INGRATITUDE OF MAN   
NO. 1055

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, JUNE 9, 1872, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
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**He came unto His own, and His own received Him not. John 1:11.**

I WOULD very frankly confess at the outset that I am not about to preach from the words of this text and that I have selected it solely because it contains an epitome of mans behavior towards the Savior. He came unto His own people, the Jews, and answered in every particular to the descriptions which their Prophets had given. But as they were looking for a temporal leader who should dazzle them with an earthly kingdom, they would not acknowledge the true Messiah. And though He continued to come unto them preaching and working such miracles among them as no other man did, so that their unbelief was without excuse, they still rejected Him. This was a gross act of ingratitude. It was superlative kindness which brought Jesus to that nation in particular and to the sons of men in generalit was supreme ingratitude when that nation, alas, in this representing us all, would not receive Him, but rejected the Lord of Glory.

I use our text as an illustration of the ingratitude of men towards our Lord, and it is upon that subject that I intend to preach at this time. I lay the charge against not only those who lived in Christs day, but against mankind in generalagainst this assembly in particularand against myself, also, in sad measure. We have treated the Lord ungratefully and have not rendered unto Him according to the benefits received. In commencement, we shall speak upon the fact that those among whom Jesus lived were guilty of ingratitude towards Him. Secondly, coming home to ourselves, we shall dwell more at length upon the lamentable fact that we, too, are guilty of ingratitude towards Him. We shall close by observing, What then? What follows out of this? What lessons are we to learn from it?

I. First then, THE PEOPLE AMONG WHOM OUR LORD DWELT WERE GUILTY OF INGRATITUDE TOWARDS HIM. They were a favored people above all nations. It was a distinguishing mark of Divine favor that the Messiah should be born among them. They ought to have received Him with delight. His signs and evidence of Messiahship were clear enough. He worked among them unexampled miracles, and He spoke as no other man spoke, yet they rejected Him, treating their best friend as though He had been their worst foe. This was a high-handed act of national ingratitude!

Special cases occurred in our Lords life involving still greater ingratitude. Among the people of Israel many became partakers of our Lords healing power. Many blind eyes did He bless with sight. Into many deaf ears did He cause sound to enter. Not a few lame men leaped as an hart at His bidding, and many that were sick of palsy and all manner of diseases were suddenly restored by His word. Yet the mass of these healed ones did not become His disciples, for the number of His male disciples, after He had ascended, was about 120yet our Savior had not healed merely120, but, according to the Evangelists, many hundredsI might, without exaggeration, say many thousands had been partakers of His healing benefits! They were in their own persons testimonies to the Lords Divine power and yet they did not worship Him!

From where did this obstinate unbelief come? Strange ingratitude this must have been, that a man should owe to Christ his eyes, and yet refuse to see in Christ his Saviorthat he should owe to Christ the tongue with which he spoke, and yet should be silent in the great Physicians praise! Yet so it was. Many were healed, but few believed. We know, moreover, that our Lord fed thousands of hungry persons. He multiplied loaves and fishes, and fed crowds so that they did all eat and were filled. For a time He was very popular with themas anyone will be who has loaves and fishes to distributeand they would have made him a king, for idle men much desire a monarch who will supply their needs and relieve them from personal labor.

Yet these persons had no affection for His person or doctrine, but followed Him simply and alone for what they could get from Him. Many of these selfish followers, doubtless, gave their voices against Him and shouted, Crucify Him, crucify Him! They ate bread with Him and lifted up their heel against Him. Surely, after sitting at a table so marvelously supplied, reason itself would have suggested to every feaster that their Host must be a Prophet sent of God, if not God Himself. Tis strange, tis passing strange, tis amazing that men receiving so much at His hands should still remain unbelievers in Him.

The same treatment was dealt out to our Lord when He acted as the Teacher of the people. He taught them pure Truths of God in the best conceivable manner, and small, indeed, was His reward. They could not complain of His sermons, that they were dull and unattractive, or that they were austere and devoid of sympathy. We never read that a hearer ever fell asleep under Christs preaching, as Eutychus did under the lengthy discourse of Paul. Neither were any terrified by His looks, as men have been by fierce fanatic leadersHis ministry was pleasing and charmed the earyet it was ill received. When His sermon at Nazareth was finished, what was His reward? They took Him to the brow of the hill and they would have cast Him down headlong had He not escaped!

When He taught the Jews in the Temple, they took up stones again to stone Him. In return for His arguments of mercy, they assailed Him with the weapons of malice. Though, by declaring the glad tidings of salvation He rendered to His hearers the most precious service, some of them, in return, sought to entrap Him in His speech and others gnashed their teeth in rage against Him. He brought light into the darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not. Sometimes, when He found around Him a more select audience than usual, the great Teacher would not merely preach the elements of the Gospel, but would go more deeply into the mysteries of it, but He had no thanks for doing so. On one occasion He spoke to them concerning eating His flesh and drinking His bloodbut He had cast His pearls before swinethey turned again to tear Him apart! And many of those who had followed Him up to that point forsook Him and walked no more with Him.

Even the disciples who were true at heart to Him did not always prize His sayings well enough to keep them in their mindsand they were not influenced by His teaching and example so much as they should have been. How often must the tender bosom of our Lord have been wrung with anguish over human unkindness? The adders tooth of ingratitude left its print upon Him. Men returned unto Him evil for good, and for the heapedup measure of His benevolence they filled up equally high the measure of their hate. What a plaintiveness is there in that question which He asked after He had healed 10 lepers, and only one of them returned to thank HimWere there not 10 cleansed, but where are the nine? as if He had expected at least that they would thank Himit was the least they could do in return for so matchless a blessing as deliverance from a deadly disease!

Surely, whenever our Lord looked upon the handful of His followers He must have recollected the hosts upon whom He had conferred benefits, and said within himself, Where are the nine? From that thankless generation the meek and lowly One received no recompense of love for His temporal and spiritual bounties. Here and there a grateful woman ministered to Him of her substance, and now and then a thankful soul became His disciple. But, for the most part there was no response to His love, save such as that which Jerusalem heard when, for His tearful cries of compassion, He received shouts of murderous hate demanding that He should be crucified!

Dear Brothers and Sisters, the further our Lord Jesus Christ went on in life the more did He experimentally know the base ingratitude of mankind. He lived for themin obedience to His Father He spent His whole life for men. He lived first for Gods Glory, and next for love of men. His meat and drink was to do men good. He forgot HimselfHe utterly renounced all ambitious purposes and gave Himself away that He might seek and save the lost. As a mother devotes herself to her babe so did Jesus lay Himself out for men. No! No mother ever loved her babe as Jesus loved His own which were in the world! And yet, continually, in every way, men sought to take away His life, which was more valuable to them than it was to Himfor it was for their sakes, only, that He continued, still, to live on earth.

How often had He to escape their cruel hands, and when His hour was come how eagerly did they conspire to hound Him to His death! One would have thought when the mob stood in the street of Jerusalem howling out, Crucify Him, crucify Him! that He must have been a common informer who had betrayed men for selfor a poisoner who had secretly tainted the bread of the people with a deadly drug! Or a blasphemer who had profaned every holy thing! Or a wretch whose character was doubly dyed in infamy! Instead of which, there stood before that furious crowd the meekest among men! The most inoffensive, and, at the same time, the most generous! The most self-denying, the most tender Man of all of woman born. Yet, how lustily they cry, Crucify Him! Crucify Him! and when the question is put by the Roman Governor, Why, what evil has He done? they can give no answer to it, and, therefore, they drown the question with their shouts, Crucify Him! Crucify Him! Oh, base ingratitude of men to recompense such a life as His with such a cruel death!

At last that evil generation had its way with the Man of Sorrows and they took Him after He had been scourged, and led Him away to be crucified. We know well that He needed not have died even then. One thought of His could have averted the arrows of death. He had but to will it and the nails would have sprung from their places, and from the Cross the Lord would have leaped into the midst of His foesto their horror and dismay. He was dying for

men! He suffered each pang for men! For men the crown of thorns! For men the nailed hands! For men the pierced side! For men the bleeding feet! For men the gall cup! For men the pain! And for men the thirst! He saved others, Himself He could not save.

It was the greatest sacrifice that man had ever made for man, and yet how was it repaid? The cruel crowd stood around Him and scoffed at His pains. They made jests upon His Personthey insulted His faiththey mocked His prayers! O You dear Christ of God, gladly would we have covered Your sacred body from those lewd and brutal eyes, and sheltered Your tender spirit from those inhuman taunts, but so it could not be! Man is allowed to be infamous that You may suffer to the uttermost, and, in so doing redeem Your people! See the contrastJesus loves and man hates! He dies for sinners, and sinners insult Him in His agonies.

When our Lord had died and had lain in the grave three days, and had risen again, His rising was for men. He might have gone into His Glory if He had pleased, but He tarried for 40 days to minister blessings to His people. The requital which He received from the Jewish people was of the same evil character. They doubted whether He had risen from the dead at all, and there were those who were base enough to invent that idle tale concerning the stealing of His body at night by His disciples. They laid imposture to the door of the Son of God, and charged the Perfect One with acting a lie!

O man, how mad you must be! What strange insanity of iniquity is this that you do thus requite your loving Lord! I think I hear a murmur among you, as though you said, Ah, but this was the guilt of the Jewsthe crime of unbelievers. All were not so cruel. But surely you have forgotten that in this ingratitude even those who were nearest to Him had a share! Those who were His immediate companions were ungrateful to Him. What do you think of him who said, when his Lord had been anointed by a loving womans hand for His burial, that it was a waste? That what was given to anoint the King of Glory might have been sold for much, begrudging an offering to that divinely generous One who had given up all for us? One would have thought that those who abode with Him would have unanimously delighted in every honor shown to Him, and one is apt to imagine that they should more often have interposed to screen Him, if they might, from the ills of poverty, weariness and need.

Among them all, was there not one who should have pressed hospitality upon Him again and again, that He might no longer cry, Foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but I, the Son of Man, have not where to lay My head? At any rate, when it came, at last, to the dying struggle, should not His bosom friends have watched with Him one hour? Might they not have guarded Gethsemanes gates when He left them outside the wall? And the three who came within a stones cast of His grief and could hear His groanscould they not have forborne to slumber? Must they sleep while the Lord is in agony? He excused them, but could they excuse themselves?

The case of Judas was peculiarly afflicting to our Redeemers sensitive soul. In him treason reached its climax and base ingratitude outdid itself. Yet Judas was an Apostlethe keeper of his Masters purse, the friend who ate bread with Him and lifted up his heel against Him. Shame on you, Judas! But, alas, you are not aloneothers follow your hideous example, and some such may be among us! Lord, is it I? But, where were the rest of the disciples? Did they not accompany their Lord to the judgment seat and come forward and boldly bear witness to the righteousness of His Character? Not one of them was there to do Him service! All the disciples forsook Him and fled. One ventured where he saw his Masters ill-treatment, but he thrice denied Him and added oaths and curses, saying, I know not the Man. Thus acted those whom He had carried in His bosom and loved even to the end!

Those to whom He had opened up His inmost soulwho had eaten with Him His last solemn meal before His passionuntrue to all their professions of affection, sought every man his own safety, and left Him to His fate. Call you not this ingratitude? What is worse than the ingratitude of bosom friends and Brethren? The indictment lies against all that were of His day with whom He came in contact, from the worst even to the best. Where is the advocate who will plead their cause? There was none faithful, no, not one. Ingratitude stained all.

II. But let us not think severely of them and forget ourselves, for we, too, are in the same condemnation. This is our second pointWE ALSO HAVE BEEN UNGRATEFUL TO OUR LORD. While I have been turning over this subject in my own mind it has deeply affected me. But I feel quite powerless to produce it before you so that you shall be affected in the same manner unless God the Holy Spirit shall now be pleased to melt your hearts. Remember that to bring a charge of ingratitude against a man is a very strong thing to do. I would not like to be called untruthful. I should grievously feel it, but to be called ungrateful is equally as degrading.

Can any accusation be more dishonoring? Ingratitude is a mean and despicable vice! He who is guilty of it is unworthy of the name of man. A soldier who had been kindly rescued from shipwreck and hospitably entertained, was mean enough to endeavor to obtain from Philip of Macedon the house and farm of his generous host. Philip, in just anger, commanded that his forehead should be branded with the words, The ungrateful guest. That man must have felt like Cain when the mark of God was upon himhe must have desired to hide himself forever from the gaze of man. Prove a man ungrateful and you have placed him below the beasts, for even the brutes frequently exhibit the most touching gratitude to their benefactors.

The old classic story of Androcles and the lion rises before usthe man healed the lion, and years after, the lion, being let loose upon him, crouched at his feet and acknowledged him as a friend. Only the most despised creatures are used as metaphors of ingratitude! For instance, we speak of the donkey which drinks, and then kicks the bucket it has emptied, but we never speak thus of nobler animals. An ungrateful man is thus lower than the animals! Inasmuch as he returns evil for good, he is worse than bestialhe is devilish. Ingratitude is essentially infernal. Ingratitude to friends is vile, to parents it is worsebut to the Savior it is worst of all!

Therefore, what I shall have to say must not be received with coolness, as though the charge were a trivial one. It is a very serious matter that we should be open to an indictment of ingratitude towards the Lord Jesus Christ. Hear, then, and sorrow as you hear, for I also mourn as I speak! I lay the charge, first, against Believersagainst those of us who are Christiansand are, therefore, most indebted to Christs love and Grace. And we will observe at the outset that every sin of the Believer has in it a measure of ingratitude, for, since our Savior has suffered by reason of our sins, we are ungrateful when we wander into sin! Since He came to destroy the works of the devilit is ungrateful to build, again, that which He has destroyed.

Shall that very sin which was the murderer of our Beloved be harbored by us? The very thought is treason! Since these sins of mine were my best Friends worst enemies, and more to be blamed than the Jews or the Romans, would it not be a shameless need of love to make them my bosom companions? Our sins were the nails and our unbelief the spear! Away, then, with them all! Brothers and Sisters, if we do not watch most carefully against our besetting sins we shall be false to our Redeemer. If a woman saw her husbands murderer before her and gave her heart to him, what should we think of her? May the Lord, by His Grace, prevent us from being equally shameless! May Grace enable us to take vengeance on our sins because they drew down vengeance on our Savior!

Saints are especially ungrateful to the Lord Jesus when they allow any rival to set up his throne in their hearts. He, the chief among 10,000 and the altogether lovely, deserves to be admired and adored by our souls not only beyond all othersbut to the exclusion of all others. If your hearts were capacious enough to hold a thousand times more affection than they now contain, the Lord Jesus would deserve it all! If our hearts were as wide as Heaven, yes, as vast as seven heavens in oneJesus, having bled and died for us ought to monopolize all our love! Yet we must confess that a wife, a child, a friend will steal away our hearts. Ambition for position, love of pleasure, desire to please, joy in wealth will invade and conquer a province of our hearts. Oh, base ingratitude which allows us to set up Dagon in the temple where the Crucified One, alone, should reign!

Oh, wretched unfaithfulness, which pines after these fleeting things in preference to the eternal Lover of souls! How common is this ingratitude! Do I address a single child of God but what must acknowledge, I am, indeed, guilty? I sorrowfully confess my own offenses against the infinite love of Jesus in this respect, and will do so before God far more at large than here would be either fit or profitable. How often, too, might we be charged with ingratitude when we lose large measures of the Grace which we have already received. We have power given us, at times, by the Holy Spirit, to rise above the dead level of mans ordinary life, and we climb the mountain and stand upon a higher platform altogether.

There are times with us when we love the Lord with all our hearts when our faith mounts to assurance and all our graces are bright and strongbut we come down from that mountain almost immediately! Our feet slide from the glorious elevation! It seems far easier to mount than it does to tarry aloft upon the wing. The Holy Spirit admits us into peculiar nearness to the heavenly Father and then we act inconsistently and lose our communion, and come to follow afar off as so many do. We have the sweet flavor of Divine love in our mouths and yet desert the banquet tablewhat is this but ingratitude? Is it not a slighting of the precious gifts of Jesus Divine Grace?

He permits us to lean our heads on His bosom and we will not do so! He stands at our door and knocks, and we refuse to open to him! He calls us to take our fill of love, and we turn to the poor husks of earth. Have we not grievously provoked Him? Would He not long ago have divorced His unfaithful spouse if it had not been true that He hates putting away? Beat on your breasts, Beloved, and confess your ill manners towards your best Beloved!

Could we, any of us, plead innocence if the charge were brought in another way, namely, that we render Him but little service and give Him but lukewarm love? How much have we done for Jesus, after all? How much have we ever loved Him? How much do we love Him now? I must correct myself I ought to have said how little. If we hear of the death of Christ upon the Cross, we listen to it as coldly as though it were a thrice told tale with which we had no concern. How is this? Are our hearts like an adamant stone? A silly story of a lovesick maid will bring tears to our eyes far sooner than the tragedy of the Cross!

If we did but see one of our fellow creatures suffer but a millionth part of what the Lord of Glory bore for us, we should be moved infinitely more than we are, now, when Calvary is before us. Why? Is not this black ingratitude? Who can extenuate such need of tenderness? Our love to Jesus, is it love at all? When I read of some of the saints giving up all that they have, crossing the sea, penetrating into barbarous regions, bearing their lives in their hands, sacrificing comforts, and living day by day on the verge of death amid fever and wild beastsand all that they might honor ChristI am utterly ashamed! What are we, my Brethren? Unto what shall we liken ourselves? Like a Colossus such men bestride their age, while we, base things, hide our dishonorable heads for shame at our spiritual littleness!

The love of Christ to us is like that ancient furnace which was heated seven times hotter, while our love is like a solitary spark which wonders within itself that it is yet alive. May the Holy Spirit change this and give us yet to glow and burn with sacred fire like the bush in Horeb when it was aglow with Deity!

The same humiliation reflections arise when we meditate upon the consecration, or rather non-consecration, of our substance to the Redeemers cause. What a small portion do the most of us give to His work, or to His poor! If you were to take the numbers of Church members, and the contributions to missions, you would hardly dare to say how little per head is given! It is so trifling that it is rather an insult to the Savior than an offering to Him. Some hearers even try to cheat the minister whom they flock to hear and evade every claim, even from the Church to which they belong. For the most part, when Christians take stock of what they have, and then calculate what they have given, they have great cause for shame. If our estimate of Christs worth is according to our gifts to Him, there are some who would not give 20 pieces of silver for Him. To some these remarks are more applicable than to othersto many congregations more necessary than to you, for, thank God, there are those among you who delight to honor the Lord with their substance. But these are the last persons to think that they have done enoughin fact, those who do most for Christ are the first to feel that they do far too little!

Furthermore, Brethren, how often is ingratitude shown to our Lord Jesus by neglect of His commands. Some professors need to be driven to obedience. If you tell the man who earnestly loves Christ his duty, he is charmed to know it, and to attend to it at once. But love to Christ is so low in some professors hearts that you must hammer the precept into them again and again, and again, and again! And yet they will linger long before they will fulfill their Masters will. They must be persuaded and threatened before they will yield. Fervent gratitude runs with winged feet wherever Jesus bids it go. If we were more jealously obedient to our Lord, it would be evident that we were more grateful to Him.

Now, I feel, Brothers and Sisters, in my heart as if I would be glad to have done preaching, for I need to get alone and sigh and weep this sermon over by myself. I need to confess and mourn over my own conscious ingratitude to my ever-blessed Lord, whom, nevertheless, I love. I do remember well the time when I imagined that if the Lord would only give me pardon through the atoning blood, nothing would be too difficult for me to attempt for His dear sake. And yet, though I have been cleansed from sins and accepted in Christ Jesus, I am too often sluggish in my Masters errands. Well do I remember when I first began to preach His WordI thought if I might but have opportunities of pleading with men for Jesus I would pour out my very soul while I urged them to flee from the wrath to come!

Alas, although I am not altogether without zeal for God, my zeal falls far short of what it should be. Gladly would I speak firefire which should melt your heartsand then set them on flame with ardent love to Jesus! I cannot reach my own ideal and I doubt not that if I could, I should still be faulty. I charge you not, my Brethren, with ingratitude without confessing and acknowledging it in myself. Come, my Brothers and Sisters, let us not confess with our lips only, but with inward penitential grief! Let us seek godly sorrow which works practical repentance! May we, in the power of the Holy Spirit, resolve that we will love our Lord better for the future and yield to the sweet constraints of His love.

Now I have a heavy task, indeed, and that is to speak of some whose ingratitude to Christ is even greater, if greater can be, for they utterly refuse to trust Him. I desire to speak with you to whom I have preached in vain these many years. The one topic of every Sabbath in this place is Jesus Christ crucified. I have other things to say to you, but this is repeated over and over again. You are told without ceasing that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners and that, whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life. Notwithstanding all this, up to this moment many of you refuse to trust Him! You stumble at the Word being disobedient, and you thus make the rock of salvation to be a rock of offense to you.

If you deny it, I will ask you, Why, then, have you not accepted Him for your Savior? Why are you still alienated in your hearts from Him? Perhaps your reply is that you do not think of these things. Is this, then, your conduct towards the dying Saviorthat you will not even think of Him? Is He nothing to you? Do you despise His blood? Perhaps it is that you do not understand. Then surely, in your case it must be a willful blindness of understanding, for the Truth of God has been put before you as plainly as words could utter it! And neither do I know how I could have spoken more clearly. You have rejected, up to this moment, the Christ who died for sinners! Do you know what you have done? I wish He would stand here upon this pulpit at this moment, that you might see who it is that you have despised.

See Him with the ruby drops still glistening upon His crown of thorns, His face bruised, His countenance lined with grief, His eyes red with tears, His shoulders furrowed with the lash, His hands and feet wounded with the nails and His side gashed with the lancethis is the Man of Sorrows whom you have refused! Look, now on Him whom you have pierced! Can you, in His Presence, continue your rejection? Will you still bar your hearts against Him? Will you now say to Him to His face, Son of God, bleeding for human sin, we will not trust You! Son of Man, dying in the place of sinners, we will not yield to You? Yet you have said that in His Presence, which is everywhere real, though undiscerned by eye or ear. With those eyes of fire which discern from Heaven everything that is done on earth, He has seen you impudently refusing to be saved by Him.

Alas, I have to go further. Some of you have not been content with rejecting the Lord, but have gone the length of opposing Him! You have made His Gospel the theme for jest and treated His people with indignity. It always staggers me that men should treat the meek and lowly Jesus and His gracious Gospel so roughly. There is something so tender and so meek about the Savior that I pity from my soul the wretch who had the heart to strike Him in the face, or was so base as to insult with spit that dear and sorrowful visage! Once in the sack of a city, when the fierce soldiers had commenced a general massacre, a little child was seized by a rough warrior, who was about to kill him, but stayed his hand when the little one said, piteously, Please, Sir, dont kill me, I am so little.

I think the Saviors meek and gentle manners might be a similar argument for staying the hand of wrath. Who can harm the harmless Lamb of God? Persecutor, what evil has Jesus done to you? Reviler, what has He ever said to injure you? When has He given you an ill word or look? Ah, it is to His silence that you owe your life! Should He accuse you, you would be undone forever! Yet He has not accused you to the Father, but has pleaded for your reprieve! Sometimes in our police courts you may have seen an inhuman husband brought before the magistrate for having maltreated the poor unhappy woman who is linked to him for life. The policeman has taken him in the very act of assaulting herher poor sickly face bears evidence of his brutality.

She can scarcely stand, for his cruelty has put her life in jeopardy. Watch her closely. The magistrate asks her to give evidence against the creature who has so cruelly injured her. She weeps and shakes her head, but says not a word. She is asked, Did he not ill-treat you yesterday? She is long before she speaks, and then not a word is uttered against the husband whom she still loves, though there is nothing loveable about him. She declares that she cannot bear to appear against her husband and she will not. What a stone must that mans heart be if he does not love her from then on all her days!

But, see a nobler counterpart! There is the Lord whom you have injured by your hard speeches and cruel mockeries. See you not His face all marred with your bruises? Yet He does not accuse you to the Father but when He opens His mouth to speak for sinners, He cries, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. He must be ingratitude incarnate who can continue to use Him or His cause despitefully! There is no chivalry, nothere is no manhood in the heart which treats despitefully one who neither provokes nor retaliates. I must add, before I close this point, that some are ungrateful to Christ, from whom, above all others, such conduct ought never to have proceeded. The text saysHe came to His own, and His own received Him not.

In this very place the Lord Jesus has come to those who appeared to be His own. You, Sir, were your mothers own boy, and she, now in Glory, was an ardent lover of the Savior. And when Jesus came to you He might have said, This is the son of one of My dearest friends, the son of a woman whose whole heart was Minesurely her son will love Me, too. Yet you did not respond to Him. Jesus has come to your house and found there a wife who ardently loves Him, and He might well have said, Surely the husband of My handmaiden will receive his wifes Friend. Yet you have shut the door upon Him.

Possibly I address an unconverted person who is not only the son of a Christian father, but the child of one of Gods own ambassadors, yet he himself is an enemy to God! Surely a ministers children should be the Lords, and yet ministers sons and daughters have been seen among reprobates. I know not why it is, but sadly often has this been the case. Do I address one such? I pray that you may no longer be ungrateful to your fathers God. Yes, and there are some here who years ago were sorely sick and on the borders of the grave, and they said, Please, God, if we ever get up again, we will seek the Lord. You were thus in a sense, His own by your own voluntary vowbut you have not received Him.

Today the Lord Jesus comes to you again, and shows His hands and side, and asks you why it is you break your promises to Him? He asks why it is you love not your mothers Savior? Why it is you care not for your fathers God? And what it is that has turned you against Him? Many good works has He shown you, and for which of these do you stone Him? He is full of love, and pity, and mercy and power to savefor what reasons do you reject Him?

May the Lord grant that these appeals may have power with you by the voice of the Holy Spirit.

III. I close by answering the question WHAT THEN? What comes of all this? Why, first, let us appreciate the sufferings of our Lord Jesus Christ! We must never lower our estimate of the bodily pains of Jesus. They were undoubtedly very great, but, after all, His mental sufferings were far greater and among the most acute of them must have been thisto be always treated with ingratitude by those whom He loved so well. Do I address, here, a tender heart which has bled from the stabs of ingratitude? A mother with an ungrateful son? A friend with a treacherous friend?

You know that nothing stings more than ingratitude, yet your Lord had to feel it every day! He was always occupied in doing everything for men, and men, on the other hand, were doing everything against Him. He was from day to day like Sebastian the martyr who was bound to a tree and made the target for a thousand arrows. The archers have sorely shot at Him and wounded Him, but His love abides in strength and so remains to this day.

Next, admire the Saviors love. When a man is kind and loving he will continue so until he meets with base returns, and then he is very apt to become indignant and stay the course of his benevolence. When we try to bring men together who have fallen out with each otherwhere ingratitude has been the cause of itwe use strong arguments. We have to say to the injured person, You have been badly used, but labor to rise superior to it all. It is true that such ingratitude does deserve to forfeit your kindness, but do more than ordinary men would doheap coals of fire on the ungrateful head!

The Savior knew that men would be unkind to Him. He knew it all beforehand, and when men were ungrateful He did not merely hear their words, but He read their heartsand He knew that their hearts were yet more opposed to Himyet He never turned aside from His course of love. He pressed on, still, through reproaches and shame and derision and every form of human evil till He had finished the redemption of His people! Admire His love and let it kindle in you love in return.

Dear Brothers and Sisters, see next the mighty power of the pardoning blood of Jesus. Jesus can take away even this scarlet sin of ingratitude! Though He came to His own and His own received Him not, yet to as many as received Him to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to as many as believed on His name. Have you rejected Jesus 50 years? Come to Him even now, and He will blot out your sins in a moment! Have 70 years rolled over your guilty head, and have you remained deaf to all His appeals of mercy? Yet come and welcome, come and welcome! The gentle Savior has not exhausted His pity! May His Spirit draw you now, and you shall find Him as ready to receive you as He would have been 50 years ago. Admire the Grace which continues to invite and the efficacy of the blood which is still able to cleanse.

Another practical lesson is to let us see how we ought to forgive. If another man has injured me it is no reason why I should injure myself. Perhaps you do not see the application of that utterance. Well, here is the explanation of it. If I have loved a man and his only return is unkindness, shall I injure myself by leaving off loving him? After all, it will be a great injury to my heart to become unkind. If I have sought a mans good and he has only returned me evil, do not let me bring myself down to his level. Let me rather seek to rise higher! And because of his evil let me seek to do more good to himthen I shall be like Christ, for He did! When our sin abounded, His Grace did much more abound! In our Lords life, sin and love contested which should win the day. Man sinned yet more and more, and Christ loved yet more and more. On the Cross He loved to the death and won the battle, and this day human ingratitude is beneath the feet of the conquering Savior. Love has won the day and sin is crushed beneath its feet. O Christian, do battle in the same spirit and the Lord help you to be more than conqueror through Him that loved you!

Dear Brothers and Sisters, lastly, let us judge how we ought to live in the light of this subject. If we have been ungrateful up till now, shall we be so any longer? No, let us now, on bended knee, with earnest soul, cry to God to inflame us with something of the fire which set the Savior on a blaze with sacred ardor for our good! Let us devote ourselves wholly to Him. Let us cry, Bind the sacrifice with cords, even with cords to the horns of the altar. What manner of people ought we be who owe so much to the Grace of God?

And there is this mournful reflectionwhat will become of those who shall die after having lived a life of constant ingratitude to Christ? There is a limit even to His mercy, for death shuts the golden gate of love. Justice takes the place of mercy as soon as the impenitent man has closed his dying eyes. An excellent writer has well said that, Divine justice is love in flames, and so it is. When once love turns to jealousy, it is cruel as the gravethe coals thereof are of juniper that have a most vehement flame. You may despise Him, whose feet were pierced, and reject the Savior whose heart was opened with the spearbut He will come again. I know not when, but His Word is, Behold, I come quickly.

Beware, I pray you, for in that day this shall be the word, Behold, you despisers, and wonder and perish! In that pierced hand shall be a rod of iron and He shall break His enemies in pieces like potters vessels! His pierced feet shall be sandaled with light and out of the mouth which now speaks promises shall come forth a two-edged sword with which to strike His adversaries.

Kiss the son lest He be angry and you perish from the way while His wrath is kindled but a little. He will forgive you now! He waits to be gracious to you now! Mercy now rules the day! But let the sun of mercy go down and the blackness of darkness shall abide forever. O provoke not the Lord! May His mercy turn your hearts by the power of His ever blessed Spirit and unto Him shall be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Adapted from The C.H. Spurgeon Collection, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307.  
Sermon #1212 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

FAITH AND ITS ATTENDANT PRIVILEGES   
NO. 1212

DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

***He came unto His own, and His own received Him not. But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them which believe on His name:***

***which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.   
John 1:11-13.***

ACCORDING to this text, the principal matter in our salvation is faith. Faith is described as receiving Jesus. It is the empty cup placed under the flowing stream. It is the penniless hand held out for heavenly alms. It is also described in the text as believing on His name. And this reception, this believing, is the main thing in real godliness. Faith is the simplest thing conceivable! When we hear people sing, Only believe and you shall be saved, they sing the Truth of God, for we have the Divine assurance that whoever believes on Him is not condemned. The Gospel message is, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved.

The act of faith is the simplest in the world. It may be performed by a little child. It has often been performed by persons so short-witted that they have been almost incapable of any other intellectual act. And yet faith is as sublime as it is simple, as potent as it is plain! It is the connecting link between impotence and Omnipotence, between necessity and allsufficiency. He that by faith lays hold on God has accomplished the simplest and yet the grandest act of the mind. Faith is apparently so small a matter that many who hear the Gospel can hardly believe it possible that we can really mean to teach that it brings salvation to the soul. They have even misunderstood us and imagined that we have meant to say that if persons

believed they were saved, they were saved.

If that were the doctrine of Justification by Faith, it would be the most wicked of delusions. It is not so! Faith in Jesus as our Savior is a very different thing from persuading ourselves to believe that we are saved when we are not! We believe that men are saved by faith, alonebut not by a faith which is alone. They are saved by faith without works, but not by a faith which is without works. The faith which saves is the most operative principle known to the human mind, for he that believes in Jesus for salvation, being saved, and knowing that he is saved, loves Him that saved himand that love is the key of the whole matter!

The loving Believer ceases from everything which would displease Him whom he loves. He tries to abound in that which will please Him, his beloved Redeemer. So salvation becomes the great reason for gratitude and changes the heart! And, the heart being changed, all the issues of life are changed. The man is like a watch which has a new mainspringnot a

mere face and hands repairedbut new inward machinery with freshly adjusted works which act to a different time and tune. And whereas he went wrong before, now he goes right, because he is right within. Faith is so simple that the little child who believes becomes, before long, strong in the Lord. It is a vital force which gets such mastery over men that it makes them other men than they ever were before!

And as it grows, it lifts them up from being mere men, to be men of God, and then beyond that it leads them on till they become heroes and they stop the mouths of lions, quench the violence of flames, obtain promises and enter into rest. Faith the size of a grain of mustard seed develops into faith that moves mountains! Faith of the little child increases into faith of the giant! May we know by experience how true this is! Our object is to show what faith does. And, O, while I am trying to speak of this great gift of the Lord to men by which they obtain every other gift, may many of you who have not believed come to believe in Jesus! If you do, there is nothing in this text but what shall certainly be yours.

I. We shall begin by saying that FAITH MAKES THE GRANDEST OF DISTINCTIONS AMONG MEN. This is clear from the text. Faith makes the grandest distinctions among men, for the text begins, He came unto His own, and His own received Him not! That is one companybut as many as received Himthat is another company. Were an angel to come here with a drawn sword and to suddenly separate the righteous from the wicked with one stroke, you would find that his sword had for its edge the question, Do you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ? This divides men into saved Believers and unbelievers with the wrath of God abiding on them.

He that believes has passed from death unto life, and shall never come into condemnation; but he that believes not is condemned already, because he has not believed on the Son of God. There are many distinctions among mensome proper and some improperand there always will be such distinctions while this age lasts. There are rich and poorand I fear there never will be a form of society in which there will be no poor. Even in the kingdom of Christ, when He comes, it seems there will be poor, for He shall judge the poor and needy. There will be the governors and the governed. The wise and the foolish. The teachers and the taught. But, mark you, these distinctions pass away. The grave is an awful leveler.

There in the sepulcher Caesar is no more than his vassal, Socrates no greater than the slave who washed his feet! The great emperor who swayed the scepter has, in the tomb, no higher rank than the bondwoman who toiled at the mill. Death recognizes no caste, the sepulcher believes in equality. At the Judgment Seat temporal distinctions will not be recognized except so far as they involve responsibilityand so far as that point goes, some of the great and mighty will then wish that they had been slavesand regret that they cannot hide their heads among those whom they oppressed! The grand distinction which will outlast all time is that of faith or lack of faith. Do you believe or do you doubt? This makes the broad line of distinction! To the receivers of Christ or the non-receivers to which do you belong, dear Friend?

I want you to observe that the faith which makes the distinction is described here as a receptive faith. Saying faith becomes a working faith by degrees, but at first it is a receptive faith. And in fact, work as it may, afterwards, it must always be a receptive faith! We only work out our salvation as God works in usand even the highest actions that are ever done for God are performed with the strength which God supplies. Working faith is merely receptive faith in action. A receiving faith is the vital point and it is absolutely necessary that the soul should receive Jesus to be its All in All. To as many as received Him. Have you ever received Him, the Lord Jesus, the real Christ? Do you talk to Him? Do you know Him? Is He a companion? Is He a friend of yours? If you have received a personal Christ by confiding, trusting and depending upon Him, you are on the safe side of the house!

The text further says, Even to them that believe on His name. Now, what is it to believe on His name? It struck me it would be a fair and a right way of illustrating the text to notice what are the names which are used in the former verses of this chapter. Please notice, in the first chapter of John, where our text is, what name of Jesus is used. In the beginning was the Wordthat is the first name. The Word. What is the meaning of that? Why is Jesus Christ called the Word? Why, because, Brothers and Sisters, if I want to communicate to you by writing or by speech, I use a word. My thought is hereand there is your mind.

I could get the thought partly to your mind by a picturethat is what God has done in Nature. But we cannot use pictures for a full communication of knowledgewe must employ words. So God, wanting to speak to man, spoke by sending Christ and Christ is Gods Word. Have you ever received Christ as Gods Word? Will you just think of it, what a wonderful Word He was? God said, Men, stand no longer at a distance from Me. I will come and dwell among you33 years the Son of God dwelt among the sons of men! Men, He said, Men, I must punish your sins. There hung His Son bleeding on the tree for sinGod saying in a wonderful wayI hate sin and therefore Jesus must die.

The Lord next cries, Men, I can now be just and yet can justify you. Come unto Me. There is Jesus risen from the dead, in newness of life, and He goes into Heaven a Man and, as Man, is received to the Throne of Godand thus God says in a word to us, I am willing to receive you up to My very Throne. Actions speak louder than words, but Christ, Himself, is the Word, the love-Word, the tender Word, the very heart-Word of God with acts attending and following which make His utterance the more convincing! God kept nothing back when He spoke Christ. He spoke that Word and that Word is the fullness of Gods soul to sinners!

Have you ever accepted Christ as the Word between you and God? Have you ever spoken to God that Word back again by pleading the name of Christ? Lord, there is no communication between me and You except this!

Whenever You speak, you say, Christ, and my reply is, Christ. When I want You to pardon me, I say, Christ. When I need You to bless me, indeed, and give me answers to my prayers, I plead, Christ. That is the Word from God to man, and back again from man to God.

Now, to as many as believe on His name as the Word, to them He gives power to become the sons of God. But many have never accepted Him as, the Word, any more than if God had never spoken. They are deaf. At any rate, there is the Word and they have never received it. Look down the chapter and you will find that Jesus is described as the Life. All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made. In Him was life. Have you believed on His name as the Life? Man is dead by nature. When God said to Adam, In the day you eat thereof you shall surely die, Adam did die that very day and that is the key word to what is meant by death in the Scriptures. Did he cease to exist? No, nor will you.

But he ceased to live and that is a very different thing. To exist is not to live, there is a wide distinction there. To die is not to cease to existno thoughtful man should fall into such an error. What is death? Practically it is the separation of a living being into its component elements. When the seed is put into the ground, the Apostle says, it is not quickened unless it dies, or dissolves into its constituent elements. It dies in order more perfectly to live. When we die, neither body nor soul ceases to exist, but they cease to be united and their separation is death. When a soul departs, (and the life of the body is the soul), the life of the body is gone. When a soul dies, it is separated from God, for union to God is the souls true life. That is the death which Adam died and which every impenitent sinner will have to die. No, that is the death which every sinner is under now, for, he that believes not shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.

Listen well that, he that believes not has not life. He has an existence and always will have, but he has not life he abides in death. But as for the man who believes in Jesus, he gets back his God and that is his life! Jesus says, He that believes in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and he that lives and believes in Me shall never die. I am the Resurrection and the Life. When we are brought back to God, God has made our soul alive! A soul without God is like a fair palace which has been desertedyou pace through all its halls and there is not a sound. It is all death, decay and emptiness. But when the king comes back, again, to his palace, the merry bells peal out their joyful notes! All is rejoicing and there is life again throughout the house. God is the life of the soul and as many as receive God in Christ, receive the Life.

Now see, Jesus is first the Word, that is God speaking to men. Secondly the Life, that is God quickening man and dwelling in him. Have we so received the Christ of God? Note the third name here. In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men. Notice that this name of Jesus is repeated many times if you read through the chapter. John came for a witness to bear witness of the Light. He was not that Light, but he was sent to bear witness of that Light. That was the true Light, and so on. So that the next name of Christ we have in this chapter is the Light. Have we received Christ as the Light? What is it to have Christ to be your Light? What is light? It is that by which we see. Everybody sees in a light.

Take an illustrationonly an illustration. A merchant comes to a city, town, village. He calculates whether it is a good place for business. Bad place, this, he says. A man cannot live here. It is a bad situation. And he is not content unless he gets near the Bank or in Lombard Street, or some other business quarter. Now look at the artist. He has another light. You take that artist into the city and he says, I could not live here in this dreary wilderness of brick, amid these fogs! Let me get away to North Wales, or somewhere where the picturesque is to be seen. And he settles himself down in Bettws-y-coed, and he says, This is beautiful.

Take the rich man there and say to him, You are to live here for 20 years. Twenty years? he says, I could not live here a month! It is preposterous. This is not a place where a man can live. Bring a man of gaiety into a religious circle and he says, O, I need a place where there is some life. I have been traveling, sometimes, where I thought the scenery very beautiful and I have heard young men say, This is a hateful place: there is no life here. Everybody sees according to the light he sees by.

My dear Hearer, have you ever seen things in the Light of Christ? Did you ever feel, this is the place where I can live, for here are Christians with whom I can commune. Here is the Gospel preached and my soul will be fed here. I shall learn much of Christ. This is a sphere in which I can be useful? When you have Life you will get Lightand you will see things in that Light. You will see yourself in the Light of Christ. You will say, O God, be merciful to me a sinner. Everything looks according to your light. Yellow spectacles will make everything look yellow, but get the true Light, the only Light that can lighten any man that comes into the world, and things will be seen in the Truth of God. If you get Christ within you, you have Light, indeed!

So the question comes backhave we believed on the name of Jesus as the Word, the Life and the Light? If we have, it has made a distinction between us and others, and there is a deep gulf fixed between us, across which, thank God, men may come to us by Sovereign Grace, but across which we shall never returnfor he that has received the Word will find in it an incorruptible Seed! He that has received the Life has received with it the assurance, Because I live, you shall live also. And he that has received the Light knows that it shines more and more unto the perfect day. This distinction, then, is a very grand one and it is one which obliterates all others, for the text puts it, As many as received Himthat is, if the chimney-sweep receives Christ, he is a child of God, and if the Czar of Russia receives Christ, he is a child of Godbut not the one more than the other. If they receive Himthat is the pointthey become the sons of God!

It is a distinction, therefore, which is to be sought after abundantly by us, and which has to do with present things. As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God. Now I charge you, do not think of religion as a thing to be run after when you die, as your friends may seek after an undertaker to bury you. My bell sometimes sounds at the dead of night or at three in the morning. Would you come and pray for a dying person? They even say, Pray to some dying person. Why do they send for me? Why do they not think of sending for me when the man is in good health?

They send for me when the man has taken stupefying drugs, perhaps, to lull pain, or he is half asleep with coming death, or his suffering is so intense that he cannot think! Or if he can think, he counts on my coming and my visit rather ministers to his superstition than to his benefit! Religion is for life as well as death. It is for today. Now are we the sons of God. Oh, have the Gospel today, today, today, today! It is said that every man ought to repent on the last day of his lifethis day may be yours therefore, today, if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts. I have many things to say unto you, but time flies and I have much more left. This is the first head, then. Faith makes the grandest of all distinctions.

II. Secondly, FAITH OBTAINS THE GRANDEST OF ALL ENDOWMENTS. Read, To as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God. The margin says the privilege. The margin is right, but so is the common reading. The word exousia is a very great word in the Greek. It cannot be comprehended in the word, privilege, at all. It means power, privilege and a great deal more. Everyone that has believed in Jesus has received the privilege, the power and everything else that lies in being a son of God. This is described as being a privilege peculiar to Believers and yet there are rogues who are everlastingly talking about the fatherhood of God because He made them.

I suppose the man who made that table is the father of the table. They assert that the Creator is the Father of all His creatures. That is not the sense in which Believers say, Our Father which art in Heaven. If you are children of the devil and doing his works, why call God your Father? How dare you? If you have not believed on the Son of God, He is not your Father in the sense of the textand you have no right to think of yourself as His son! The privilege of the text is, to as many as received Him, for, to them gave He the power or, the privilege to become the sons of God. As for the unbeliever, what is written concerning him? The wrath of God abides on him.

Now, there is a distinction intended here in the use of this word, son, rather than the old legal word servant. The most that they could attain to under the old dispensation was to be servants. Moses was faithful in all his house as a servant. Yes, that is all. And what a blessed thing to be a servant of God! The poor prodigal would have been glad enough to have been one of the hired servants. But says our Master, Henceforth I call you not servants, for the servant knows not what his Lord does, but I have called you Friends. And we know who has said, For this cause He is not ashamed to call them Brethren, because they are sons in the same house. Oh, what a pleasure to rise from slavery to sonship! From the bondage of the Law to the glorious liberty of the children of God!

And that is where we all are who have believed. Only sometimes, you know, we do not live up to this sonship privilege. Those who are under the Law do not rise to sonship. They may be sons, but they are in their minority and the child, while he is yet in his minority, differs little from a servant, though he is lord of all. He is under tutors until he is of age. Christ has come and we are no longer under a schoolmaster, but now, blessed be His name, we are the sons of God! Are we not His servants, too? O, yes! Jesus Christ was first His Fathers Son and then His Fathers Servant. So we, being sons, have the joy of serving our Father. And I tell you it is a very different thing to serve your Father to what it is to serve a mere prince or ruler!

We are sons, then, rather than servants. We are called sons of God because of our new nature. We are the children of God by birth. We are also sons by likeness, for the Spirit of God dwells in us and we are made like unto God. The likeness between a son of God and God, Himself, is real and true. Have you ever seen the likeness between yourself and your child? Yes. Yes, he is very much like you. Some points of his character are caricatures of yours! You can see your image, distorted somewhat, and imperfect, but it is yourself. It is as near like yourself as a child can be like a manbut a child is not a man, for all that. So God makes His children like Himself, but they are miniatures, they are little, childish, weak. There are many imperfections and shortcomings, but still, mark that word, I often stagger as I read itHe has made us partakers of the Divine Nature.

In moral qualities and spiritual actualities, He has given us power to become the sons of God, that is, by making us like unto God, showing us that as He is who was the Chief Son, so are we, also, in this world. Oh, the privilege of this! I assure you I would enlarge upon it if I did not feel that I am quite incompetent. I can only stand as John did when he wanted to tell us about it, and could only cry, Behold, as much as to sayLook yourself, I cannot tell you! Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us that we should be called the children of God. We are such by prerogative, by nature, by growing like He and by privilege. We are now the sons of God.

Some of you do not know what this means. Children, you know, take many liberties with their father and are very familiar. I wonder what the little children of a judge think of him if they are ever taken into court to see him with his big wig on, sitting there trying prisoners? Well, I have no doubt they feel a great awe of him. But you should see him when he is at home! Why there he is down on the rug with the children on his back! He is the father and the father somehow swallows up the judge! And the child does not seem to remember that he is a judge, but only that he is his father. O, how many times has my soul, while prostrate with awe in the Presence of my God, laid hold on Him and said, My

Father, great as You are, You are not so great as to forget that You are my Father. You have taught me to say it, You have said, When you pray, say, Our Father, and I do say it, and I feel that, Abba, Father, is the natural cry of the spirit that is within me. Will you not answer to the cry?

He does answer us and like as a father pities his children, He pities us. He bows His Omnipotence to help us in our little laborsand bows His mighty arms to help us in our little troubles. He counts the number of the stars, and calls them all by their names. He heals the broken in heart, and binds up their wounds. Is not that a grand stoop from rolling the orbs and wheeling the worlds along, to stoop down to bind broken hearts and to strap their wounds with Heavens court plaster lest they should bleed too much? Blessed be his name!

*The God that rules on high,   
And thunders when He pleases.   
That rides upon the stormy sky   
And manages the seas   
This awful God is ours,   
Our Father and our love!   
He shall send down   
His heavenly powers   
To carry us above.*

But we must pass on. Faith makes the grandest of distinctions and obtains the grandest of endowments.

III. Thirdly, FAITH IS THE EVIDENCE OF THE GRANDEST EXPERIENCE, for the text speaks of, them that believe on His name which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of man, but of God. This teaches us that every man who believes in Jesus is a regenerate man. He has been born of God! What a wonderful thing it is to be born again! There are poor blind men about who say that persons are regenerated by the application of water, though they have no faith, and grow up without any! May the Lord open their eyes! We will say no more, but wherever there is true regeneration there must be faith. Read the third chapter of John. See how faith and regeneration run together. Read this very passageTo as many as believe on His name which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of man. Faith is the first, the unique token of being born again!

Now, what is it to be born again? I saw a big man once. A strong, rough fellow, and he was evidently under conviction of sin. He said, Would God I had never been born. He thought again and he said, I remember when I used to pray at my mothers knee. I knew nothing, then, of the wickedness and vice through which I have gone. Would God I could begin life again like a little child! I was pressed to hear him say that, for it enabled me to say, That is exactly what you shall do if you believe in Jesus. You shall be born again. But if we could be born again as we were born at first, that is, of the will of the flesh, we should do as we did beforefor that which is born of the flesh, if it could be born twice of fleshwould be still flesh.

That which is born of the Spirit is spirit and, you must be born again from aboveyou must be born of the Spirit of God. What the Spirit of God does for us is to give us a new life to start us afresh with a new nature upon a new career. Whoever believes in Jesus is born again! Regeneration is a great mystery, but you have that mystery. Do not puzzle yourself about the new birthyou have experienced it if you really believe in the Lord Jesus. As I tried to explain it just now, you are born again. You are a new creature in Christ Jesus. You have begun life again. It is of little use to attempt to mend the old nature, it is too far gone. There was a certain prince who used to swear this oath, God mend me! But a good man says, I think He had better make a new one.

Some men think God will mend them, but they err. I like the drunkard to become sober and the thief to become honest and mend himself as much as he can. But what he really needs is making over again. I have heard of a man who brought his gun to the gunsmiths to be repaired. You want it repaired, says the smith. Well, what it needs is a new stools dock and barrel. That looked very much like making a new one! You had better begin de novo. The old Law had for its token the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the distinguishing ordinance of the New Covenant goes much further.

What does Christ say to His people in the act of Baptism? He says, You are dead. You must be buried and must rise into newness of life. Baptism cannot do this, but it sets forth our need of the death of the old nature and of resurrection into new life. We must be born againnot washed, not cleansed, not mended upbut made new creatures in Christ Jesus. And every man who believes in Jesus has undergone that wondrous change! He is not born of blood, that is not born according to the natural way of birth. He is born in a new, celestial manner. He is not born of the will of the fleshmans bad carnal willnor of the will of man, mans best will, for the will of man, when it has done all it can, has done nothing at all savingly. If you were born of the will of man, it would not answer the purposeborn not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

We need renewal by a supernatural power. God alone can create and God alone can new-create. To make a new creature is a greater wonder than to make a world, because when God made a world there was nothing to stand in His way. But when He makes a new creature there is the old creature in conflict with Him. If I may be allowed to commit so palpable an error of speech, I would say it takes double Omnipotence to re-create! We must be born from above, but we are saved if we have believed in the Lord Jesus. God grant that if any here have not believed, the new birth may be given themand faith in Christ Jesus.

IV. Now, lastly, lest I weary you, FAITH RAISES THE BELIEVER TO THE NOBLEST CONCEIVABLE CONDITION. The man who has received

Christ has undergone a new birth which fits him to be a child of God. Now, note, first, the inconceivable honor of being a child of God. Ah, if all the degrees, dignities, honors and titles that were ever conferred by men could be put into a heap, they would not make enough of real honor to be seen by a microscopecompared with the glory that belongs to the humblest, poorest and most despised son of God!

Son of God! Unto which of the angels did He say at any time, You are My Son, this day have I begotten You? I know the text applies to Christ, but it applies, also, to all His people. His angels are servantsthey are not sons. It is their delight to keep watch and ward about us, as servants do over young princes of the blood. They shall bear You up in their hands, lest You dash Your foot against a stone. About the child of God there is even, here, a splendor which is none the less bright because carnal eyes cannot see it. It is like the splendor of Godinvisible because too excessive for eyes to see.

I will picture a child of God, if you please, a daughter of Zion. She is a poor seamstress. She has stitched a shroud as well as a shirt and she lies upstairs dying. You would not like to fare as she does. She dwells in a wretched little room. It is scantily furnished. The bed is hard and she lies there in agony. She can scarcely breathe. She gasps for life. She is very poor and those upon whom she is depending have begun to feel her a burden and sometimes say hard words to her. This is a gloomy place, is it not? Come here. I will touch your eyes as the Prophet did the eyes of his servant. And what do you see? You see one of the members of Christs body struggling for the last timeand about to win the victory!

Listen to her! She tells you that Christ is with her! Do you see Him? There He stands in the deepest sympathy, bending over His beloved, smiling upon a soul that He has chosen from before the foundations of the worlda daughter upon whom He has put a garment without spot, meet for royal wear! She is a Kings daughter! Look about the room. Angels are there, they are waiting all around her, waiting to take her Home! The Holy Spirit, Himself, is within her soul. Do you see the light of His consolations and revelations? If your eyes are open, you can see it. Yes, the Father Himself is here, for He is never away from the deathbeds of His children! Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints. She has grown worse. Her eyes are dim. Her voice is feeble. Listen to her! I am picturing no fancy sceneI have heard it!

She is just about to enter into Life, and she cries  
*And when you hear my heart-strings break, How sweet my minutes roll!   
A mortal paleness on my cheek,   
But Glory in my soul!*

If she has strength enough left, you will hear her sing   
*Midst darkest shades, if He appears,   
My dawning is begun;   
He is my souls bright morning star,   
And He my rising sun.*

Do not talk to me of Joan of Arc! This is the true heroine! She is battling with Death and singing while she dies. Fear? She has long forgotten what that means. Doubt? It is banished! Distress? Despondency? She has left them all behind. She is a Believer! She has received Jesus and she has power to be a child of God! O, the honor and dignity of being born from above!

Now, note again the safety of this birth. If you are a child of God, how safe you are! I am sure there is no father and mother here that would let any harm come to their children. None of us would if we could protect them. Do you think God will suffer His children to be harmed? He will cover them with His feathers and under His wings shall they trust. His Truth shall be their shield and buckler. There shall no evil befall them neither shall any plague come near their dwelling. I, the Lord, do keep it. I will water it every moment lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day. I give unto My sheep eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of My hand. My Father which gave them Me is greater than all, and none is able to pluck them out of My Fathers hand.

*Safe in the arms of Jesus.*   
Well may you sing that, for so you are if you are the children of God!

And, last of all, though much more might be said, what happiness this brings to a man to know that he is a child of God. I remember, some 22 years ago, being waited upon by a Mormon who wanted to convince me of the Divine mission of Joseph Smith. And after hearing some of his talk, I said, Sir, would you kindly tell me what you have to offer me and how I am to get it? I will listen to you if you will let me tell you

afterwards what I have to offer you and the way to it. I heard him with a great deal of patience. He listened to me not quite so patiently, but when I had done he saluted me thus, If what you say is true, you ought to be the happiest man in the world! To which I replied, Sir, you are correct. I ought to be and, more, I am! And so I left him.

And so I am, and so is every child of God that lives up to his privilege. You are a child of Godforgiven, accepted, belovedwhat more do you need? In the name of goodness, what more do you need? If a man were to become an imperial prince, would he say, I need more? My dear Man, what more can you need? If you are a son of God, what more can you ask? I remember the timeperhaps you remember it for yourselfwhen I was in bondage under sin and I thought I should be sent to Hell. If the Lord had said to me, I will forgive you, but you must live on bread and water till you die, I would have clapped my hands for joy! I would have said, Lord, do but save me. If I can get rid of my sins, the very hardest lot will be a pleasure to me. Let us never complain, since we are possessors of salvation. The joy of the Lord is your strength. Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, rejoice.

Remember this as a practical word. There is an old French proverb which says, Nobility obliges. There is an obligation upon nobles. You do not expect to see great princes sweeping the street crossing. You would

not expect to hear of Her Majesty the Queen acting like a milkmaid. Well, now, if you are a son of God, you must act like it! If I hear of a man who says, I am a child of God, and he gives short weight and is hard in his bargainsI am ashamed of him! He a son of God? He who must make money! And hold it, and keep it? He, a son of God? He is not very much like his Father! Son of God? And yet sharp, quick-tempered, angry, spiteful! He is not very much like his Father. A child of God and do a mean thing? My dear Brothers and Sisters, what are you? A son of God and tell a lie?

A son of God and afraid of anybody? A son of God and cannot look your fellow man in the face without a blush? A son of God and at home a tyrant? Such conduct will never bear a thoughtand he who is guilty of it gravely offends. When the great Emperor Napoleon was in his power, if a member of his family married below his rank, he was made to know the emperors anger, for members of the imperial house were under bonds of honor to keep up their dignity. You girls here, who are daughters of God, dare you marry out of the imperial family? Never do that! Take care that you are not unequally yoked. When a king was taken prisoner, Alexander asked him how he would be treated, and he said, Like a king.

Christian, act like a king! When a quarrelsome person offends us, we should say in our heart, I would have quarreled with you, but I could not stoop to it. I am a child of God. I read a bitter remark of Guizots to his enemies the other day, which ran something like this, Come up the steps and mount as high as you can. And when you reach the top you will be beneath my contempt. So oftentimes may the child of God think of the world and all the shams, and all the temptations which are in it, I have a great work. How can I come down to you? I am a son of God. My conversation is in Heaven! I cannot leave my position to come down to you.

Walk as children of light. What manner of persons ought you to be in all holy conversation and godliness? You are a peculiar people, a royal priesthood, a chosen generation, zealous for good works. Do not demean yourselves! Go your way and may the Spirit of your Father rest upon you. Amen and amen.

PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON1 John 3. HYMNS FROM OUR OWN HYMN BOOK533, 448.   
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THE SIMPLICITY AND SUBLIMITY OF SALVATION   
NO. 2259

**INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS-DAY, JUNE 5, 1892. DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON THURSDAY EVENING, MARCH 6, 1890.

**He came unto His own, and His own received Him not. But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. John 1:11-13.**

EVERYTHING here is simple. Everything is sublime. Here is that simple Gospel by which the most ignorant may be saved! Here are profundities in which the best-instructed may find themselves beyond their depth. Here are those everlasting hills of Divine Truth which man cannot climb! Yet here is that plain path in which the wayfaring man, though a fool, need nor err, nor lose his way. I always feel that I have no time to spare for critical and captious persons. If they will not believe, neither shall they be established. They must take the consequences of their unbelief. But I can spare all day and all night for an anxious enquirerfor one who is blinded by the very blaze of the heavenly Light of God that shines on him and who seems to lose his way by reason of the very plainness of the road that lies before him! In this most simple text are some of the deep things of God and there are souls here that are puzzled by what are simplicities to some of us. And therefore my one aim shall be to handle this text as to help and encourage and cheer some who would gladly touch the hem of the Masters garment, but cannot for the press of many difficulties and grave questions which rise before their minds!

Let us go to the text at once and notice, first, a matter which is very simpleAs many as received Him...even to them that believe on His name. Secondly, a matter which is very delightfulto them gave He power to become the sons of God. And thirdly, a matter which is very mysteriousWhich were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

I. Here is, first, A MATTER WHICH IS VERY SIMPLEreceiving Christ and believing on His name. Oh, that many here may be able to say, Yes, I understand that simple matter. That is the way in which I found eternal life!

The simple matter of which John here speaks is receiving Christ, or, in other words, believing on His name.   
Receiving Christ is a distinctive act. He came unto His own, and His own received Him not. The very people you would have thought would have eagerly welcomed Christ did not do so! But here and there a man stood apart from the rest, or a woman came out from her surroundings, and each of these said, I receive Christ as the Messiah. You will never go to Heaven in a crowd! The crowd goes down the broad road to destruction, but the way which leads to life eternal is a narrow way, and few there are that find it. They that go to Heaven must come out one by one and say to Him that sits at the wicket-gate, Set my name down, Sir, as a pilgrim to the Celestial City. They who would enter into life must fight as well as run, for it is an uphill fight all the wayand few there are that fight it out to the end and win the crown of the victors.   
Those who received Christ were different from those who did not receive Himthey were as different as white is from black, or light from darkness. They took a distinctive step, separated themselves from others and came out and received Him whom others would not receive. Have you taken such a step, dear Friend? Can you say, Yes, let others do as they will, but as for me, Christ is all my salvation and all my desireand at all hazards I am quite content to be counted singular and to stand alone. I have lifted my hands to Heaven and I cannot draw back. Whatever others may do, I say, Christ for me?   
As it was a distinctive act, so it was a personal oneTo as many as received Him. They had to receive Christ, each one, by his own act and deed. Even to them that believe on His name. Believing is the distinct act of a person. I cannot believe for you any more than you can believe for me! That is clearly impossible. There can be no such thing as sponsorship in receiving Christ, or in faith. If you are an unbeliever, your father and mother may be the most eminent saints, but their faith does not overlap and cover your unbelief. You must believe for yourself. I have had to even remind some that the Holy Spirit, Himself, cannot believe for them. He works faith in you, but you have to believe! The faith must be your own distinct mental act. Faith is the gift of God, but God does not believe for ushow could He? It is for you distinctly to believe. Come, dear Hearer, have you been trying to put up with a national faith? A national faith is a mere sham! Or have you tried to think that you possess the family faith? Oh, we are all Christians, you know! Yes, you are all hypocritesthat is what that comes to! Unless each one is a Christian for himself, he is a Christian only in nameand that is to be a hypocrite. Oh, that we might have the certainty that we have each one laid our sins on Jesus, the spotless Lamb of God! God grant that if we have never done so before, we may do so this very moment!   
Mark, next, that as it was a distinctive and personal act, so it related to a Person. I find that the text runs thus, He came unto His own, and His own received Him not. But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the Sons of God, even to them that believe on His name. That religion which leaves out the Person of Christ has left out the essential point. You are not saved by believing a doctrine, though it is well for you to believe it if it is true. You are not saved by practicing an ordinance, though you should practice it if you are one of those to whom it belongs. You are not saved by any belief except thisbelieving on Christs name and receiving Him. I take in a body of divinity, says one. Do you? There is no body of divinity that I know of but Christ, the Son of God in human flesh, living, bleeding, dying, risen, ascended, soon to comeyou must lean on Himfor the promise is only to as many as receive Him.

This reception of Christ consisted in faith in HimAs many as received Him...even to them that believe on His name. He was a stranger and they took Him in. He was food and they took Him in and fed on Him. He was living water and they received Him, drank Him up, took Him into themselves. He was light and they received the light. He was life and they received the life, and they lived by what they received. As the empty cup receives from the flowing fountain, so do we receive Christ into our emptiness. We, being poor, naked and miserable, come to Him, and we receive riches, clothing, and happiness in Him! Salvation comes by receiving Christ!   
I know what you have been trying to doyou have been trying to give Christ something. Let me caution you against a very common expression. I hear converts continually told to give their hearts to Jesus. It is quite correct and I hope they will do so. But your first concern must be not what you give to Jesus, but what Jesus gives to you! You must take Him from Himself as a gift to youthen will you truly give your heart to Him. The first act and, indeed, the underlying act all along the way, is to receive, to imbibe, to take in Christand that is called believing on His name. Note that, name. It is not believing a fanciful Christ, for there are many christs, nowadaysas many christs as there are books, nearlyfor every writer seems to make a christ of his own. But the christ that men make up will not save you! The only Christ who can save you is the Christ of God, that Christ who, in the synagogue at Nazareth, found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the Gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.  
You are to believe on the Christ as He is revealed in the Scriptures. You are to take Him as you find Him herenot as Renan, not as Strauss, or anybody else pictures of Himbut as you find Him here. As God reveals Him you are to believe on His nameThe Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Emmanuel, God With Us; Jesus, saving from sin; Christ anointed of the Father. You are to believe on His name, not on the Christ of Rome, nor the Christ of Canterbury, but the Christ of Jerusalem, the Christ of the eternal Glory! Not a christ of a dreamy prophecy with which some are defaming the true prophetic spirit of the Word, no christ of idealism, no man-made christ, but the eternal God, Incarnate in human flesh, as He is here pictured by Psalmist, Prophet, Evangelist, Apostle, very God of very God, yet truly Man, suffering in your place, bearing the sin of men in His own body on the Cross. It is believing in this Christ that will effectually save your soul! To believe is to trust. Prove that you believe in Christ by risking everything upon Him   
*Upon a life I did not live,   
Upon a death I did not die,   
I risk my whole eternity.*   
On Him who lived for me and died for me, and rose again for me, and has gone into Heaven for meon Him I throw the whole weight of past, present, future and every interest that belongs to my soul, for time and for eternity!   
This is a very simple matter and I have noticed a great many sneers at this simple faithand a great many depreciatory remarks concerning it, but, let me tell you, there is nothing like it under Heaven! Possessing this faith will prove you to be a son of Godnothing short of it ever will. To as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become sons of God, and He has given that power to nobody else! This will prove you to be absolved, forgiven. There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus. But if you have no faith in Christ Jesus, the wrath of God abides on you! Because you have not believed on the Son of God, you are condemned already! One grain of this faith is worth more than a diamond the size of the worldyes, though you should thread such jewels together, as many as the stars of Heaven for number, they would be worth nothing compared with the smallest atom of faith in Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God!   
But where does this wonderful power of faith come from? Not from the faith, but from Him on whom it leans! What power Christ has! The power of His Manhood suffering, the power of His Godhead bowing on the Cross, the power of the God-Man, the Mediator, surrendering Himself as the greatest Sacrifice for sin! Therefore, he who touches this has touched the springs of Omnipotence! He who comes, by faith, into contact with Christ, has come into contact with boundless love, power, mercy and Grace. I marvel not at anything that faith brings when it deals with Christ! You have a little key, a little rusty key, and you say, By use of this key I can get all the gold that I need. Yes, but where is the box to which you go for the gold? When you show me and I see that it is a great chamber filled full of gold and silver, I can understand how your little key can enrich you when it opens the door into such a treasury. If faith is the key which unlocks the fullness of God, for it pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell, then I can understand why faith brings such boundless blessings to him who has it. Salvation is a very simple business. God help us to look at it simply and practicallyand to receive Christ and believe on His name!   
II. Now, secondly, here is A MATTER WHICH IS VERY DELIGHTFUL To them gave He power to become sons of God.   
If I had a week to preach from this text, I think that I should be able to get through the first head, but at this time I can only throw out just a few hints. Look at the great and delightful blessing which comes to us by our faith in Christ. We give Christ our faith and He gives us power to become sons of God! The authority, liberty, privilege, rightsomething more than mere strength or forceto be sons of God!   
When we believe in Jesus, He indicates to us the Great Fathers willingness to let us be His sons. We who were prodigals, far away from Him, perceive that when we receive Christthe Father, who gave us Christis willing to take us to be His sons. He would not have yielded up His OnlyBegotten if He had not willed to take us into His family!   
When we believe in Jesus, He bestows on us the status of sons. We were slaves beforenow we are sons! We were strangers, aliens, enemies and every word that means an evil thing might have been applied to us! But when we laid hold on Christ, we were regarded as the sons of God, as a man in Rome, when he as adopted by some great citizen and publicly acknowledged in the forum as being, from that day forward, that mans son, was regarded as such, so, as soon as we believe in Jesus, we get the status of sons! Beloved, now we are the sons of God.   
Then Christ does something more for us. He gives us Grace to feel our sonship. As we sang just now   
*My faith shall Abba, Father, cry,   
And You the kindred own.*   
God acknowledges us as His children and we acknowledge Him as our Father and, therefore, Our Father, which are in Heaven, is no meaningless expression, but it comes welling up from the depths of our heart!   
Having given us Grace to feel sonship, Christ gives us the Nature of our Father. He gives us power to become the sons of God. We get more and more like God in righteousness and true holiness. By His Divine Spirit, shed abroad in our hearts, we become more and more the children of our Father who is in Heaven, who does good to the undeserving and the unthankful, and whose heart overflows with love even to those who love Him not.   
When this Nature of sons shall be fully developed, Christ will bestow His glory upon us. We shall be in Heaven, not in the rear rank, as servants, but nearest to the eternal Throne of God. Unto angels He has never said, You are My sons, but He has called us sons, poor creatures of the dust who believe in Jesus! And we shall have all the honor, joy, privileges and delight that belong to the princes of the blood royal of Heaven members of the imperial House of Godin that day when the King shall manifest Himself in His own palace!   
Some of us could draw parallels about being made sons, from our own lives. You were once a very tiny child, but you were a son, then, as much as you are now. So is it with you who have only just begun to believe in ChristHe has given you authority and right to become sons of God. Very early in our life, our father went down to the registrars office and wrote our name in the roll as his sons. We do not remember that, it was so long ago, but he did it and he also wrote our name in the Family Bible, even as our Father in Heaven has enrolled our names in the Lambs Book of Life! You recollect that, as a child, you did not go into the kitchen to dine with the servants, but you took your seat at the table. It was a very little chair in which you first sat at the table, but, as you grew bigger, you always went to the table, because you were a son.   
The servants in the house were much bigger than you and they could do a great many things that you could not do, and your father paid them wages. He never paid you anythey were not his sonsbut you were. If they had put on your clothes, they would not have been his sons. You had privileges that they had not. I remember that, in the parish where my home was, on a certain day in the year, the Church bell rang and everybody went to receive a penny roll. Every child had one and I remember having mine. I claimed it as a privilege because I was my fathers son. I think there were six of us, who all had a rollevery child in the parish had one. So there are a number of privileges that come to us very early in our Christian life, and we mean to have them, first, because our Lord Jesus Christ has given us the right to have them and, next, because if we do not take what He bought for us, it will be robbing Him and wasting His substance! As He has paid for it all and has given us the right to have it, let us take it!

You were put in school because you were a son. You did not like it. I daresay that you would rather have stayed at home at play. And you had a touch of the rod, sometimes, because you were a son. That was one of your privileges, for what son is he whom the father chastens not? One day you were in the street with other boys, doing wrong, and your father came along and punished you. He did not touch your companions, for they were not his sons. You smile at those little things, but you did not, at the time, count your punishments as privilegesbut they were. When the chastening of the Lord comes, call it a privilege, for that is what it is! There is no greater mercy that I know of on earth than good health unless it is sicknessand that has often been a greater mercy to me than health!   
It is a good thing to be without a trouble, but it is a better thing to have a trouble and know how to get Grace enough to bear it. I am not so much afraid of the devil when he roars, as I am when he pretends to be asleep. I think that, oftentimes, a roaring devil keeps us awakeand the troubles of this life stir us up to go to God in prayerand that which looks to us as bad turns to our good. We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to His purpose. III. Now I come to my last point, that is, A MATTER WHICH IS MYSTERIOUS. We are not only given the status of children and the privilege of being called sons, but this mysterious matter is one of heavenly birth Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.   
This new birth is absolutely necessary. If we are ever to be numbered among Gods children, we must be born again! Born from above. We were born in sin, born children of wrath, even as othersto be Gods children, it is absolutely necessary that we should be born again!   
The change worked thereby is wonderfully radical. It is not a mere outside washing, nor any touching up and repairing. It is a total renovation. Born again? I cannot express to you all that the change means, it is so deep, so thorough, so complete.   
It is also intensely mysterious. What must it be to be born again? I cannot understand it. Says one. Nicodemus was a teacher in Israel and he did not understand it. Does anybody understand it? Does anybody understand his first birth? What do we know of it? And this second birth? Some of us have passed through it and know that we have, and remember well the pangs of that birth, yet we cannot describe the movements of the Spirit of God by which we were formed anew, and made new creatures in Christ Jesus, according to that Word from Him who sits on the Throne, Behold, I make all things new! It is a great mystery.   
Certainly it is entirely superhuman. We cannot contribute to it. Man cannot make himself to be born again. His first birth is not of himself and his second birth is not one jot more so. It is a work of the Holy Spirit, a work of God! It is a new creationit is a quickeningit is a miracle from beginning to end!   
Here is the point to which I call your special attention, it is assuredly ours. Many of us here have been born again. We know that we have and herein lies the evidence of it, As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name, which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. If you believe on Christs name, you are born of God! If you have received Christ into your soul, you have obtained that birth that comes not of blood, nor of the will of parents, nor of the will of man, but of God! You have passed from death unto life!   
Let no man sit down here and cover his face, and say, There is no hope for me. I cannot understand about this new birth. If you will take Christ, to have and to hold, henceforth and forever, as your ONLY trust and confidence, you have received that which no line of ancestors could ever give you, for it is not of blood. You possess that which no will of the father and mother could ever give you, for it is, not of the will of the flesh. You have that which your own will could not bring you, for it is, not of the will of man. You have that which only the Giver of Life can bestow, for it is, of God! You are born again, for you have received Christ and believed on His name. I do not urge you to look within, to try and see whether this new birth is there. Instead of looking within yourself, look to Him who hangs on yonder Cross, dying, the Just for the unjust, to bring us to God! Fix your eyes on Him and believe in Him. And when you see in yourself much that is evil, look to Him. And when doubts prevail, look to Him. And when your conscience tells you of your past sins, look to Him!   
I have to go through this story almost every day of the year and sometimes half a dozen times in a day. If there is a despairing soul anywhere within 20 miles, it will find me out, no matter whether I am at home, or at Mentone, or in any other part of the world! It will come from any distance, broken down, despairing, half insane, sometimes, and I have no medicine to prescribe except, Christ, Christ, ChristJesus Christ and Him crucified! Look away from yourselves and trust in Him! I go over and over and over with this and never get one jot further. Because I find that this medicine cures all soul sicknesses, while human quackery cures none! Christ alone is the one remedy for sin-sick souls! Receive Him! Believe on His name! We keep hammering at this. I can sympathize with Luther when he said, I have preached justification by faith so often, and I feel, sometimes, that you are so slow to receive it, that I could almost take the Bible and bang it into your heads! I am afraid that the Truth of God would not have entered their hearts if he had done so. This is what we aim atto get this one thought into a man, You are lost and, therefore, such an One as Christ came to save.   
One said to me just lately, Oh, Sir, I am the biggest sinner that ever lived! I replied, Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. But I have not any strength. While we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died. Oh, but, he said, I have been utterly ungodly. Christ died for the ungodly. But I am lost. Yes, I said, this is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. The Son of man has come to save that which was lost.   
I said to this man, You have the brush in your hand and at every stroke it looks as if you are quoting Scripture. You seem to be making yourself out to be the very man that Christ came to save! If you were to make yourself out to be good and excellent, I would give you this word Jesus did not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. He did not die for the good, but for the bad. He gave Himself for our sinsHe never gave Himself for our righteousness. He is a Savior. He has not come, yet, as a Rewarder of the righteousthat will be in His Second Advent. Now He comes as the great Forgiver of the guilty and the only Savior of the lost. Will you come to Him in that way?   
Oh, but, my friend said, I have nothing to bring to Christ. No, I said, I know that you have notbut Christ has everything. Sir, he said, you do not know me, otherwise you would not talk to me like this. And I said, No, and you do not know yourselffor you are worse than you think you are, though you think that you are bad enough in all conscience. But be you as bad as you may, Jesus Christ came on purpose to lift up from the dunghill those whom He sets among princes by His free, rich, Sovereign Grace.   
Oh, come and believe in Him, poor Sinner! I feel that if I had all your souls, I would believe in Christ for their salvation! I would trust Him to save a million souls if I had them, for He is mighty to save! There can be no limit to His power to forgive! There can be no limit to the merit of His precious blood! There can be no boundary to the efficacy of His plea before the Throne of God! Only trust Him and you will be saved! May His gracious Spirit lead you to do so now, for Christs sake! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON   
**JOHN 1:1-34**

May the Holy Spirit, who inspired these Words, inspire us through them as we read them!   
Verse 1. In the beginning was the Word. The Divine Logos, whom we know as the Christ of God. In the beginning was the Word. The first words of this Gospel remind us of the first words of the Old Testament In the beginning God created the Heaven and the earth. Even then the Word WasHe existed before all time, even from everlasting.   
1. And the Word was with God, and the Word was God. I know not how the Deity of Christ can be more plainly declared than in His eternal duration. He is from the beginning. In His glory He was with God. In His Nature He was God.   
2. The same was in the beginning with God. As we have been singing *Before sin was born, or Satan fell,*   
before there was a creation that could fall, the same was in the beginning with God.   
3. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made. He that hung upon the Cross was the Maker of all worlds. He that came as an Infant, for our sake, was the Infinite. How low He stooped! How high He must have been that He could stoop so low!   
4. In His was life. Essentially, Eternally.   
4, 5. And the light was the light of men. And the light shines in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. It never has done so; it never will. You may sometimes call the darkness, the ignorance of men, or the sin of men. If you like, you may call it the wisdom of men and the righteousness of men, for that is only another form of the same darkness. The light shines in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.   
6. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. How very different is the style of this verse from the one that precedes it! How grand, how sublime, are the Evangelists words when he speaks of Jesus! How truly human he becomes, how he dips his pen in ordinary ink when he writes, There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. Yet that was a noble testimony to the herald of Christ. John the Baptist was a man sent from God.

7. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through Him might believe. Dear Friends, if you and I know our real destiny and are the servants of God, we are sent that men might, through us, believe in Jesus. John was a special witness, but we ought all to be witnesses to complete the chain of testimony. Every Christian should reckon that he is sent from God to bear witness to the great Light, that, through Him, men might believe.

8, 9. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light that was the true Light, which lights every man that comes into the world. There was no light from John except what he reflected from his Lord. All the Light of God comes from Jesus. Every man who comes into the world with any Light borrows his Light from Christ. There is no other Light there can be no other. He is the Light of the World.

10. He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not. This is a sad verse. He was a stranger in His own house! He was unknown amidst His own handiwork. Men whom He had made, made nothing of Him. The world knew Him notdid not recognize Him.

11. He came unto His own, and His own received Him not. That favored circle, the Jewish nation, where Revelation had been giveneven there, there was no place for Him. He must be despised and rejected even by His own nation!

12, 13. But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. To receive Christ, a man must be born of God. It is the simplest thing in all the world, one would think, to open the door of the heart and let Him in but no man lets Christ into his heart till, first, God has made him to be born againborn from above.

14. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory of the Only-Begotten of the Father), full of Grace and Truth. They who saw Christ on earth were highly privileged, but it is a spiritual sight of Him that is to be desiredand even now we can have that! How full of Grace, how full of Truth He is to all those who are privileged to behold Him!

15, 16. John bore witness of Him, and cried, saying, This was He of whom I spoke, He that comes after me is preferred before me: for He was before me. And of His fullness have we all received, and Grace for Grace. I wish that we could all say that. Even out of this company, many can say it and, linking our hands with those who have gone before us, and those who are still with us in the faith, we say unitedly, Of His fullness have we all received, and we hope to receive from it, again, tonight, for it is still His fullness! There is never a trace of declining in Him. It was fullness when the first sinner came to Him and it is still fullnessit will be fullness to the very end. And Grace for Grace. We get Grace to reach out to another Grace, each Grace becoming a steppingstone to something higher! I do not believe in our rising on the steppingstones of our dead selves. They are poor stonesthey all lead downwards. The steppingstones of the living Christ lead upwards! Grace for Grace, Grace upon Grace, till Grace is crowned with Glory!

17. For the Law was given by Moses, but Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ. We know that the Law came by Moses. The Law has often burdened us, crushed us, convinced us, condemned us. Let us be equally clear that Grace and the Truth of God come by this Divine channel, Jesus Christ.

18. No man has seen God at any time; the only- begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him. We do not need to see God apart from Christ. I am perfectly satisfied to see the Eternal Light through His own chosen Medium, Christ Jesus. Apart from that Medium, the light might blind my eyes! No man has seen God at any time. Who can look on the sun? What mind can look on God? But Christ does not hide the FatherHe manifests Him. The only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.

19 - 23. And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who are you? And he confessed and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ. And they asked him, What then? Are you Elijah? And he said, I am not. Are you the Prophet? And he answered, No. Then said they unto him, Who are you? That we may give an answer to them that sent us. What say you of yourself? He said, I am the voicenot, I am the Word, butI am the voice. Christ is the essential Wordwe are but the voice to make that Word of God sound across the desert of human life.

23. Of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the Prophet Isaiah. You see, even as a voice, John was not original. That straining after originality of which we see so much of today, finds no warrant among the true servants of God. Even though John is only a voice, yet he is a voice that quotes the Scriptures: Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the Prophet Isaiah. The more of Scripture we can voice, the better. Our words, what are they? They are but air. His Word, what is it? It is, Grace and Truth. May we continually be lending a voice to the great Words of God that have gone before!

24 - 27. And they which were sent were of the Pharisees. And they asked him, and said unto him, Why do you baptize, then, if you are not that Christ, nor Elijah, neither that Prophet? John answered them, saying, I baptize with water: but there stands One among you, whom you know not; He it is, who, coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoelace I am not worthy to unloose. Ah, Dear Friends, although it was a lowly expression that John used, you and I often feel that we need something that goes even lower than that! What are we worthy to do for Christ? Yet there are times when, if there is a shoelace to be unloosed, we are too proud to stoop to do it! When there is something to be done that will bring no honor to us, we are too high and mighty to do it! O child of God, if you have ever been in that condition, be greatly ashamed of yourself! John was first in his day, the morning star of the Light of the Gospel, yet even he felt that he was not worthy to do the least thing for Christ. Where shall you and I put ourselves? Paul said that he was less than the least of all the saints. He ran away with a title that might have been very appropriate for us. Well, we must let him have it, I suppose, and we must try to find another like it. But if we cannot find suitable words, God help us to have the humble feeling, which is better still!

28, 29. These things were done in Bethabara beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing. The next day John saw Jesus coming unto him, and said, Behold the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world! John preached a sacrificial Savior, a sin-bearing Savior, a sin-atoning Savior. You and I have nothing else to preach. Let each of us say

*Tis all my business here below   
To cry, Behold the Lamb!*

30, 31. This is He of whom I said, After me comes a Man which is preferred before me: for He was before me. And I knew Him not. Although John knew the Savior, personally, he did not know Him officially. He had a token given to him by God, by which he was to know the Messiah, and he did not officially know Him till he had that token fulfilled.

31 - 33. But that He should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water. And John bore record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from Heaven like a dove, and it abode upon Him. And I knew Him not: but He that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom you shall see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, the same is He which baptizes with the Holy Spirit. John could not know of his own judgment. No doubt he was morally certain that Jesus was the Christ. He had been brought up with Him. He knew His mother, he had heard of His wondrous birth. John and Jesus must have been together often, but he was not to use his own judgment in this case, but to wait for the sign from Heaven. And until he witnessed it, he did not say a word about it. When he saw the Holy Spirit descend upon Him, then he knew that it was even He!

34. And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God. Hear you, then, the witness of John! The Christ, who came from Nazareth to be baptized of him in Jordan, He on whom the Holy Spirit descended like a dovethis is the Son of God. This is the sin-bearing Lamb! Oh, that you and I might fulfill Johns expectation, for he spoke that we might believe. He, being dead, yet speaks! May we believe his witness and be assured that this is the Son of God!

HYMNS FROM OUR OWN HYMN BOOK249, 549, 728. Adapted from The C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307 Sermon #1757 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

THE NEW YEARS GUEST   
NO. 1757

**A SERMON PREACHED ON LORDS-DAY AFTERNOON, DECEMBER 16, 1883,   
BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT MENTONE, BEFORE THE COMMUNION, TO A SMALL COMPANY OF BELIEVERS.

**I was a stranger, and you took Me in. Matthew 25:35.**

**But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name. John 1:12.**

I LATELY received a New Years card which suggested to me the topic on which I am about to speak to you. The designer of the card has, with holy insight, seen the relation of the two texts to each other and rendered both of them eminently suggestive by placing them together. There is freshness in the thought that, by receiving Jesus as a stranger, our believing hospitality works in us a Divine capacity and we thereby receive power to become the sons of God. The connection suggested between the two Inspired words is really existent and by no means strained or fanciful, as you will see by reading the context of the passage in JohnHe was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not. So He was a stranger in the world which He Himself had made! He came unto His own, and His own received Him not. So He was a stranger among the people whom He had set apart for His own by many deeds of mercy! But as many as received Himthat is to say, gave entertainment to this blessed Strangerto them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name.

I thought that this might prove to be a suitable and salutary passage to discourse upon at the beginning of a New Year, for this is a season of hospitality and some among our friends will think it well to commence a New Year by saying to the Lord Jesus, Come in, You blessed of the Lord; why do You stand outside? This Divine stranger has knocked at many doors till His head is wet with dew and His locks with the drops of the night. And now I trust there are some who will rise up and open unto Him so that at the end of the year they may say with Job, The stranger did not lodge in the street: but I opened my doors to the traveler. Verily, in so doing, you will not only entertain angels unawares, but you will be receiving the Lord of angels!

The day in which you receive Him shall be the beginning of years to youit shall be the first of a series of years which, whether they are few or many, shall be, each one, in the best sense happy! I would say a few words, first, about the Stranger taken in and then, about the Stranger making strangers into sons.

I. THE STRANGER TAKEN INthis is a simile given to us by our Lord, Himselfa royal metaphor presented to us from His own Throne. Note that the passage begins, I was hungry and you gave Me meat: I was thirsty and you gave Me drink. These are two good works which prove faith in Jesus and love of Him and, therefore, they are accepted, recorded and rewarded. But it is a distinct and memorable growth when it comes to, I was a stranger, and you took Me in. A place to stay is a larger gift than refreshment at the door. It is good, believingly, to do anything for Christ, however small, but it is a much better thing to give entertainment to Jesus within our souls, admitting Him into our minds and hearts.

We have not come to the full of what our Lord has a right to expect of us until we have given from our stores to Him by benefiting His poor and aiding His causethen we deliberately open the doors of our entire being to Him and install Him in our souls as an honored Guest! We must not be satisfied with giving Him cups of cold water, or morsels of bread, but we must constrain Him, saying, Abide with us. Our hearts must be as a Bethany, where, like Mary, Martha and Lazarus, we give our Master a grand welcome! Or as the house of Obededom where the Ark of the Lord may dwell in peace. Our prayer must be that of Abrahams, My Lord, if now I have found favor in Your sight, pass not away, I pray You, from Your servant.

The most important word of our text is stranger and its light casts a hue of strangeness over the whole passage. Here are three strange things. The first is, that the Lord Jesus should be a Stranger here below. Is it not a strange thing that, He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and yet He was a stranger in it? Yet is it not a whit more strange than true, for when He was born there was no room for Him in the inn? Inns had open doors for ordinary strangers, but not for Him, for He was a greater Stranger than any around Him. It was Bethlehem of David, the seat of the ancient family to which He belonged, but alas, He had become a Stranger unto His brethren, and an alien unto His mothers children! And no door was opened unto Him.

Soon there was no safe room for Him in the village, itself, for Herod the king sought the young Childs life and He must flee into Egypt, to be a Stranger in a strange land and worse than a strangeran exile and a fugitive from the land where, by birthright, He was king! On His return and in His public appearing, there was still no room for Him among the mass of the people. He came to His own Israelto whom Prophets had revealed Him and types had set Him forthbut they would have none of Him. He was despised and rejected of men. He was the Man whom men abhorred, whom they so much detested that they cried, Away with Him! Crucify Him! Crucify Him! Yes, the world so little knew Him that they must necessarily hang up the Lord of Glory on a Cross and put the Holy One and the Just to a felons death! Jew and Gentile alike conspired to prove how truly He was a strangerthe Jew said, As for this Fellow, we know not from where He is. And the Roman asked Him, Where are You from?

Now, that Christ should be such a Stranger was, indeed, a sadly singular thing, and yet we need not wonder, for how should a wicked, selfish world know Jesus or receive Him? The Lords own had been forewarned of this in ancient type, for long before the Lord appeared in the flesh, He had shown Himself as a Stranger to the faithful. He came in angelic form to Abraham and thus we read the storyAnd he lifted up his eyes and looked and, lo, three men stood by him: and when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground. And said, My Lord, if now I have found favor in Your sight, pass not away, I pray you, from Your servant: Let a little water, I pray You, be fetched, and wash Your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree: and I will fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort you your hearts.

The Lord, who stands out in the center of the three, was a Stranger, and the father of the faithful entertained Him, in type of what all the faithful of every age will do. This is He of whom Jeremiah said, O the hope of Israel, the Savior thereof in time of trouble, why should You be as a stranger in the land, and as a wayfaring man that turns aside to tarry for a night? Yet with this fair warning, it still remains sadly singular that, coming on an errand of mercy, our Lord should find so scant a welcome; should be so little known; so seldom recognized, so harshly entreated. Truly as Egypt made Israel to serve with rigor, so have we made this patient Stranger to serve with our sins and wearied Him with our iniquities.

The Son of Man had not where to lay His head. Luke says the barbarians showed Paul and his friends no little kindnessbut men were worse than barbarians to their Savior! Shall the servant be better treated than his master, or the disciple than his Lord? Behold, what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knows us not, because it knew Him not. Another strange thing is that we should be able to receive the Lord Jesus as a stranger. He has gone into Glory and will He always say of us, I was a stranger and you took Me in? Yes, He will say so, if we render to Him that spiritual hospitality of which He here speaks.

This can be done in several ways. Brothers and Sisters in Christ, for such I trust you are, we can receive Christ as a stranger when Believers are few and despised in any place. We may sojourn where worldliness abounds and religion is at a discountand it may need some courage to swear our faith in Jesus. Then have we an opportunity of winning the approving word, I was a stranger, and you took Me in. There is a sure proof of love in receiving our Lord as a stranger. If the Queen desired, again, to visit Mentone, every villa would be gladly placed at her disposal! But were she driven from her empire and reduced to be a poor stranger, hospitality to her would be a greater test of loyalty than it is today.

When Jesus is in low esteem in any place, and He sometimes is so, let us be all the more bold to acknowledge our allegiance to Him. I fear that many professors take their color from their company and are fellows with the irreligious and the unbelieving. These cry, Hosanna, with the multitude of the Lords admirers, but in heart they have no love to the Son of God. Our loyalty to Christ must never be a matter of latitude and longitudewe must love Him in every land, honor Him when the multitude disregard Himand we must speak of Him when all forget Him. Again, we have the Lords own warrant for saying that if we show brotherly kindness to a poor saint we entertain the Lord, Himself.

If we see Christians in need, or despised and ridiculed and we say, You are my Brother in Christ. It matters not what garb you wear, the name of Christ is named on you and I suffer with you. I will relieve your needs and share your reproach, then the glorious Lord, Himself, will say to us at the last, Inasmuch as you have done it unto one of the least of these, My brethren, you have done it unto Me. It does seem passing strange, though I thus speak, that you and I should still be able to entertain our Lord and yet it is so! We do not wonder that the righteous, with a humble truthfulness exclaim, Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You? Or thirsty and gave You drink? When did we see You a stranger and took You in? Neither are we free from admiring surprise. We also cry, Will God in very deed dwell with men upon the earth? Will He accept hospitality at our hands? It is even so!

Again, we may entertain the Stranger, Christ, by holding fast to His faithful Word when the doctrines taught by Himself and His Apostles are in ill repute. Nowadays the Truth which God has revealed seems of less account with men than their own thoughts and dreams! And they who still believe Christs faithful Word shall have it said of them, I was a stranger and you took Me in. When you see the revealed Truth of God, as it were, wandering about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented, and no man says a good word for it, then is the hour come to acknowledge it because it is Christs Truthand to prove your fidelity by counting the reproach of Christ greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt!

Oh, scorn on those who only believe what everybody else believes because they must be in the swim with the majority! These are but dead fish borne of the current and they will be washed away to a shameful end! If living fish swim against the stream, so do living Christians pursue Christs Truth against the set and current of the times, defying alike the ignorance and the culture of the age! It is the Believers honor, the chivalry of a Christian, to be the steadfast friend of the Truth of God when all other men have forsaken it. So, also, when Christs precepts are disregarded, His day forgotten and His worship neglected, we can come in, take up our cross and follow Himand so receive Him as a stranger.

To be sure, some will say, Those people are fanatical Methodists, or strait-laced Presbyterians, but what of that? It matters nothing to us what the world thinks of us, for we are crucified to it and it to us! If our Lord has laid down a rule, it is ours to follow it and find rest unto our souls in so doing! Yes, and a special rest in doing it, when by so doing we are securing that blessed sentence, I was a stranger, and you took Me in. Death, itself, for His sake, would be a small matter if thereby we secured that priceless word!

Once more, that spiritual life which is the innermost receiving of Christthat new life which no man knows but he that has received it; that quickening of the Spirit which makes the Christian as much superior to ordinary men as men are above dumb, driven cattleif we receive that blessed gift, then shall we with emphasis be entertaining our Lord as a stranger. Profession is abundant, but the secret life is rare. The name to live is everywhere, but where is the life fully seen? To be rather than to talk; to enjoy rather than to pretend; to have Christ truly withinthis is not every mans attainment, but those who have it are among the God-like ones, the true sons of God!

A third strange thing is the fact that Jesus will deign to dwell in our hearts. Such a One as Jesus in such a one as I am? The King of Glory in a sinners bosom? This is a miracle of Divine Grace, yet the manner of it is simple enough. A humble, repenting faith opens the door and Jesus enters the heart at once. Love shuts the door with the hand of Penitence and holy Watchfulness keeps out intruders. Thus is the promise made good, If any man hears My voice, and opens the door, I will come in to him and will sup with him, and he with Me. Meditation, contemplation, prayer, praise and daily obedience keep the house in order for the Lord!

And then follows the consecration of our entire nature to His use as a templethe dedication of spirit, soul, body and all their powers, as holy vessels of the sanctuary! It is the writing of, Holiness unto the Lord, upon all that is about us till our everyday garments become vestments, our meals sacraments, our life a ministry and ourselves priests unto the Most High! Oh, the supreme condescension of this indwelling! He never dwelt in angels, but He resides in a contrite spirit! There is a world of meaning in the Redeemers words, I in them. May we know them as Paul translates them, Christ in you, the hope of glory.

II. A few words must suffice upon THE STRANGER MAKING STRANGERS INTO SONS. As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name. Yes, Beloved, the moment Christ is received into our hearts by faith, we are no more strangers and foreigners, but of the household of God, for the Lord adopts us and puts us among His children! It is a splendid act of Divine Grace, that He should take us, who were heirs of wrath, and make us heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ! Such honor have all the saints, even all that believe on His name.

There is more to followthe designation of sons brings with it a birth into the actual condition of sons. The privilege brings with it the power; the name is backed up and warranted by the naturefor the Spirit of God enters into us, when Christ comes, and causes us to be born again. To be adopted without being born again would be a lame blessing, but when we are both adopted and regenerated then have we the fullness of sonship and the Grace is made perfect towards us. Except a man is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. And this mysterious birth, which comes with the reception of Christ, makes us free, not only in the kingdom of God, but in the house and the heart of God!

Dont forget that when the Lord Jesus enters our hearts, there springs up between us and Him a living, loving, lasting union which seals our sonshipfor as we become one with the Son, we must be sons, also. Jesus puts it, My Father and your Father. It is the Spirit of His Son in our hearts by which we cry, Abba, Father. He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit. We are unto the Father even as Jesus is, as He says, You have loved them as You have loved Me. Thus you see that in receiving Jesus, we receive, as the Revised Version puts it, the right to become the sons of God.

Yet once morethe practical reception of Jesus into the life becomes a proof to ourselves and others that we are the sons of God, for it creates in us a likeness to God which is apparent and unquestionable. For look, although Jehovah, our God, is incomprehensible and Infinite, and His Glory is inconceivable in its splendor, yet this fact we know of Him, that in His bosom lies His Son, with whom He is always well-pleased. When we receive Jesus into our bosom, as one with us, and when our joy and delight are in Him, we do, in that matter, become like the Father. Having thus, with the Father, the same Object of love and delight, we are brought into fellowship with Him and begin to walk in the Light of God as He is in the Light.

A small window will let in the great sunmuch more will Jesus, as the blessed meeting place between our souls and Godlet in the Life, Light and Love of God into our souls, making us like God! Moreover, having received Jesus as a stranger, we feel a tenderness towards all strangers, for we see in their condition some resemblance to our own. We have love to all who, like ourselves, are strangers with God and sojourners, as all our fathers were, and thus again we are made like God, of whom it is written, The Lord preserves the strangers. Our God is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil. Our Lord Jesus, therefore, bade us be the children of our Father which is in Heaven, For He makes His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.

By becoming doers of good, we are known as children of the good God. Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God. A man is a son of God when he lives beyond himself by a thoughtful care for others; when his soul is not confined within the narrow circle of his own ribs, but goes abroad to bless those around him, however unworthy they may be. True children of God never see a lost one without seeking to save him; never hear of misery without longing to bestow comfort. You know the heart of a stranger, said the Lord to Israel. And so do we, for we were once captives, ourselves, and even now our choicest Friend is still a stranger, for whose sake we love all suffering men.

When Christ is in us, we search out opportunities for bringing prodigals, strangers and outcasts to the great Fathers house. Our love goes out to all mankind and our hands are closed against none if it is so that we are made like God, as little children are like their father. Oh, sweet result of entertaining the Son of God by faith! He dwells in us and we gaze upon Him in holy fellowship so that, we all with open face beholding as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

Love is of God and everyone that loves is born of God and knows God. May we daily feel the power of Jesus within our hearts, transforming our whole character and making us to be more and more manifestly the children of God! When our Lord asks, concerning us, What manner of men were they? may even His enemies and ours be compelled to answer, As You are, so were theyeach one resembled the children of a King. Then shall Jesus be admired in all them that believe, for men shall see in the children, the Divine Strangers handiwork.

Adapted from The C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307 Sermon #669 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

OPEN HEART FOR THE GREAT SAVIOR

NO. 669

**DELIVERED ON SUNDAY EVENING, DECEMBER 17, 1865, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name: who were born, not of blood,   
nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. John 1:12.**

DIVINE Truth is one, but it is many-sided. When you have looked at it from one point of view you may reverse your position, and, though the Truth at which you look will be the same, you will marvel at its freshness as seen from another aspect. This morning we sought to show you how Jesus Christ received sinners [Volume 11, Sermon #665Open House for All Comers.] Tonight it shall be our endeavor, as the Holy Spirit may enable us, to set forth how sinners receive Christ.

It is perfectly true that the work of salvation lies first and mainly in Jesus receiving sinners to Himself to pardon, to cleanse, to sanctify, to preserve, to make perfect. But, at the same time the sinner also receives Christ. There is an act on the sinners part by which, being constrained by Divine Grace, he opens his heart to the admission of Jesus Christ and Jesus enters in and dwells in the heart, and reigns and rules there. To a gracious readiness of heart to entertain the Friend who knocks at the door, we are brought by God the Holy Spirit, and then He sups with us and we with Him.

We shall take, tonight, the view of the subject opened up before us by this text. We shall begin by simply and shortly describing how the sinner receives Christ. Secondly, the privilege, or power, which is conferred as the result of this reception of Christ. And thirdly, the great change which is involved in the fact that the sinner has received Christ, the fact that the sinner has been born again from above, not of the will of man, but of God.

I. As briefly, then, as may be, and very simply, indeed, we will describe WHAT IT IS FOR THE SINNER TO RECEIVE CHRIST. This receiving Christ lies in several things. If a man would receive Christ he must, first of all, receive Him in His Person as He is revealed in the Sacred Scriptures. We are taught over and over again in Scripture that Jesus Christ is Immanuel, God with us, God manifest in the flesh, Jehovahs equal in fashion as a man.

The WORDthat Word of which it is said, the Word was Godwas made manifest in flesh among men, and they beheld His glory. Though He thought it not robbery to be equal with God, yet He made Himself of no reputation, but took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men. This was a new and startling doctrine when first preached to heathen sages, that God should take humanity into so intimate a connection with Himself, as really and truly to be Man and God in the same Person.

But it is a doctrine which must be received by you or else you cannot receive Christ. My Master will not be satisfied with the acknowledgment that His Character is lovely, His doctrine pure, and His moral teaching super-excellent. He will not be content with your admission that He is a Prophet greater than any Prophet that ever came before or after Him. He will not rest satisfied with your admission that He is a teacher sent from Heaven, and a Being who, on account of His virtues, is now peculiarly exalted in Heaven.

All this is well, but it is not enough! You must also believe that He, who as Man was born of the Virgin, and was dandled upon her lap at Bethlehem, was as God none other than the everlasting Lord, without beginning of days or end of years. You do not receive Christ in very deed and truth unless you believe in His proper humanity and actual Godhead. Indeed, what is there for you to receive if you do not receive this? A Savior who is not Divine can be no Savior for us! How can a mere man, however eminent, deliver his fellows from sins such as yours and mine? How can he bear the burden of our guilt any more than we can ourselves bear it, if there is no more about him than about any other singularly virtuous man?

An angel would stagger beneath the load of human criminality, and much more would this be the case with even a perfect man. It needed those mighty shouldersWhich bear the earths huge pillars up, to sustain the weight of human sin, and carry it into the wilderness of forgetfulness! You must receive Christ, in order to be saved by Him, as being God though man. But, my dear Friends, the mere belief of this doctrine will not save anybody! There are many persons who have no need to fear the curses of the Athanasian Creed, nor the test of any other dogmatic way of expressing the fact of the Deity of Christ. But they are, nevertheless, very far from having received Christ Jesus Himself! A man may believe another to be a clever physician, and yet if he has a personal objection to him, he may refuse to receive him as such.

If a man would receive Jesus rightly, he must, in the next place, accept Him in all His offices. Our blessed Lord has three main offices. We find Him spoken of as Prophet, Priest, and King, and men must be willing to take Him in each and all of the three. As a Prophet He teacheswhat He has received of God He manifests to man. Am I willing to abide by His teaching? Do I take His words, and the words which He delivered by His Apostles, as being my directory and rule? I have a certain doxy which some call, heterodoxy, but which, perhaps, I think to be orthodoxy. Can I sincerely say that Jesus Christ is the Dictator of my orthodoxy?

Do I take Him and His teaching to be the Truth by which I will abide? I find one Church holding one creed, and another Church holding another. Do I look at all these standards of faith, and say of them, I will follow them as far as they follow Christ, but neither to cardinal, bishop, synod, nor presbytery will I yield my faith? I must first know whether the teaching of these men is in accordance with the teaching of Him whom I take to be my Master and my Teacher. Whether you are Calvinists, or Arminians, or anything else, dear Friends, be first and chiefly Christians Christians following Christreceiving Him as the great Expositor to you of God, and of the great Truths of Revelation.

You will tell me you have your bodies of divinity. There never was but one body of divinity, and that was the body of the Man, Christ Jesus! Do you, abating all prejudices and self-formed opinions, receive our Lord as the great embodiment of Truth? The truest and the best system of theology is Jesus Christ! If you learn Him you have all Truthyou have nothing in excess, and nothing is omitted. He is the mold of Truth into which your prepared mind must be delivered to receive form and shape from His perfect wisdom. Our hearts must receive Him as the Truth of God

*You are the Truth, Your Word alone   
True wisdom can impart.   
To You I yield a willing mind,   
And open all my heart.*

If I receive Jesus as Prophet, I must also take Him as Priest. Herein, indeed, mainly lies His work. He came to purify men from sin. He stood before God offering a sacrifice of propitiation by which the guilt of man is removed. If I am not willing to receive Him as an atoning sacrifice, it is in vain for me to esteem Him as an exemplar. His Cross of Atonement is inseparable from Himself. We must not only glory in Christ but in Him Crucified, or else we shall surely be led forth with His enemies. Jesus must be my only ground of confidence for pardon. I must leave all human priests. I must have done with all trusting in priest-craft in any shape or form, whether it is in the Popish, Anglican, or any other fashion.

I must neither make myself a priest, nor look upon any other man as being priest for me. I must look upon Jesus Christ as being the only Priest in whom I confidefor, mark youmy Master claims the sole prerogative of priesthood and He only permits us, His people, to hold it as being in Him. And then we all, without exception, can sayHe has made us kings and priests unto God. But any special form of priesthood, peculiar to a certain class, is as alien to the spirit of Christianity as any dogma can possibly be. Every regenerated man becomes a priest by virtue of his union with Christ Jesus. But out of this union, it is treason to think of priesthood.

You have not received Christ as the truly regenerated children of God have received Him unless you have accepted Him as the Anointed of God, the only Priest in whom to trust for the salvation of your soul

*I other priests disclaim,   
And laws, and offerings, too.   
None but the bleeding Lamb   
The mighty work can do.   
He shall have all the praise, for He   
Has loved, and lived, and died for me.*

If I yield to the Lord Jesus Christ as Prophet and Priest, I must also give Him allegiance as my King. He will reign where He purifies. He is not content to teach me, but He will also govern me. What do you say, my Hearers? Will you give yourself up, body and soul, to be ruled absolutely by Christ? Shall His Laws be binding upon your conscience and carried out in your life?

Do you say now, as before the Searcher of all heartsI desire in everything to be guided by Him, to submit myself to His absolute control? You cannot really and truly receive the Savior unless you are willing to do this. God has not sent His Son to be the messenger of sin! He will forgive your past offenses, but you must in the future submit yourselves to His gentle sway. Kiss the Son, is one of the first Gospel commandsKiss the Son, lest He be angry, and you perish from the Way when His wrath is kindled but a little. Remember the doom of those men who said, We will not have this Man to reign over us.

Take His easy yoke. Bow before His Throne of love. Touch the silver scepter of His Divine Grace. He is your Lord, and worship Him. Crown Him in the palace of your soul and set Him on the throne of your affections, for He is the King of angels and should be the King of men

*My King supreme, to You I bow,   
A willing subject at Your feet.   
All other Lords I disavow,   
And to Your government submit.   
My Savior King this heart would love,   
And imitate the blest above.*

Can we, dear Friends, thus accept Christ tonight, as Prophet, Priest, and King? If not, it is idle to talk about receiving Jesus Christwe do not know Himand are not known of Him! Our Lord is not to be divided and parceled out. You must have Him altogether or not at all. You must admit Him in all His offices, or He will not come under your roof.

But a man may agree to all this and yet not receive Christ! All this is necessary as a steppingstone, but we must go on to something more. I must receive Jesus Christ as being all this to me. I must give myself to Him and take Him as mine, as having near relationship to me and influence upon me. Another mans Christ will not save you. He must be your Christ. You have been accustomed to go to a place of worship and you think, perhaps, Well, I have gone with the rest, and therefore it is all right with me. And when you have heard a sermon it has been addressed to the congregation in the plural and you have been content to get a little share of it, but a very little one, indeed.

Now, you have never heard aright unless the Truth has come to you in the singular number, as to you alone. The gate of salvation is too narrow for two persons to go through arm-in-arm. You must all singly and separately pass the portal of Eternal Life just as you did the portal of natural life. You must feel not only that such and such things are true, but that they are true to you. If you receive our dear Redeemer as a Prophet, He begins to exercise that office by telling you that you are naturally lost, ruined, and undone. Do you believe this? Do you believe it to be true of younot of chimney-sweeps, not of streetwalkers, not only of thieves in prison, but of youthat you are condemned under the Law of God? Do you take home the doctrine of the Fall, and of the depravity of human nature as being true to you?

He tells you, next, that the only way to remove your sin is by His precious blood. Has that blood any reference to you? Have you trusted it? Has it washed you from sin? You have not taken the Lord Jesus as a Priest unless you have believed in His blood as presenting a propitiation for your sins, and as cleansing you before the holy Presence of the Most High God. You have not truly accepted Jesus as King unless you have personally submitted yourself to Him. In everything else people are so selfish that nothing but personal possession will content them! Why are they not thus careful in religious matters?

They do not rejoice in the gold in the bank cellarsthey aspire to have a good account at their own bank account. They do not consider themselves fed because there may happen to be a fine dinner provided at the London Tavernthey wish to see a feast on their own tables. But in eternal matters of infinitely more importance, men are, alas, so satisfied with generalities. Yes! Oh yes, we are a Christian nation. Wonderfully so! Of course, we, as a family always go to a place of worship. We are not heathens! We were born in a Christian land. A Christian land. It is, we must all admit, a very Christian land!

Very Christian, indeed! Look at our gin palaces and our divorce courts! But what of that? How can national religion content private conscience any more than national wealth can console personal poverty? Still, the most of men care so little about their souls that they are satisfied with generalities! They do not come to particulars, to personalities. Why should they be so particular in other matters and not in religion? Why seek a personal interest in gold and land and estates, and then leave Heaven and the eternal world to be matters of universal speculation? You have not received Christ truly if you have not gripped Him with your own hands and claimed Him as your own!

You must get right hold of Him for yourselves. There is no receiving a thing unless the thing received is held by the receiver. Water is poured into a vessel and anything received is contained within the thing receiving it. So Christ Jesus must come right into you, into personal, conscious relationship with your own spirit so as to act upon you and influence you or else you have not received Him! I hope I shall not make what is very plain, very difficult.

One is sometimes afraid, in giving explanations, that one may do what a good Divine did with Bunyans Pilgrims Progress which he edited with explanatory notes. He went round among his flock and said to one good woman, Do you understand Mr. Bunyans Pilgrim? Oh yes, Sir, was the answer, very well, indeed. And I hope that one day I shall be able to understand your explanations. So, perhaps, you will say of me, that you understand the text very well, and you hope that one day you will be able to understand my explanations!

Well, I really do not know how to make it more plain. My desire is to say very distinctly that we must receive the Lord Jesus Christ as a Divine Beingreceive Him in all His officesand receive Him to ourselves in all those offices. The pith and marrow of receiving Christ we find in the next remark: we must trust Him. The true reception of Christ is explained in the text, Even to them that believe on His name. To receive then, is to believe, or, in other words, to credit, to rely upon, to trust.

Now this is the simplest matter in all the world, and yet, by reason of its simplicity, it is the hardest possible act for human nature to perform. So hard, that although faith still remains the act of man, it is an act which he never performs till he receives faith as the gift of God. We do not naturally care for a plan of salvation so simple and devoid of meritbut there it is and we cannot alter itnor ought we desire to do so. As many as trust Christ, to them He gives power to become the sons of God. The whole act of faith lies in the simple matter of believing that Jesus is Gods appointed Savior, and then throwing ourselves upon Him to save us.

You know what trust is in earthly matters. You rely upon a friend in cases of difficulty, and then you do not trouble yourself about the matter any more. A person offers to pay your debts and you go home and consider yourself out of debtyou trust the person. Now Jesus says to you, I have suffered for the sin of all Believers. God can now forgive sin and yet be a just God. He has punished Me instead of sinners who believe on Me. Trust Me. Rely upon Me and your reliance will be at once evidence to you that I died for youthat I carried your sinthat God punished Me for you. He, therefore, never can punish you because in justice He cannot punish both Substitute and offender for one and the same sin.

God can never punish Christ for your sin and then lay the sin at your door. He will not send your Substitute to the wars for you and then demand you to go for whom the Substitute has already gone. The act of trusting Jesus Christ is the act which brings a soul into a state of Grace and is the mark and evidence of our being bought with the blood of the Lord Jesus. Do you trust Him, dear Hearers? Then, if so, you receive Him. When the soul has thus trusted Christ there comes another form of reception. The outer golden door of faith being first opened, the inner pearly gate of affection is next thrown open. They who trust Christ, love Christ

*Sure I must love, or are my ears   
Still deaf, nor will my passions move?   
Lord! Melt this flinty heart to tears   
This heart shall yield to death or love.*

I do not love Christ first, and then trust Him. I, in the dawn of spiritual life, trust Him to save me. I find He does save me and I then love Him because He first loved me. I trust Him to deliver me out of the bondage of my daily sins. And then I find that I am stronger against those sins than I ever was beforethat I can tread a corruption under foot when I trust Jesus, which I could not battle with before I trusted Him. I find He really does come to my rescue, and therefore I then say to him, I love You, O my Helper and Friend. And from that time on Jesus Christ lives in my heart!

We cannot help using expressions such as, Christ living in us, Jesus formed in us, and the like, when talking about these things. And to spiritual men they are very simple, but to the carnal mind they are very difficult. Let us in a word expound them. Just as when a man is attached to a certain friend, that friend is said to, live in his heart. So Jesus lives in the hearts of His people because they love Him.

And, just as when a man has devoted himself to the pursuit of science, that science fills his soul, lives in his soul, makes an abode of it, makes a kingdom of it where it will rule and reign. So, love to Jesus, faith in Him, and devotion to His cause enter into the soul of the Believer and fill it, and thus that soul receives Him. The first door is the door of simple faitha door which has been opened in many a sinners heart by the loving hand of the Holy Spirita door, which we pray, may be opened in yours tonight. Oh, how gently does the door of faith turn on its hinges! A babe taught of God may push it open!

You may not understand all the doctrines of the Bible but you can understand thisif you trust in Jesus Christ you will be a son of God! You cannot perform a complex act of an educated mind. Sympathy with poetic imagery and enjoyment of metaphysical refinements are quite beyond you. But if the Holy Spirit teaches you, you will see that the act of faith is not a complex act, but a very simple one, indeed! It is so simple that children of three and four years of age have doubtless been capable of it. And there have been many persons but very little removed from absolute idiocy who have been able to believe.

A doctrine which needs to be reasoned out may require a high degree of mental developmentbut the simple act of trusting requires nothing of the kind. If you cannot read a letter in a book you may believe thisthat God came down from Heaven in the Person of Jesus Christ and suffered for sin Himself that He might forgive sin and yet be just. I wonder that a man can hear it and not believe it! It is an amazing thing that such good news is not at once believed. Let me repeat it, and oh, may the blessed Spirit work faith in you who hear it! God was so just that He could not forgive sin without violating His Nature! He must award punishment to transgression.

But to make mercy consistent with the severest justice, the Lawgiver came Himself among men and gave His own shoulders to the scourge, and stretched out His own hands to feel the nails, to suffer, bleed, and die! And now if you trust God in the Person of Christ, and do rely upon Him to put away your sin. And if you take Him from now on to be your King and Ruler, you shall be saved! God be thanked that we have so simple a Gospel to preach and may the Lord bring many to receive it, that they may become His sons!

II. We now turn to THE GREAT PRIVILEGE, which is said in the text to be given to those who trust in the Son of God. But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God. The word power here may be translated privilege, and one of the older commentators and translators renders it honor. To them gave He the honor to become the sons of God. Now, what is it to be a son of God? This theme demands a seraph to discourse upon it! Yes, even an archangel might fail to describe what it is to be a son of God!

Certainly it is a point of dignity beyond what any angel ever attained. Unto which of the angels said He at any time, You are My son, this day have I begotten you? But every man, woman, and child that believes in Jesus Christ is from that time on a child of God. You know what it is to be the son of a good man and true, and some of you would not willingly renounce your birthright. You claim from your father a childs privileges. You expect, that being a son, you shall inherit certain rights, and those rights you will duly receive.

If I could stand here tonight and say I were a kings son, many would be wonderfully envious. But what do you say to thisI claim to be one of the sons of God? Does no mans heart aspire to this felicity? Are there no spirits which pine for this dignity? Oh, the stolid baseness which does not rise to a desire after this glory! Do not suppose that when we say son of God, we merely use a metaphor without meaning! No, every person who believes in Christ Jesus is entitled to all rights and privileges which go with son-ship relationship in any case, but which emphatically go with son-ship in the case of a son of God!

What, then, are we entitled to, and what do we receive? A complete list I cannot attempt to make out for you, but as my mind suggests the gifts of adoption, they shall come before you. If we are the sons of God, we are dearly beloved of God. Did you ever try to get that thought into your mind, that God loves you? I can understand that God pities methat is a feeling which so vastly superior a Being might well feel to so inferior an existencebut that He loves me is scarcely conceivable, although it is most sure and certain! Who can drink this well dry? Who can bear home this fruitful sheaf of delights, this purple cluster of Eshcol?

Sons of God are loved of their Father with a love surpassing thought! They are, indeed, intimately related as well as dearly loved. There is a union between God and His sons. There is the same Nature in the son as there is in the Father, for we become partakers of the Divine Nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. These are no words of mine, but of the Holy Spirit! One would not have dared to have uttered them if inspiration had not made them ready to our hand. We are most near and dear to the blessed God who fills all in all. Being sons we are graciously treated. Like as a father pities his children, so the Lord pities them that fear Him. He spares them as a man spares his own son that serves him. Goodness and mercy shall follow us all the days of our life and we shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

Being sons, again, we are wisely educated. Parents do not think they have done their duty unless they bring their children up to understand knowledge, and to be fitted to take their part with full grown men. We are trained in the school of God. We receive chastisement and are made to smart under His rod. We read in the illuminated Book of His Grace, and are made meet, when fully educated, to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. All your children shall be taught of the Lord. There is no school like that in which love is the head master. As children we are admitted to a familiarity which servants cannot know. A child may say and do to his father what no stranger could.

God manifests Himself to us as He does not unto the world. The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him, and He will show them His Covenant. We have access to God at all hours! The Fathers door is never locked against His much-loved children. Our cry He knows even as a father knows his childs cry from every other sound. All our needs are provided for, and our Fathers loving heart watches over all our wanderings and forgives all our offenses. Remember that a fathers relationship is one which cannot be suspended.

I know the old proverb says, A fathers a father till he gets a new wife, which implies that he is not afterwards, but that only means as to his actions, for he must be a father always. He cannot break off that relationship. He must cease to be before he can cease to be a father so long as his children live. When I have heard people say that you may be a child of God one day and a child of the devil the next, I have felt inclined to buy them a dictionary so that they might know the meaning of the word father. What a mistake! What a misuse of words do they commit! If I am my fathers child I am so, and there is no power, human or DivineI speak with reverencethat can disown me!

Adoption might cease to operate, but birth, never! I must be the child of him that begat me. And so, if I am a child of God, begotten unto God by the incorruptible seed of His Word, there is no power, infernal or Divine, that can possibly rob me, as a child of God, of this privilege! As a child I am, and a child I must be. So then, we have honorable standing, safe, abiding, blessed inheritance, and perfected education all belongingto whom? Why, to as many as receive Christ! That is, to as many as trust Him! Poor trembling Soul, why should not you be in that number?

III. The third point was to be, THE GREAT WORK, WHICH IS NECESSARILY INVOLVED IN THIS ACT OF RECEIVING CHRIST. Every man who trusts the Lord Jesus has been born again. The question was once argued in an assembly of Divines as to whether a person first had faith or regeneration, and it was suggested that it was a question which must forever be unanswerable. The process, if such it is, must be simultaneousno sooner does the Divine life come into the soul than it believes on Christ. You might as well ask whether in the human body there is first the circulation of the blood or the heaving of the lungsboth are essential ingredients in life, and must come at the same time.

If I believe in Jesus Christ I need not ask any question as to whether I am regenerated, for no unregenerate person ever could believe in the Lord Jesus Christ! And if regenerated I must believe in Jesus, for he who does not do so is clearly dead in sin. See, then, the folly of persons talking about being regenerated who have no faith! It cannot be! It is impossible! We can have no knowledge of such a thing as regeneration which is not accompanied with some degree of mental motion and consciousness.

Regeneration is not a thing which takes place upon matterit is a thing of spirit. The birth of the spirit must be the subject of consciousness, and though a man may not be able to say that at such and such a moment he was regenerated, yet the act of faith is a consciousness of regeneration. The moment I believe in Jesus Christ my faith is an index to me of a work that has gone on within. And the secret work within, and the open act of faith which God has joined together let no man put asunder. Those who believe not are unregenerate, though they may have been sprinkled by the best priest who ever had Episcopal hands laid on his head!

If a man believes not he is unregenerate, whether baptized or not. But if he believes, he is regenerate, though he may never have been baptized at all. Baptism may outwardly express regeneration after it has been received, and then the symbol becomes valuablebut without faith there can be no regeneration, even though Baptism is administered a thousand times!

Observe what kind of new birth it is which all Believers have received. It is one which comes not of bloods, (so the original has it). Neither by the blood of circumcision, nor of the Passover, nor especially by the blood of descent. Sin runs in the blood, if you will, but Divine Grace does not. We are not born Christians by the mere fact of our being the children of godly Christian people. Neither are we born Christians of the will of man. The best men in the world cannot create us anewif they pray for us ever so muchthe power of their will apart from the will of God cannot avail.

We are not born of the will of the flesh, that is to say, our own free will does not cause it. If a man could will himself into a state of newness of heart, the fact of his being willing to be in such a state would, I suppose, be evidence of his being in that state alreadybut the human will is powerless in itself to produce regeneration. We must be born again from above! The Holy Spirit must, by His Divine energy, enter into us and make us new creaturesfor such a heavenly birth is essential to eternal life.

Now, I think I hear some troubled conscience saying, When you said just now that if I trusted in Christ I should be saved, I rejoiced, but when you say we must be born again, that saying seems so mysterious that I am troubled. My dear Friend, there is no need to be troubled. If you trust in Christ, then you are born again! I have already told you that there is no possibility of a soul ever truly relying upon the Savior unless there has been a previous new birth to produce his faith.

If you are, tonight, able to put your whole trust in Jesus Christ as Gods dear Son, and to take Him to be yours, though your new birth may be too mysterious a thing for you to know much about it, for, the wind blows where it likes, and you hear the sound of it, but can not tell from where it comes, and where it goes. Yet, your faith is a sufficient index that you are really a partaker of the new birth. I do not want to open the boiler of a steam engine for the sake of knowing what quantity of water there is in itI am perfectly satisfied by looking at the tell-tale.

Now faith is the tell-tale of the human soul! Where there is faith there is new life. Where there is no faith there is no life. There is no need to dissect a man, anatomize him, and cut him up in order to find out his spirityou would destroy him in so doing. But when you see the man has action, motion, energywhen you put your hand upon his breast and feel the heaving of the lungsyou know that there is life. Now, if I may so say, faith is the heaving of the spiritual lungs! If you believe in Jesus Christ you are a living manyou have been born, not of the will of man, but of God.

I should like to ask one question before I am donehave all of you received Christ? Yes, or No? You good people up in the gallery there, I am not going to ask you where you worship generally, nor to what Church you belong, but have you received Christ? Well, Sir, we were baptized. I do not care a farthing at this moment whether you were baptized or not! I leave that question till we have settled an earlier one. Have you received Christ? Well, we take the sacrament. Never mind that! Have you received Christ? Do you trust Him and Him only?

To the point nowcan your soul say   
**On Christ the solid Rock I stand,   
All other ground is sinking sand?**

Have you received Jesus Christ, each one of you? And if you have not, why not? Is there anything so hard in receiving Him? I have sometimes thought I should like to tell the tale of the Cross for the first time to a number of savages who would just have sufficient culture to understand itGod was made flesh and dwelt among us. And rather than men should suffer God suffered Himself! And because Justice required punishment, He bore the punishment instead of sinners. Why, I think I see their eyes glistening, and I think their hearts must melt!

But you have heard the tale so often that it has become an old story to you! However, I would like to put the question to you againhave you received Jesus Christ? Well, I have not had much experience, laments one, and another says, I do not know much, and another cries, We have had family prayer for twenty years, and another says, My name is down for twenty guineas in several charitable institutions. Well, all that is very well, but I do not care about any of these matters tonight! All I want to know is, have you received Christ?

Oh! says one, Of course! I was always brought up to it. But you cannot be brought up to it. You must be brought down to it by being born again! There must be a change in your nature. We do not preach the Gospel, as I have said before, to the depraved and debauched alone. We preach it to you good, excellent peopleyou whose honesty in trade, and whose moral character set you on high among your fellows, as upon a pinnacle. Even YOU must be born again! Ladies and Gentlemen, you must be born again, as well as the lowest of the low and the poorest of the poor. We have the same Gospel to preach to Her Majesty the Queen as we have to the sinners in a refuge or the rogues in a reformatory. We know of no difference in this matter between any of you. A difference of morality there is, and we are thankful for itbut you must be born again as much as the worst rebels in the world!

And you below here, have you received Christ? I know that many of you have, and that your hearts leap at the sound of His name. You can say *Jesus, the very thought of You,   
With rapture fills my breast.*

But there are some of you who have not received ChristI mean not merely you who are occasional hearersbut my constant hearers. You have received meyou believe what I saybut you have not received Christ, and you do not believe what HE tells you. It is one thing to believe in your minister, but quite another to believe in Jesus Christ! I pray you never stop short in receiving anything because we say it, or because we seem to prove ityou must get it burned into you as with a red-hot iron by God the Holy Spirits power or else it will be of no service to you.

I stood a few hours ago at the bedside of one of our Brethren in Christ who seemed sorely sick and at the point of death. He could not speak aloud but the soft and gentle words which he whispered in my ear were very precious. He had not his peace to make with God in his last hourhe had not then to seek Christbut was full of perfect peace and rejoicing in unbroken calm. He will not leave me, will He? he askedHe cannot deny Himself. I may sink, but I cannot sink lower than He will go, for underneath me are the everlasting arms.

Oh, my Brothers and Sisters, the mere letter of Gospel doctrine will not do to die onyou must have the spirit of it in your heart or you cannot be comforted by it! Believe me, it is stern work to die. A Christian dies peacefully, but it is no childs play, even to him. Some of us, when we have been sick and racked with pain, know that we have had to search for our evidences with much care and anxiety. I have turned over many a moldy old deed that laid by in the chest of my evidences to try if I could

*Read my title clear*

*To mansions in the skies,*   
and glad enough have I been to light on some such word as this   
*Rock of Ages, cleft for me,   
Let me hide myself in Thee,*   
and to sing   
*Nothing in my hands I bring,   
Simply to Your Cross I cling.*   
But, my Hearers, what of some of you? The day is coming when the great assemblies of this house will seem but as nothingwhen this immense gathering will be but as a drop in a bucket compared with that greater gathering! The trumpet, ringing through earth and Heaven, shall awaken the dead! The righteous and the wicked shall stand in judgment. We shall all be therethis company shall have no exceptionthere shall be no excuse for being absent on that tremendous day, and then there will be no question which will have so much weight as this oneHAVE YOU RECEIVED CHRIST?   
I think I see the Reaper coming. He is hastening to gather the vintage of the world, for the grapes are fully ripe. The ungodly must be gathered first and there they arethrown in clusters into the winepress of the wrath of Godwhile the dread angels of avenging Justice tread the grapes until the blood flows out. Will you be there among the accursed clusters of Sodom and Gomorrah? Will you be there, you men of London, you dwellers in Newington and Walworth, who hear the Gospel constantlywill you be cast into the winepress of Jehovahs wrath? And shall the streets be red with your blood?   
Or will you be yonder, where, with golden sickle, trusting no angel to do the work, Christ Himself shall reap His golden corn, ear after ear, and take it all home with shouts of delight to His Fathers garner? Will you see Him, in that day, as the God that died for you? Will you see Him with exultation? Will you meet Him in the air, and so be forever with the Lord? If so, then receive Jesus, and He will receive you. Take Him into your hearts and He will take you into Heaven. Take Him, His Cross, His people, His Gospel, His doctrines! Take Him, to have and to hold Him, for better and for worse, and then not even death shall part you, but you shall be with Him in the day of His appearing.   
May the Lord seal His Word with His own blessing!

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THE GLORY OF CHRISTBEHELD!   
NO. 414

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON SUNDAY MORNING, OCTOBER 20, 1861, BY THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and Truth. John 1:14.**

I CANNOT refrain from mentioning an incident connected with the perusal of the first chapter of John. I suppose there is not a passage in Gods Word which has not at some time or other been blessed to the conversion of a soul. Even the fifth chapter of Genesis which is so uninteresting to most readers, because the verses continually end, And he died, And he died, And he died, has been blessed to onewho from the reiteration of the fact that men who lived nine hundred years nevertheless diedwas led to think of his own death.

Now the first chapter of John was the means of the conversion of a celebrated writer, Junius the younger, who did good service in the Church. His father, perceiving him to be an ungodly young man, put in his way as much as possible the New Testament and the following is an extract from Junius account of his own life. My father, who was frequently reading the New Testament and had long observed with grief the progress I had made in infidelity, put that book in my way in his library in order to attract my attention, if it might please God to bless his design, though without giving me the least intimation of it.

Here, therefore, I unwittingly opened the New Testament thus providentially laid before me. At the very first view, although I was deeply engaged in other thoughts, that grand chapter of the Evangelist and Apostle presented itself to meIn the beginning was the Word and the Word was God. I read part of the chapter and was so greeted that I instantly became struck with the divinity of the argument. I was amazed by the majesty and authority of the composition as infinitely surpassing the highest flights of human eloquence. My body shuddered. My mind was in amazement and I was so agitated the whole day that I scarcely knew who I was. Nor did the agitation cease, but continued till it was at last soothed by a humble faith in Him who was made flesh and dwelt among us.

One of the Platonic philosophers who considered all Christian writers to be but barbarians, nevertheless said of the first chapter of John, This barbarian has comprised more stupendous stuff in three lines than we have done in all our voluminous discourses. And we will to this day glory in the power of the Holy Spirit that an unlearned and ignorant man like

John, the son of Zebedee the fisherman, should be enabled to write a chapter which excels not only the highest flight of eloquence, but the greatest depths of philosophy.

But now for the verse before us. I think, if you look attentively at it and if you are in some slender measure acquainted with the original, you will perceive that John here compares Christ to that which was the greatest glory of the Jewish Church. Let me read it, giving another translation The Word was made flesh and tabernacled among us and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and Truth. Now you remember that in the Jewish Church its greatest glory was that God tabernacled in its midstnot the tent of Moses, not the various pavilions of the princes of the twelve tribesbut the humble tabernacle in which God dwelt was the boast of Israel.

They had the King Himself in the midst of them. A present God in their midst. The tabernacle was a tent to which men went when they would commune with God and it was the spot to which God came manifestly when He would commune with man. To use Matthew Henrys words, it was the trysting place between the Creator and the worshipper. Here they met each other through the slaughter of the bullock and the lamb and there was reconciliation between them.

Now Christs human flesh was Gods tabernacle and it is in Christ that God meets with man and in Christ that man has dealings with God. The Jew of old went to Gods tent, in the center of the camp, if he would worshipwe come to Christ if we would pay our homage. If the Jew would be released from ceremonial uncleannessafter he had performed the rites he went up to the sanctuary of his God that he might feel again that there was peace between God and his soul. And we, having been washed in the precious blood of Christ, have access with boldness unto God, even the Father through Christ who is

our tabernacle and the tabernacle of God among men.

Now let us draw the parallel a little further. The greatest glory of the tabernacle itself was the Most Holy Place. In the Most Holy Place there stood the ark of the covenant, bearing its golden lid called the mercy seat. Over the mercy seat stood the cherubim, whose wings met each other and beneath the wings of the cherubim there was a bright light known to the Hebrew believer by the name of the Shekinah. That light represented the presence of God. Immediately above that light there might be seen at night a pillar of fire and by day a spiral column of cloud rose from itwhich no doubt expanded itself into one vast cloud which covered all the camp and shielded all the Israelites from the blaze of the broiling sun.

The glory of the tabernacles, I say, was the Shekinah. What does our text say? Jesus Christ was Gods Tabernacle and, we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father. Jesus is not the tabernacle without the gloryHe is not as the temple when the voice was heard with the rushing of winds before the siege of Jerusalem, crying, Arise, let us go. But it was a temple in which God Himself dwelt after a special mannerfor in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.

The Apostle however points to a surpassing excellence in Christ the Tabernacle, by which He wondrously excels that of the Jewish Church. Full of grace and Truth. The Jewish tabernacle was rather full of Law than full of grace. It is true there were in its rites and ceremonies foreshadowings of grace. But still in repeated sacrifice there was renewed remembrance of sin and a man had first to be obedient to the Law of ceremonies before he could have access to the tabernacle at allbut Christ is full of gracenot a little of it but abundance of it is treasured up in Him. The tabernacle of old was not full of Truth, but full of image and shadow and symbol and picture.

But Christ is full of substance. He is not the picturebut the Reality. He is not the shadowbut the Substance. Herein, O Believer, do you rejoice with joy unspeakablefor you come unto Christthe real Tabernacle of God. You come unto Him who is full of the glory of the Father. And you come unto One in whom you have not the representation of a grace which you need, but the grace itselfnot the shadow of a Truth ultimately to be revealed, but that very Truth by which your soul is accepted in the sight of God. I put this forth as a matter for you to think over in your retirement.

It might have constituted the divisions of the sermon but as I want more especially to dwell upon the glory of Christ, we leave these observations as a preface and go more particularly to that part of the subject where the Apostle says, We beheld His glory, the glory of the onlybegotten of the Father, full of grace and Truth.

I. In the first place, we have here A FAVORED PEOPLE. We beheld His glory.   
And who are thesethe we to whom the Apostle here refers? They were first of all an elect company, for Jesus said, I know whom I have chosen. You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you. He came unto His own and His own received Him not. But they who did receive Him are described as men who were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. The elect in Christs day, though they were but a small remnant, nevertheless did exist. There were a few, else had that generation been as Sodom and been made like Gomorrah.   
There were twelves and seventies and afterwards we read of three thousand and then of many others who were added to the Church of such as should be saved. In Christs own day, however, the lines of manifest election seemed to be but very narrow, for there were but few that followed Him and of those who followed Him it is said, many from that day went back and walked no more with Him. For His Truth had sifted the mere professors and reduced them but to a slender company who followed the Lamb wherever He went. The we, then, who beheld Christs glory, were a chosen company.   
They were also a called company, for of many of them we read their special calls. Of John himself we read that Jesus walked by the sea and saw other two brethren, James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father unending their nets. And He called them. And they immediately left the ship and their father and followed Him. Of most of the Apostles and immediate attendants upon Christs Person we have a record of their divine and special call by Christs own voice. And in the case of those respecting whom there was no record preserved, yet was it, nevertheless, the factfor He had called them as the shepherd calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. Indeed, in all of us who shall at any time perceive Christs glory, it must be because He has called us unto this special privilege as the result of His election of us.   
These who beheld His glory were also an illuminated people. For Christs glory was not manifest unto the rest of mankind. None of the princes of this world knew Him. The priests who had studied the Law could not discover Him. The members of the Sanhedrim, who were under some expectation of His advent, could not perceive Him. In vain was the star in the east. In vain the miraculous appearance of angels to the shepherdsthe blind generation would not perceive Him. In vain the opening of blind eyes and the preaching of the Gospel to the poor. In vain the raising of the deadin vain all those innumerable signs and wonders. They could not perceive His glory. But of those who did perceive it it may be said, as of Simon Barjona, Blessed are you, for flesh and blood has not revealed this unto you.   
We may say, then, of those who beheld His glory, the favored people that they were chosen of sovereign grace, that they were called effectually by the Holy Spiritand that they were anointed by the same Divine Person. And to this day, Brethren, it is the same. None believe in Christ but those who are His sheep. No man comes unto Him except the Father who has sent Him draws them and none ever perceive Him but those whose eyes are opened by His own healing fingers. Let the question be passed round among usDo I perceive His glory? Have I seen something of the splendor of God in the humble Man of Nazareth? Have I learned to magnify Him in my soul and have I desired to glorify Him in my life, as my God, my life, my love, my All in All, though once despised and rejected of men?   
If so, Belovedif we can say this from our heart, we are favored indeed and especially favored if we remember how many there are who have never obtained this grace. Not many great men after the flesh see any glory in Christ. They find their glory in the clash of arms and in garments rolled in blood, but not in Him who is meek and lowly of heart, who gives rest to weary souls. Not many wise men have seen any glory in Christ. They find glory in philosophy. They can see glory in nature, but not in Him who is nobler than Gods creation, inasmuch as He is the only perfect one among the sons of men. They say they see something of glory in Providence and yet fail to perceive anything wonderful in grace.   
Not many wise men are called. Oh, let us be astonished at the sovereignty of God! Let us be filled with gratitude at His compassion. Let us pray that if we know something of the glory we may know more of it day by day and may set it forth among the sons of men, that they, too, may by-and-by perceive His glorythe glory as of the only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and Truth.   
II. But now, secondly we have spoken of the favored peoplelet us now spend a minute or two in dwelling upon THEIR EXALTED PRIVILEGE. We beheld His glory.   
What is this word Beheld? It says not we heard of His glory, we read of it in prophecy, or we listened to it from the lips of othersbut we beheld His glory. What a privilege was this, which was accorded to the first disciples! Have you not often envied them? To see the Man, the very Man, in whom God dweltto walk with Him as ones companion along His journeys of mercyto listen to the words as they stream all living from those eloquent lipsto look into His eyes and mark the depth of love that glistened thereto see His face, even though it was more marred than that of any man. I have often sympathized in that child-like hymn *I think when I read that sweet story of old, When Jesus was here among men,   
How He called little children as lambs to His fold, I should like to have been with them then. I wish that His hands had been placed on my head, That His arm had been thrown around me, And that I might have seen His kind looks when He said, Let the little ones come unto Me.*   
But better still to have been with himto have leaned this head upon His bosomto have told Him my griefs, as they did who took up the body of John and went and told Jesus. To have asked of Him the explanation of difficulties, as they said, Show us the Father and it suffices. To have had ones faith encouraged by touching His very flesh, as he did of whom it is written that he put his finger into the print of the nails and thrust his hand into His side. But what are we talking about? All this is carnal, all this is of sightand the Christian is a nobler being than to live and walk by sight. He lives by faith. And to this day, Brethren, there is a sight of Christ which can be had by faith. And therefore we need not murmur because we are denied the privilege of sight.   
The sight of Christ, it seems, did but little good to those who had it not even to His disciplesfor they were sorry dolts even though He was the Master. It was only when the Spirit came down at Pentecost that they began to know Christ and to understand what He had said to them though He himself had said it. And truly tis better to see Christ by faith than it is to see Him by sight, for a sight of Him by faith saves the soul. But we might see Him with the eye and yet crucify Him and be found among the greatest rebels against His government and power.

Now we say to you, have you beheld His glory by faith? Oh, you have all of you heard of it. We, the ministers of Christ, have tried Sabbath after Sabbath to lift Him up and it is such sweet and blessed work that I would love to do every day. When we have to preach the Law we feel it a hard and toilsome servitude, but to preach ChristO how sweet and blessed is the labor! Happy is the man whose lips are ever overflowing with the news of Jesus! Blessed is he whose ministry is full of Christ! He is blessed in his own soul, as well as blessed unto others.   
You have heard of Him, then, but what of all this? You may hear of His glory and perish in your sins. You have read of His glory. This book is in your houses and you read it, I trust, each day. Thus you have read the story of the Man of sorrows and griefs acquaintance. And you know how He ascended on high, leading captivity captive and ever sits at the right hand of God. But you may read all thisand yet it shall be a curse and not a blessing, for you knew Him and yet rejected Him. You were among His own and He came unto you and you received Him not. Oh, to behold His glory! This is soul work, saving work, blessed work, everlasting work have you any interest in it?   
But you answer, How can we behold His glory? Why faith sees it. Faith looks back to the Man who lived and died for us and sees glory in His shame, honor in His disgraces, riches in His poverty, might in His weakness, triumph in His conflict and immortality in His death. No, Faith is sometimes assisted by Experience. And Experience sees His gloryit sees the glory of His grace in rolling away all our sins. The preciousness of His blood in giving us reconciliation with the Father. The power of the Spirit in subduing the will. The love of His heart in constantly remembering us upon the Throne. And the power of His plea in its perpetual prevalence with God.   
Experience shows us the glory of Christ in the deep waters while He puts His arm beneath us and says, Fear not, you shall not be drowned. It shows us the glory of Christ in the blazing furnace while the Son of Man treads the glowing coals with His afflicted Israel. Experience shows us the glory of Christ in all the attacks of Satan. While He is our shield He wards off every poisoned arrow and shows us the glory of Christ in helping us to live and enabling us to die and by-and-by it shall show us the glory of Christ in enabling us to rise and take possession of the crown which He has purchased for His children.   
And with Experience there is another that helps us to behold the glory of Christ, namely, communion. Beloved, I hope you know what that meanswhen shut in your chamber with God and the world shut out, our eyes behold Him and not anotherthis is communion. Communion is when we can kneel down in the very posture of the poor agonizing victim of Gethsemane and see by fellowship the sweat of blood as it streams from the pores of His framewhen we can mark Him hounded, hissed, scouted through all the streets of His own city and taken to Calvary to die. Communion knows something of the bitterness of the cup which He then drank, somewhat of the sharpness of the nails that pierced His hands and somewhat of the death which was endured when at last He said, It is finished! and gave up the ghost.   
Yes, communion can show us the glory of Christ even in His shame. And then it can take to its wings and show us His glory beyond the skies. These eyes have never seen the Saviorbut this heart has seen Him. These lips have never kissed His cheek, for that they might do and I might be a Judasbut the soul has kissed Him and He has kissed me with the kisses of His mouth, for His love is better than wine. Think me not enthusiastic or fanatical when I say that the children of God have as near access to Christ today in the spirit as ever John had after the flesh. There is to this day a rich enjoyment to be obtained by those who seek itin having actual fellowship with the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ.   
Oh, it is a joy worth worlds! Worldling, if you had ever known the sweetness of this bread you would never eat your own ashes again. O pleasures of the world! You would cease to tempt us if you knew how much more sweet are the pleasures of His face. O thunders of this world! You would cease your attempts to frighten us if you knew the sweet satisfaction and solace which we find in Him, when everything is bitter and disconsolate abroad. Yes, we have beheld His glory, just as surely as if we had seen it with our eyesas certainly as if we had heard with our ears the acclamations of the glorified and taken our seat with them at the foot of His Throne, or with them had veiled our faces with wings and cried, Holy holy, holy, Lord God omnipotent!   
Just as truly, though not so fully, we have beheld His glorythe glory of the Only-begotten of the Fatherfull of grace and Truth.  
III. Thirdly we have in the text A MOST BLESSED VISION.   
We have had the favored persons, their exalted privilege and now we have their blessed vision. We have beheld His glory. Let us dwell upon the thought of His glory for awhile. My Brethren, what a glory have we beheld by faith! By faith, in the first place, we have beheld the glory of His complex Person. We have known and believed that He is the everlasting Word, the veritable Son of the Father. We have beheld Him by faith as dwelling with the Father before the world was. The Beloved of His Fathers soul. We have seen Him and we have marked that His goings-forth are of old, even from everlasting. We have seen Him weighing the clouds, measuring the channels of the great deep, planning the heavens and meting out the sea.   
We have seen Him with the line and with the plummet making all things according to His wisdom and the purpose of the counsel of His will, for without Him was not anything made that was made. We have seen Him as God, seated upon the Throne of His Father and we have believed that the sea roars only as He bids it, that the earth with all the creatures that are therein obey His glorious will. Lo, in His hands today the keys of Heaven and death and Hell! We have had no doubts whatever as to His Divinity for we have seen and known that He is very God of very God. God over all, blessed forever Amen.   
We have seen him, too, as Man. We have perceived that He is of the substance of His mother, bone of our bone, flesh of our flesh. He is man in all infirmities, but not man in any guiltiness of His own. We see Him as man weak, suffering, hungry, thirsty, dying but without spot or wrinkle pure, the immaculate Lamb of God. We have beheld Him in the glory of this complex Personnot God deteriorated to man, not man deified to God, but God, very God and very Man. God in all that is God-like, Man in all that is man-like and we have adored Him as such. We have seen in Him the luster of a beauty which far outshines all that earth can present us, or all that Heaven can offer. Whom have we on earth but Jesus? Who is there in Heaven that we can desire beside Him?  
Next we have beheld His glory, not merely in His Person, but in the motive for which He undertook His great work. That motive was love. Love which could have His self-interest to be an alloy, love to worthless creatures, love to those who could never repay His love. Love to rebels, love to men who crucified the Lord of Gloryand we have said as we have seen this love sparkling like a jewel in a black setting, lying in the heart of the pool, injured, poverty-stricken, houseless, comfortless Man of Nazareth There is a glory here in this love that is never to be found elsewhere.   
Then, we have beheld the glory of His self-sacrifice. We have looked upon Him giving up everything for us, renouncing His crown and specter, laying aside His royal robes and splendor, leaving His Fathers house and palaces and honorbecoming man, no, a poor man, a despised afflicted manno, becoming obedient to death, even the death of the Cross. We have read history through but we never saw a self-sacrifice that could equal His. In Him selfishness never lived and therefore, never needed to be kept in cheek. He was not His own. His whole history could be written in thisHe saved others, Himself he cannot save. Glorious Christ, in this while You were rejected of men, we have beheld Your glory.   
We have beheld, moreover, the glory of His endurance. He is tempted in every point yet fails in none. The worlds glory lies at His feet. He chooses rather our salvation than the glories of earth. He counted the reproach that He should bear for us greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt. We see Him mocked, yet never revilingspit upon, yet never spitting back again even so much as a word of venom. We see Him despised, yet never attempting to clear Himselfaccused, yet silent before the judgment seatso giving up Himself that He can bear all things, whatsoever they may be.  
Many waters could not quench His love, neither could the floods drown it. Though all the substance of the worlds house were offered Him that He might renounce His love, yet did He utterly despise the world. Who was ever such a martyr as the Savior? Who endured as He did? Who bore such contradiction of sinners against Himself? Great God, O Jesusfor such You areGreat God, there is none like You in the omnipotence of Your endurance. We have seen Your glory, even when You did tabernacle among men.   
And we have seen His glory also in His great and blessed perseverance even to the end, having loved His own which were in the world He loved them to the endhaving undertaken He went through with it. He never paused till He could say, It is finished. Then He gave up the ghost, but not till then. Now today behold His perseverance. For Zions sake He does not rest and for Jerusalems sake He never holds His peace day nor night until God shall be pleased to make her glory come forth as the brightness and her righteousness as a lamp that burns. On, on, onneither to the right nor to the left turning for a moment, without pause, without making a moments questiononwards to His destined work He speeds and never does He cease till He can say to His Father, I have finished the work that You gave Me to do.

And then, not to keep you too long even upon such a subject as this, we have beheld His glory in His final triumph. Yes, Brethren, by faith we have seen in the very moment when the sun was darkened and when the earth was shaken and the rocks rent asunderwe have seen Christ darkening the worlds glories. We have seen Him rending rocky hearts and bidding the dead arise. We have seen Him in the very instant when He gave up the ghost leaping from the Cross, pursuing with thunderbolts the prince of Hell and driving him to darker shades below. We have seen Him grasping at last the tyrant in His hands and chaining Him to His chariot wheel. Our faith has beheld Him riding up the everlasting hills, leading captivity captive.  
We have seen the gates wide open flung while angels said, Lift up your heads, O you gates and be you lift up, you everlasting doors. And the King of Glory shall come in. We have joined by faith the triumph and have swelled the train. We have heard the acclamation of the spirits of the just made perfect. We have heard above all the voice of God, Well done. You have finished your Fathers will. We have seen Him ascend in august majesty the Throne which is His resting place and we have seen Him sit down on the right hand of the Father, while from Heaven and earth and even Hell, there went up one prolonged note of praise, Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah! The Lord God omnipotent reigns.   
No, our faith has gone beyond the mere matters of the past. We have beheld His glory, we have seen Him as one by one His sheep are brought and His prayer is heard, Father, I will that they also whom You have given Me be with Me where I am. We have seen Him going forth day after day in the chariot of Salvation scattering with both His hands His mercies among the poverty-stricken sons of men and we have cried unto Him, Gird Your sword upon Your thigh, O You most mighty. Often has our prayer been, Come forth, O Jesus. Heaven obeys You, earth shakes at Your presence, Hell trembles at You, devils are dismayed. Come forth, put Your arrow to the string and lift up Your glittering spear. Who, who shall stay Your course, or in Your presence stand?   
Like chaff before the wind so shall they be driven and as stubble before the flame so shall they be utterly consumed. We have been helped to fly even to the great end of all things and by faith have seen His second advent. We have beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father. We have seen Him come   
*But not the same   
As once in lowliness He came   
A silent Lamb before His foes,   
A weary Man and full of woes.*   
We have seen Him come   
*With dreadful form,   
With rainbow-wreath and robes of storm;   
On cherub wings and wings of wind,   
Appointed Judge of all mankind!*   
We have beheld His millennial reign. We have marked the dwellers in the wilderness blowing before Him, the kings of Sheba and Sheba offering their gifts. We have heard the universal song from the dwellers in the rocks and the islands of the sea. We have seen the halcyon age of love when no strife shall vex Messiahs reign. When they shall   
*Hang the useless helmet high   
And study war no more.*   
And then we have seen the judgment. We have beheld the reeling earth unable to bear the splendor of His triumph. We have heard the wailings of His enemies. We have seen them melt as wax before the flame, utterly consumed like the fat of rams upon His altar.   
We have at last, by faith, seen the endwhen He shall give up the kingdom to God, even our Father. We have heard, I say, the last word of the whole history in the shout of complete victory  
**Lo, Jehovahs banners furled   
Sheathed His swordHe speakstis done! And the kingdoms of this world   
Are the kingdoms of His Son.   
Then the endbeneath His rod,   
Mans last enemy shall fall;   
Hallelujah! Christ in God,   
God in Christ is All in All.**   
IV. Have patience with me while I now conclude. In the fourth place the text reminds us of THE TESTIMONY WHICH WE WHO HAVE SEEN HIS GLORY ARE SURE TO BEAR.   
We bear our testimony that He is the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and Truth. Brothers and Sisters, instead of preaching, let me bear my testimonymy testimony of what I have seen, what my own ears have heard and my own heart has tastedthat Christ is the only begotten of the Father. He is Divine to me, if He is only human to all the world besides. He has done that for me which none but a God could do. He has turned my stubborn will, melted a heart of adamant, broken a chain of steel, opened the gates of brass and snapped the bars of iron. He has turned my mourning into laughter and my desolation into joy. He has led my captivity captive, made my heart rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Let others think as they will of Him, to me He must be the only begotten of the Fatherblessed be His name!   
*O that I could now adore Him,   
Like the heavenly host above,   
Who forever bow before Him,   
And unceasing sing His love. Happy songsters! When shall I your chorus join?*   
Your name is precious even as ointment poured forth. You are indeed my Lord and my God, as certainly as ever You were the God of Thomas. Like Paul, my soul shall say, God forbid that I should glory save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me and I unto the world.   
AgainI bear my testimony that He is full of grace. Ah, had He not been, I should never have beheld His glory. I was full of sin to overflowing. I was condemned already because I believed not upon Him. He drew me when I wanted not to come and though I struggled hard He continued still to draw. And when at last I came all trembling like a condemned culprit to His mercy seat, He said, Your sins which are many are all forgiven you, be of good cheer. He took me up out of the horrible pit and out of the miry clay. He has set my feet upon a RockHimselfand put a new song into my mouth and established my goings.   
Let others despise Him. But I bear witness that He is full of grace. Oh, I would that some poor sinner here who is full of sin would remember that Christ is full of graceI would that you, poor despairing oneyou who have given yourself up as a lost soul, would remember that *Plenteous grace with Him is found,   
Grade to pardon all your sin   
May the healing streams abound,   
Make and keep you pure within.*   
Finally I bear my witness, that as He is full of grace He is full of Truth. True have His promises been, not one has failed. I have often doubted Himfor that I blush. He has never failed mein this I must rejoice. His promises have been yes and amen. I do but speak the testimony of every believer in Christ, though I put it thus personally to make it the more forcible. I bear witness that never servant had such a Master as I have. Never brother had such a kinsman as He has been to me. Never spouse had such a husband as Christ has been to my soul. Never sinner a better Saviornever soldier a better captainnever mourner a better comforter than Christ has been to my spirit.   
I want none beside Him. In life He is my life and in death He shall be the death of death. In poverty Christ is our riches, in sickness He makes our bed. In darkness He is our star and in brightness He is our sun. He is the manna of the camp in the wilderness and He shall be the new corn of the host when they come to Canaan. He is the Rock that follows them todayHe is the Rock on which they shall rest and within which they shall dwell forever   
*All hail Immanuel, all Divine, In You Your Fathers glories shine; You brightest, sweetest, fairest One, That eyes have seen or angels known. O may I live to reach the place Where He unveils His lovely face. Where all His beauties saints behold, And sing His name to harps of gold.*   
So be it, Lord, by Your grace. Amen.

Adapted from The C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Version 1.0, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307 Sermon #1862 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

THE TRUE TABERNACLE AND ITS GLORY OF GRACE AND PEACE

NO. 1862

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, SEPTEMBER 27, 1885, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His Glory, the Glory as of the Only-Begotten of the Father,) full of Grace and Truth. John 1:14.**

**For the Law was given through Moses, but   
Grace and Truth came through Jesus Christ.   
John 1:17.**

THERE was a time when God freely communed with men. The voice of the Lord God was heard walking in the Garden in the cool of the day. With unfallen Adam, the great God dwelt in sweet and intimate fellowshipbut sin came and not only destroyed the Garden, but destroyed the communion of God with His creature, man. A great gulf opened between man, as evil, and God as infinitely pureand had it not been for the amazing goodness of the Most High, we would have, all of us, been forever banished from His Presence and from the Glory of His power! The Lord God, in infinite love, resolved that He, Himself, would bridge the distance and would again dwell with man. And, in token of this, He made Himself manifest to His chosen nation, Israel, when they were in the wilderness.

He was pleased to dwell in type and symbol among His people in the very center and heart of their camp! Do you see yonder tent with its curtains of goats hair in the center of the canvas city? You cannot see within it, but it is all glorious within with precious wood, pure gold and tapestry of many colors. Within its most sacred shrine shines forth a bright light between the wings of cherubim, which light was the symbol of the Presence of the Lord! But if you cannot see within, yet you can see above the sacred tent, a cloud which arises from the top of the Holy of Holies and then expands like a vast tree so as to cover all the host and protect the chosen of God from the intense heat of the sun, so apt to make the traveler faint when passing over the burning sand! If you will wait till the sun is down, that same cloud will become luminous and light up the whole camp! Thus it was both shade and lightand by its means was enjoyed that safety which was afterwards set forth in the promise, The sun shall not smite you by day, nor the moon by night. Over all, the Glory was a defense and a comfort. The Lord dealt not so with any nation, save only His people Israel, of whom He said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

The day of the type is over. We see no more a nation secluded from all others and made to be as the Church in the wilderness. God does not now confine His abode to one people, for, The God of the whole earth shall He be called. There is now no spot on earth where God dwells in preference to another. Did not our Lord say, at the well of Sychar, Woman, believe Me, the hour comes when you shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. But. . .the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth? Wherever true hearts seek the Lord, He is found of them. He is as much present on the lone mountains side as in the aisles of yonder abbey, or in the galleries of this tabernacle. Howbeit the Most High dwells not in temples made with hands; as says the Prophet, Heaven is My throne, and earth is My footstool: what house will you build Me? says the Lord: or what is the place of My rest?

Yet there is a true House of God, a real Temple of the Infinite, a living abode of the Godhead. The Epistle to the Hebrews speaks of the true Tabernacle which the Lord pitched, and not man. There is a place where God does still meet with man and hold fellowship with Him. That place is the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ, in whom dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. The Manhood of Christ is become to us the anti-type of that tent in the center of the camp! God is in Christ Jesus! Christ Jesus is God! And in His blessed Person, God dwells in the midst of us as in a tentfor such is the force of the original in our text. The Word was made flesh, and tabernacled, or tented, among us. That is to say, in Christ Jesus the Lord dwelt among men, as God of old dwelt in His sanctuary in the midst of the tribes of Israel. This is very delightful and hopeful for usthe Lord God does dwell among us through the Incarnation of His Son.

But the Substance far excels the shadow, for in the wilderness, the Lord only dwelt in the abode of man, but now His approach to us is closer, for He dwells in the flesh of man. The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us. Note that word, flesh. It does not say, The Word was made manit means that, but the use of the word, flesh, brings the Lord Jesus still closer to us and shows that He took on Him the very nature and substance of manhood! He did not merely assume the name and notion and appearance of manhood, but the realitythe weakness, the suffering, the mortality of our manhood He actually took into union with Himself! He was no phantom, or apparition, but He had a human body and a human soul. The Word was made flesh. When the Lord became bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh, His Incarnation in a human body brought Him far nearer to man than when He only abode within curtains and occupied a tent in the midst of Israel.

Moreover, it is to be noted that God does, in the Person of Jesus, not merely dwell among men, but He has joined Himself unto menthe Word not only dwelt in flesh, but, was made flesh. It is impossible to use words which are exactly accurate to describe the wonderful Incarnation of the Son of God in human flesh, but these words are used to show that our Lord is as truly and as really Man as He is God. Not only does God dwell in the body of man, but our Lord Jesus is God and Man in one Person. He is not ashamed to speak of men as His brethren. Forasmuch then, as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also, Himself, likewise took part of the same. So that the Lord Jesus is one with us! This approach to us is exceedingly close. God was never one with the tabernacle, but in Christ Jesus He is one with us. This union has in it a sweetness of sympathy, a tenderness of relationship and a condescension of fellowship greatly to be admired. Now we listen to the music of that blessed name, Emanuel, God With Us. In the Person of the Only-Begotten, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, we see God reconciling the world unto Himself. Let us rejoice and be glad that we have in Jesus more than Israel had in the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High! The ancient Believer gazed upon the sacred tent, he thought of the holy place of sacrifice and the Holy of Holies, the inner shrine of the Lords indwellingbut we have infinitely morewe have God in our nature, and in Him, truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.

In and around the tent where the Lord dwelt in the center of the camp, there was a manifestation of the Presence of God. This was the Glory of that house, but how scanty was the revelation! A bright light which I have already mentioned, the Shekinah, is said to have shone over the Mercy Seatbut only the High Priest could see it and he only saw it once in the year when he entered, with blood, within the veil. Outside, above the Holy Place, there was the manifest Glory of the pillar of cloud by day, and of fire by night. This sufficed to bear witness that God was there, but still, cloud and fire are but physical appearances and cannot convey a true appearance of God, who is a spirit! God cannot be perceived by the senses the fiery, cloudy pillar could appeal only to the eyes. The excellence of the indwelling of God in Christ is thisthat there is in Him a Glory as of the Only-Begotten of the Father, the moral and spiritual Glory of Godhead! This is to be seen, but not with the eyesthis is to be perceived, but not by the carnal senses. This is seen, heard and known by spiritual men whose mental perceptions are keener than those of sight and hearing!

In the Person of the Lord, there is a Glory which is seen by our faith, which is discerned of our renewed spirits and is made to operate upon our hearts. The Glory of God in the sanctuary was seen only by the priest of the house of Aaron. The Glory of God in the face of Christ is seen by all Believers who are all priests unto God! That Glory the priest beheld but once in the yearbut we steadily behold that Glory at all times and are transformed by the sight. The Glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ is not a thing of outward appearance to be seen with the eyes, like the pillar of cloud and fire, but there is an abiding, steady luster of holy, gracious, truthful Character about our Lord Jesus Christ which is best seen by those who, by reason of sanctification, are made fit to discern it.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Yes, they do see Him in Christ Jesus! No man has seen God at any time; the OnlyBegotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him. Many of us besides the Apostles can say, We beheld His Glory, the Glory as of the Only-Begotten of the Father, full of Grace and Truth. We have not seen Jesus raise the dead; we have not seen Him cast out devils; we have not seen Him hush the winds and calm the waves; but we do see, with our minds eyes, His spotless holiness, His boundless love, His superlative truth, His wondrous heavenlinessin a word, we have seen, and do see His fullness of Grace and Truthand we rejoice in the fact that the tabernacling of God among men in Christ Jesus is attended with a more real Glory than the mere brilliance of light and the glow of flame!

The condescension of Christs love is to us more glorious than the pillar of cloud. And the zeal of our Lords self-sacrifice is more excellent than the pillar of fire. As we think of the Divine mysteries which meet in the Person of our Lord, we do not envy Israel the gracious manifestations vouchsafed her when a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the Glory of the Lord covered the tabernacle, for we have all this and more in our Incarnate God who is with us always, even to the end of the world!

As the Holy Spirit shall help me, I shall, at this time, say, first of all, Let us behold this tabernacling of God. And, secondly, Let us avail ourselves of this tabernacling of God in all the ways for which it was intended.

I. First, then, LET US BEHOLD THIS TABERNACLING OF GOD WITH US. We beheld His Glory, the Glory as of the Only-Begotten of the Father, full of Grace and Truth. In Jesus Christ all the attributes of God are to be seenveiled, but yet truly there. You have only to read the Gospels and to look with willing eyesand you shall behold in Christ all that can possibly be seen of God. It is veiled in human flesh, as it must be, for the Glory of God is not to be seen by us absolutely. It is toned down for these dim eyes of ours, but the Godhead is there, the perfect Godhead in union with the perfect Manhood of Christ Jesus our Lord, to whom be Glory forever and ever!

Two Divine things are more clearly seen in Jesus than anything else. Upon these I would speak at this time, considering the two, together, and then each one separatelyFull of Grace and Truth.

Observe the two glorious qualities, joined inseparablyGrace and Truthand observe that they are spoken of in the concrete. The Apostle says that the Only-Begotten is full of Grace and Truth. He did not come to tell us about Grace, but actually to bring us Grace. He is not full of the news of Grace and Truth, but of Grace and Truth, themselves. Others had been messengers of gracious tidings, but He came to bring Grace. Others teach us truth, but Jesus is the Truth of God. He is that Grace and Truth whereof others spoke! Jesus is not merely a teacher, an exhorter, a worker of Grace and Truth, but these heavenly things are in Him. He is full of them! I want you to note this. It raises such a difference between Christ and othersyou go to others to hear of Grace and Truth, but you must go to Christ to see them! There may bethere is Divine Grace in other men, but not as it is in Christthey have it as water flowing through a pipe, but He has it as water in its fountain and source! He has Grace to communicate to the sons of men, Grace without measure, Grace essential and abiding. There is the Truth of God in others where God has worked it, by His Spirit, but it is not in them as it is in Christ. In Him dwell the depth, the substance, the essence of the fact! Grace and Truth come to us by Him and yet they always abide in Him! I say again, our Lord did not merely come to teach Grace and Truth, or to impress them upon us, but He came to exhibit in His own Person, life and work, all the Grace and Truth which we need. He has brought us Grace in rivers and the Truth of God in streamsof these He has an infinite fullnessof that fullness all His saints receive!

This Grace and Truth are blended. The, and, between the two words I would treat as more than a common conjunction. The two rivers unite in one fullnessFull of Grace and Truththat is to say, the Grace is truthful Grace, Grace not in fiction nor in fancy, Grace not to be hoped for and to be dreamed of, but Grace, every atom of which is fact! It is redemption which redeems, pardon which blots out sin, renewal which actually regenerates, salvation which completely saves! We have not, here, blessings which charm the ears and cheat the soul, but real, substantial favors from God that cannot lie. Then blend these things the other way. Grace and Truththe Lord has come to bring us Truth, but it is not the kind of truth which censures, condemns and punishesit is gracious Truth, Truth steeped in love, Truth saturated with mercy! The Truth which Jesus brings to His people comes not from the Judgement Seat, but from the Mercy Seat! It has a gracious drift and aim about it and always tends to salvation. His Light is the life of men. If you are overshadowed with a dark Truth of God which seems to deepen your despair, look at it again and you will perceive, within it, a hidden Light of God which is sown for the righteous. The darkness of convincing and humbling Truth makes for the Light of Godby engendering despair of self, heart-searching Truth is meant to drive you to the true Hope.

There is Grace to Gods people in everything that falls from the lips of Jesus Christ. His lips are like lilies dropping sweet smelling myrrh. Myrrh, in itself, is bitter, but such is the Grace of our Lord Jesus that His lips impart sweetness to it. See how Grace and Truth thus blend and qualify each other! The Grace is all true and the Truth is all gracious. This is a wondrous compound made according to the art of the Divine Apothecary. Where else is Grace so true, or Truth so gracious?

Furthermore, it is Grace and Truth balanced. I wish I were able to communicate my thoughts, this morning, as they came to me when I was meditating upon this passage, but this thought almost speaks for itself. The Lord Jesus Christ is full of Grace, but He has not neglected the other quality which is somewhat sterner, namely, that of Truth. I have known many in this world, very loving and affectionate, but they have not been faithful. On the other hand, I have known men to be sternly honest and truthful, but they have not been gentle and kind. But in the Lord Jesus Christ there is no defect either way. He is full of Grace which invites the publican and the sinner to Himself, but He is full of Truth which repels the hypocrite and Pharisee. He does not hide a Truth of God, however terrible it may be, from manHe plainly declares the wrath of God against all unrighteousness. But when He has spoken terrible Truth, He has uttered it in such a gracious and tender manner, with so many tears of compassion for the ignorant and those that are out of the way, that you are as much won by His Grace as convicted by His Truth! Our Lords ministry is not Truth, alone, nor Grace, alone, but is a balanced, well-ordered system of Grace and Truth. The Lord Himself is, in His Character, just and having salvation. He is both King of Righteousness and King of Peace. He does not save unjustly, nor does He proclaim Truth unlovingly. Grace and Truth are equally conspicuous in Him.

Beloved, notice, here, that both these qualities in our Lord are at the fullest. He is full of Grace. Who could be more so? In the Person of Jesus Christ, the immeasurable Grace of God is treasured up. God has done for us, by Christ Jesus, exceeding abundantly above all that we ask, or even think. It is not possible, even, for imagination to conceive of any person more gracious than God in Christ Jesus! You cannot desire, certainly you cannot require, anything that should exceed what is found of Grace in the Person, offices, work and death of the Only-Begotten. Come, you that have large minds and intellects that are creative, and see if you can devise anything that should be mentioned in the same day with what God, in the infinite Glory of His Grace, has given us in the Person of His Son!

And there is an equal fullness of Truth about our Lord. He, Himself, as He comes to us as the Revelation and Manifestation of God, declares to us, not some Truth, but all Truth. All of God is in Christand all of God means all that is true, all that is right, all that is faithful, all that is just and all that is according to righteousness and holiness. Christ Jesus has brought to us the Justice, Truth and Righteousness of God to the fullest He is the Lord our righteousness! There are no reserves of disagreeable fact in Christ. There is nothing hidden from us of Truth that might alarm us, nor anything that might have shaken our confidence. Nor, on the other hand, is any Truth kept back which might have increased our steadfastness. He says, If it were not so, I would have told you. Admire the full-orbed splendor of the Sun of Righteousness. Ask not with Pilate, What is truth? but behold it in Gods dear Son! Oh, I know not how to speak to you upon themes so full and deep! How shall I, that am but as a twinkling dewdrop on a blade of grass, reflect the full Glory of this Sun of Righteousness? But all Truth and all Grace dwell in Christ in all their fullness beyond conceptionand the two lie in each others bosoms foreverto bless us with boundless, endless joy and Glory!

Thus have I taken the two together. Now I want to dwell briefly on each one by itself.   
Grace is put first. We beheld His Glory, the Glory as of the OnlyBegotten of the Father, full of Grace. Jesus Christ is the Son of God. He is His only-begotten Son. Others are begotten of God, but no other was ever begotten of God as Christ was. Consequently, when He came into this world, the Glory that was about Him was a Glory as of the Only-Begotten. A very singular, very special and incommunicable Glory abides in the Person of our Lord. Part of this was the Glory of His Grace. Now, in the Old Testament, in that 34th Chapter of Exodus, which we read, in part, this morning, you notice that the Glory of God lay in His being, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering and abundant in goodness and Truth. The Glory of the Only-Begotten of the Father must lie in the same things as the Glory of the Father, namely, in long-suffering, goodness and Truth. In Christ there is a wonderful display of the gentleness, patience, pity, mercy and love of God. Not merely did He teach the Grace of God and invite us to the Grace of God, but in Himself He displayed the Grace of God!   
This is to be seen, first, in His Incarnation. It is a wonderful instance of Divine Grace that the Word should be made flesh and dwell among us and reveal His Glory to us. Apart from anything that springs out of the Incarnation of Christ, that Incarnation, itself, is a wondrous act of Grace. There must be hope for men, now that man is next akin to God through Jesus Christ. The angels were not mistaken when they not only sang, Glory to God in the highest, but also, on earth peace, goodwill towards men, because in Bethlehem, the Son of God was born of a virgin! God, in our Nature, must mean God with gracious thoughts towards us! If the Lord had meant to destroy the race, He never would have espoused it and taken it into union with Himself. There is fullness of Grace in the fact of the Word made flesh, tabernacling among us!   
More than this, there is fullness of Grace in the life of Christ when we consider that He lived here in order to perfect Himself as our High Priest. Was He not made perfect through His sufferings, that He might sympathize with us in all our woes? He was compassed with infirmities, bore our sorrows and endured those crosses of the human life which press so heavily on our own shouldersand all this to make Himself able to deal graciously with us in a tender and brotherly way! Apart from that which comes out of this wonderful brotherhood, there is a bottomless depth of Grace about the fellowship, itself. The Lord Jesus cannot curse me, for He has borne my curse. He cannot be unkind to me, for He has shared my sorrows. If every pang that rends my heart has also rent His heart and, if into all my woes He has descended even deeper than I have gone, it must mean love to meit cannot mean anything else and it must mean Truth, for Jesus did not play at fellowshipHis griefs were real. I say then, that this manifestation of God in the Person of Christ Jesus is seen in His sorrowing life to be full of Grace and Truth.   
Then think, for a minute, of what He did. He was so full of Grace that when He spoke, His words dropped a fatness of Grace! The dew of His own love was upon all His discourses and when He moved about and touched men, here and there, virtue went out of Him because He was so full of it. At one time He spoke and pardoned a sinner, saying, Your sins are forgiven you. At another moment He battled with the consequences of sin, raising men from sickness and from death! He turned Himself and fought with the Prince of Darkness, himself, and cast him out from those whom he tormented. He went about like a cloud which is big with rain and, therefore, plentifully waters arid and dry places. His life was boundless compassion! There was a power of Grace about His garments, His voice, His lookand in all He was so true that none ever thought Him capable of subterfuge. Everywhere He went, He scattered Grace among the children of menand He is just the same nowfullness of Grace still abides in Him!   
When it came to His death, which was the pouring out of His soul, then His fullness of Grace was seen! He was full of Grace, indeed, for He emptied Himself to save men. He was, Himself, not only mans Savior, but his salvation! He gave Himself for us! He was, indeed, full of Grace when He bore our sins in His own body on the Cross. His was love at its height, since He died on the Cross, the Just for the unjust, to bring us to God. Pronounce the word, substitution, and you cannot help feeling that the Substitute for guilty man was full of Grace! Or use that other word, representative, and remember that whatever Jesus did, He did as the Covenant Head of His people. If He died, they died in Him. If He rose again, they rose in Him. If He ascended up on high, they ascended in Him and if He sits at the right hand of God, they also sit in the heavenly places in Him.

When He shall come a second time, it shall be to claim the Kingdom for His chosen as well as for Himselfand all the Glory of the future ages is for themnot for Himself alone. He says, Because I live, you shall live, also. Oh, the richness of the Grace and Truth that dwell in our Lord as the Representative of His people! He will enjoy nothing unless His people enjoy it with Him! Where I am, there, also, shall My servant be. To him that overcomes will I grant to sit with Me on my Throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father on His Throne.   
There is yet another word higher than substitution, higher than representation, and that is union. We are one with Christ, joined to Him by a union that never can be broken. Not only does He do what He does, representing us, but we are joined unto Him in one spirit, members of His body and partakers of His Glory! Is not this Grace, Grace unspeakable? Is it not a miracle of love that worms of earth should ever be one with Incarnate Deity? And so one that they never can be separated throughout the ages?   
Thus I have shown you that there is, in our Lord, a fullness of Grace. Your own thoughts will dig deeper than mine.   
But then it is said there is also in Him a fullness of Truth, by which I understand that in Christ Himself, not merely in what He said, did and promised, there is a fullness of the Truth of God. And this is true, first, in the fact that He is the fulfillment of all the promises concerning Him that went before. God had promised great things by His Prophets concerning the coming Messiah, but all those predictions are absolutely matters of fact in the Person of the Well-Beloved. All the promises of God are yes and Amen in Christ Jesus. Verily He has bruised the serpents head. Verily He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. Verily He has proclaimed liberty to the captives. Verily He has proved Himself a Prophet like unto Moses.   
According to my second text, in verse 17, I understand our Lord Jesus to be Truth in the sense of being the Substance of all the types. The Law that was given through Moses was but symbolical and emblematical. But Jesus is the Truth of God. He is really that Blood of sprinkling which speaks better things than that of AbelHe is, in very deed, the Paschal Lamb of Gods Passover. He is the Burnt-Offering, the Sin-Offering and the Peace-Offeringall in one! He is the true Scapegoat, the true morning and evening Lamb. In fact, He is, in Truth, what all the types and figures were in pattern. Blessed be God, Brothers and Sisters, whenever you see great things in the Old Testament in the type, you see the real Truth of those things in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ! The Jew had nothing that we have notthey had nothing, even in outline and shadow, which we have not obtained in Substance! The Covenant in its fullness is in Christ! The prophecy is in Moses, the fulfillment is in Jesus! The foreshadowing is in the Law, the Truth is in the Word made flesh!   
Further than that, our Lord Jesus Christ is said to be Grace and Truth in this sense, that He truthfully deals with matters of fact in the case of our salvation. I know the notion of the world is that the salvation of Christ is a pretty dream, a handsome piece of sentiment. But there is nothing dreamy about it. It is no fictionit is fact upon fact! The Lord Jesus Christ does not gloss over or conceal the condition of man in his salvation. He finds man condemned and takes him as condemned in the very worst sensecondemned of a capital offense. And as mans Substitute, He endures the capital penalty and dies in the sinners place. The Lord Jesus views the sinner as depraved, yes, as dead in trespasses and sins, and He quickens him by His resurrection life. He does not wink at the result of the Fall and of actual sin, but He comes to the dead sinner and quickens himHe comes to the diseased heart and heals it!   
To me, the Gospel is a wonderful embodiment of Omnipotent Wisdom and the Truth of God. If the Gospel had said to men, The Law of God is certainly righteous, but it is too stern, too exacting and, therefore, God will wink at many sins and make provision for salvation by omitting to punish much of human guilt, why, my Brothers and Sisters, we would always have been in jeopardy! If God could be unjust to save us, He could also be changeable and cast us away! If there was anything rotten in the state of our salvation, we should fear that it would, at last, fail us! But our foundation is sure, for the Lord has excavated down to the rock! He has taken away every bit of mere sentiment and sham and His salvation is real throughout. It is a glorious salvation of Grace and Truth in which God takes the sinner, as He is, and deals with Him as He isyes, and deals with the sinner as God is, on the principles of true righteousness and yet saves him!   
But it means more than that. The Lord deals with us in the way of Grace and that Grace encourages a great many hopesand those hopes are all realized, for He deals with us in Truth. Our necessities demand great things and Grace actually supplies those great things. The old Law could never make those who came to it, perfect as pertaining to the conscience, but the Grace of God makes Believers perfect as pertaining to the conscience! If I were to sit down and try to imagine a flaw in the ground of my salvation by Christ, I could not do it! Believing, as I do, in Him who bore my sins in His own body on the Cross, I feel that by no possibility can His Atonement fail me. I have not imagination strong enough to feign a reason for distrustI do not see hole or corner in which any charge could lurk against the man that believes in Jesus Christ. My conscience is satisfiedmore than satisfied!   
Sometimes it even seems to me that my sins could not have deserved that the Son of God should die. The Atonement is greater than the sin. Speak of the vindication of the Law? Is not the vindication even greater than the dishonor? Does not the Law of God shine out more lustrous in its indescribable Glory through the Sacrifice of Christ as the penalty for sin, than it would have done had it never been broken, or had all the race of Law-breakers been swept into endless destruction? O Brothers and Sisters, in the salvation of Jesus there is Grace unrivalled! There is a deep Truth of God, a substantiality, an inward soul-satisfaction in the Sacrifice of Christ which makes us feel that it is a full Atonementa fountain of Grace and Truth.   
Nor have I yet quite brought out all the meaning, even if I have succeeded so far. Christ has brought to us Grace and Truth, that is to say, He works in Believers both Grace and Truth. We need Grace to rescue us from sinHe has brought it. We need the Truth of God in the inward partsHe has worked it. The system of salvation by atonement is calculated to produce truthful men. The habit of looking for salvation through the great Sacrifice fosters the spirit of justice, begets in us a deep abhorrence of evil and a love for that which is right and true. By nature we are all liars and either love or make a liefor this cause we are content with refuges of lies and we compass ourselves with deceit. In our carnal state we are as full of guile as an egg is full of meatbut when the Lord comes to us in Christ, no longer imputing our trespasses to usthen He takes out of our heart that deceit and desperate wickedness which had otherwise remained there! I say it, and dare avow it, that the system of salvation by the indwelling of God in Christ and the Atonement offered by Him for men has a tendency in it to infuse Grace into the soul and to produce Truth in the life! The Holy Spirit employs it to that end. I pray that you and I may prove it so by the Grace which causes us to love both God and manand the truthfulness with which we deal in all the affairs of life.   
Thus has our Lord displayed the Glory of God in the Grace and Truth with which He is filled. I am sorry I have spoken so feebly on so grand a theme. May the Spirit bless you even through the infirmities of my speech!   
II. Now I want a few minutes to say to you, Come Brothers and Sisters, LET US AVAIL OURSELVES OF THIS TABERNACLING OF GOD AMONG US.   
First, then, if God has come to dwell among men by the Word made flesh, let us pitch our tents around this central tabernacledo not let us live as if God were a long way off. To the Israelites, God was equally near from every quarter of the camp. The tabernacle was in the center and the center is equally near to every point of the circumference. No true Israelite could say, I must go across the sea, or soar up into the air, or dive into the depths to find my God. Every Israelite could say, He dwells between the cherubim: I have but to go to His Tabernacle to be in His Presence and speak with Him. Our God is not far from any of His people this day. We are made near by the blood of Christ. God is everywhere present, but there is a higher presence of effectual Grace in the Person of the OnlyBegotten. Do not let us live as if we worshipped a far-off God. Let us not repine as if we were deserted. Let us not feel alone, for the Father is with us   
*God is near you; therefore cheer your sad soul.* Open your window towards Jerusalem, as Daniel did. Pray with your eyes upon Christ, in whom dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily in the greatest nearness to us. God is never far away since Christ has come to dwell among men!   
Next, let us resort to this central Tabernacle to obtain Grace to help in time of need. Let us come to Christ without fear, for He has Grace to give and He will give it to us abundantly whenever we need it. I like to think of the wording of my text. Leave out the parenthesis, and it runs, He dwelt among us full of Grace. He could not have dwelt among such provoking ones if He had not been full of Grace! But if He dwells among us full of Grace, we need not fear that He will cast us away because of our sins and failings. I invite you, therefore, to come boldly to Him who is full of forgiving love. I beg you to come and receive of His fullness, for Grace is truly Grace when it is communicatedGrace which is not distributed is Grace in name only. Alas! you say, I need so much Grace. Brother, it is treasured up in Christ for you without measure! It is placed in Him that you may have it. Do we not try to persuade the sinner that there is life in a look? Shall I need to persuade saints that Grace is equally free to

them? Do we not tell the sinner that God is not to be sought for as far away, but that He is waiting to be gracious? Must I tell the Believer the same?   
You may, at this moment, obtain all the Grace you need. The door is open! Enter and take what you will. Do not stop till you reach home and go through a set of religious exercises, but here, and now, believe in Jesus to the fullest! In the center of the camp is the Incarnate God; Israel had but to go to the central tent to find present help in time of trouble. In the Person of Christ, who has said, I am with you always, even to the end of the world, there is, in Truth, all the Grace you can possibly need! Come to this well and drink. Receive of His fullness and go on your way rejoicing.   
What shall we do next? Brothers and Sisters, since God in Christ is in the midst of us, let us abide in joyful, peaceful confidence in Him who is Grace and Truth to us. Do not let us wander to other sources. To whom would we go? Shall we leave our God? Shall we leave His Grace, His Truth? Do not let us dream that He is changed, for He is God! Do not imagine that He has left, for He has said, This is My rest forever: here will I dwell, for I have desired it. Do not let us conceive that His Grace and Truth are exhausted, for His fullness is eternal! Let us receive strong consolation and remain steadfast, unmovable. Let us quietly rest in the firm belief that all we can need between here and Heaven, all that we need this moment and in all moments yet to come, is treasured up in Christ Jesus who is abidingly the center of His Church and the manifestation of God.   
Once more. If this is so and God does really dwell in Christ in the midst of His people full of Grace and Truth, let us tell everybody of it. I am sure if I had been an Israelite in the wilderness and had met an Amalekite or an Edomite, I should have gloried in my God and in the privileges which His Presence secured me. We know that Amalekites and Edomites could not have come into the house of the Lord, but nowadays, if we meet with one who is a stranger, we can tell him of our privilege with sweet persuasion, on the desire that the stranger can be brought near through the blood of the Lamb. Therefore let us abundantly speak of the dwelling of God with men! Let us proclaim to all that the Lord has come to man, not in wrath, not in judgement, but full of Grace and Truth.   
O my unconverted Hearer, come to Jesus! He is able to save to the uttermost those that come unto God by Him. Draw near to the meek and lowly Jesus and you draw near to God! He says, He that has seen Me, has seen the Father. Publish the invitation of Grace to the four winds! Ring out your silver trumpets, or if you have them not, sound your rams hornsbut somehow let all people know that the Tabernacle of God is with men and He dwells among them! Proclaim this news in the far country, that the wandering prodigal may hear it and cry, I will arise and go to my Father. God has come to men! Will not men come to God? In Christ Jesus, God invites men to come to Himwill you not come to receive Grace and Truth?  
One more lesson remains and that iswhat manner of people ought we to be among whom Jehovah dwells? It must have been a very solemn thing to be a member of that great camp of millions in the wilderness of Sinai. Gods Presence in the midst of the camp must have made every tent sacred. As we walked through the streets of that canvas city, if we had been Israelites and in our right minds, we would have said, These tents are none other than the House of God and the very gate of Heaven, for look, Jehovah is in the midst of us! Cant you see the bright light that shines above His sanctuary? We would have felt that in such a camp all should be holy. The pollution of sin should be unknown there! In such a camp constant prayer and praise should be presented to Him whose Presence was its Glory and defense!   
Today let our congregation be a holy convocationand as for ourselves, let us be holiness unto the Lord! We are consecrated men and women, seeing the Lord has come so very near to us! I spoke of solemnityI meant not dread and sorrowbut a solemnity full of joy! It is a solemn thing to have God so near, but the joy is equal to the solemnity! Glory be unto God most high, for He is here! Let us spend our days and nights in gladness and delight! God is reconciled to us in the Person of His dear Son and we have fellowship with God in Christ Jesus! Therefore let us rejoice forevermore! Amen and amen!

**PORTIONS OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON Exodus 34:1-8; 40:34-38; John 1:1-18.** HYMNS FROM OUR OWN HYMN BOOK249, 256, 250.

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THE FULLNESS OF CHRIST THE TREASURY OF THE SAINTS   
NO. 1169

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, APRIL 19, 1874, BY C. H. SPURGEON**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**For it pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell. Colossians 1:19.   
And of His fullness we have all received, and Grace for Grace. John 1:16.**

THESE two texts make up a very beautiful sketch of the plan of salvation. Put before your minds eye the sinner, empty of all holiness, of all hope, despairing and ready to die. Put, also, before your mind, God, full of mercy, willing to come and fill the sinners emptiness, to bring all His communicable attributes, dwell in that sinner and give him, first, the mercy which can blot out his sin, and then the holiness which can lift him up from his ruined condition. Next note the difficulty in the wayGod cannot come as half a Godall His attributes must come together. And should the just God come into this guilty sinner to fill his emptiness, the flame of Justice would destroy him. It is not possible for God, even our God, who is a consuming fire, to come into contact with that which is sinful without destroying it. What then? Shall the sinner remain empty and shall Gods fullness remain uncommunicated?

Behold the plan which infinite Wisdom has devised! The Eternal Son of God becomes Man! The Divine Nature comes in all its fullness and dwells in the Mediator Christ Jesus! Coming into Him, He was made to feel the mighty burning of Justice, which caused Him agony but could not consume Him, for in Him there was no sin. Justice burned and blazed within Him and cast Him into a bloody sweatyes, brought Him to the Cross and to death because He stood in the sinners place. But this golden Vessel, though heated, was not melted! It could contain the Divine fire and yet not be destroyedand now in Christ Jesus dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily and, moreover, the Divine Nature is in Him in such a way as to be capable of communication to the sons of men. Of course the essence of Deity is not communicated, for that would be to make men into Godsbut we are made partakers of the Divine Nature in the sense of receiving the same characterand becoming the children of God. That which God could not bring to us directly by reason of our inability to receive it, He has now brought to us through a Mediator, by placing it in the Man, Christ Jesus, that we, coming to Him, might freely receive of it.

The next step in the plan of salvation is thisthat after the fullness of God has come to man in the Person of His Son, everyone that comes to Him by faith receives His Divine Grace. Salvation is not by what you bring to Christ, but by what you take from Him. You are to be receivers first, and then, by-and-by, through the power of Grace, you shall give forth

from yourselves rivers of living water to others. In your first coming you come empty, having nothing but your sin and miseryas empty, undeserving sinners you receive of His fullnessand all your life continue to do the same. The Grace already given is not the climax or the conclusion you go on receiving more and more! Grace increases your capacity for Grace and that enlarged capacity becomes filled! And so the fullness of God comes into you till you are filled with it and you rise from Grace to Glory, being made like unto God and fitted to dwell where He is forever and ever.

Now, unconverted ones, take note that this is the plan of salvation, and the only plan. You must obtain Gods love and mercy and holiness by receiving it through the Mediator, Jesus Christ! You have not yet received itI ask you, How long will you tarry without it? You are, in some degree, aware of your need, for you are not ignorant of the Gospel. Oftentimes you have heard the voice of its invitation and have been almost persuaded to receive the fullness revealed in Christ Jesus. How long will you waver between two opinions? How long will you hesitate? This is the way, the safe way, the suitable way, the only way which is open to youand it is open to you at this very momentwill your feet never tread it? Will your disobedient steps forever wander, till, at last, you sink in despair and die eternally? God have mercy upon you and bring you to receive of the fullness which the Father has stored up in His Son, Jesus Christ!

Needy Sinners, I warn you, do not insult the fullness of Christ by thinking that you are full enough yourselves! Never think of putting your own righteousness side by side with the Divine, nor think of mixing your tears with Jesus blood, nor of bringing your prayers or your faith to increase the all-sufficiency of Christs atoning Sacrifice! He needs nothing from you! Come and take everything from Him, for all fullness dwells in Him. As you may not insult His fullness, so I pray you, do not neglect it. Do not stand by this Fountain and refuse to drink. Do not pass by the riches of His Grace as though they were nothing to you, lest haply, when you come to die, your heart should be wrung with terrible remorse because you have despised the Saviors love. How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? Put not off these matters from month to month, but, today, if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts. Hasten now unto the place where God Himself has come to meet younamely, in the Person of His Son.

Moreover, as I charge you not to neglect the Grace of our Lord Jesus, so would I encourage you not to distrust it. All fullness dwells in Jesusa fullness which is meant to be given out to all who receive it as the gift of Divine Grace! Believe in this fullness and, empty as you are, do not despair any longer when you remember that Jesus has a supply for every possible need. Come, though your head is bowed with grief, for Jesus never did reject a sinner and he never can. It is His office and calling to cleanse the guilty and to receive the lost. Come to Him, now, and may we, before this service is done, be able, all of us, to sing, It pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell, and, of His fullness have all we received, and Grace for Grace.

Let not these words be forgotten by those for whom they are meant. But still, I have not taken my text, this morning, with the view of so preaching from it. I have another aim altogether. Moreover, it will be right for me to say that I do not intend to go into an exposition of these texts, having explained them several times before. I have only taken them with one object, namely, to address myself vehemently to the servants of God that they may be exhorted to lay hold of the fullness of the power and holiness which dwell in their Covenant Head.

During this last week I have given to my Brothers in the Conference, a motto which lay on my own heart. It is, Forward! Upward! These are the watchwords of this morningForward! Upward! I want you, dear Brothers and Sisters, to see that every preparation is made for greater growth and greater success. I want you to be encouraged to seize upon that which lies before you, but which is too often treated as if it did not exist, and to rise, by the power of the Eternal Spirit, to something higher than you have, up to now, accomplished or even attempted.

I. My first point this morning is thisTHERE IS A GLORIOUS FULLNESS IN JESUS. Brothers and Sisters, if it is so, why are we so weak, unfurnished and unhappy? There is an infinite fullness in Jesus! A fullness of all that any saint can ever need to enable him to rise to the highest degree of Divine Grace. If there is anything lacking for the attainment of the Divine image in us, it is not a deficiency Christwardit is occasioned by shortcomings in ourselves. If sin is to be overcome, the conquering power dwells in Him in its fullness. If virtue is to be attained, sanctifying energy resides in Christ to perfection. If I see before me an eminent child of God, whose conversation is in Heaven, I may not dare to say that I am not capable of being as sanctified as he isfor the same Lord is mine as well as his.

I have in my flesh no power whatever, for I am emptiness itself. In me the Truth of God is realized, Without Me you can do nothing. But, on the other hand, the power to do all things lies in Christ and the power to become fully consecrated streams forth from Him. With God all things are possible. In Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and they who dwell in Him shall find things impossible with man become simple everyday facts with themselves if they will but have faith in the mediatorial fullness.

Beloved, I am going to say nothing but what you all know. And I do not mean to garnish it with finery of words. The truth is that there are many who are barely Christians and have scarcely enough Grace to float them into Heaven. The keel of their vessel is grating on the gravel all the way. My prayer is that we may reach deep waters and have so much Grace that we may sail like a gallant ship on the broad ocean with a glorious cargo on board and all colors flyingand so there may be administered unto us an abundant entrance into the kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! Everything is provided for this. Christ has not merely placed enough bread on the table to keep us from starving, His oxen and fatlings are killedHe has spread a royal feast.

He has not provided a scanty garment which may barely hide your nakedness, but He has brought forth the best robe and has procured earrings for your ears, jewels for your necks and a royal crown for your

headsfor it pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell for all His saints. If you have not these riches, the fault lies with yourself. It is thereyou might have it if you had but faith to take it. Too often we sit down like beggars on the dunghill and groan and cry because of the poverty of our nature when we ought to be rejoicing in the Lord. I thank God that we can groan, for that is something! But there is a more excellent waya better gift to be earnestly coveted. In Christ you are rich to the fullness of riches! Get up, I pray you, to the high places and realize for yourselves the fullness of God in Christ Jesus!

The fullness which dwells in our Lord we may rest assured is sufficient for the conquest of the world. It is not enough for you or me that we should be wholly consecrated to Christour desire is that the whole world should be filled with the knowledge of the Lord! We can never be satisfied while there remains one sinner unsaved, one idol upon its pedestal, or one single error to darken the minds of men. For Christ we do not desire England, only, and the civilized nations, but we claim for Him the darkest dens of cannibalism and the vilest haunts of piracy. The banner of the Cross shall wave where now black flags poison the breeze! It shall be lifted high where today Kalee and Juggernaut set up their ensigns, for the Lord God Omnipotent shall reign from shore to shore!

We have in Christ Jesus all the might which is needed for subduing the nations, for all power is given unto Him in Heaven and in earth. We have, dear Brothers and Sisters, I fear, too often been considering the amount of money and the number of men which would be needed. Indeed, I remember a remarkable paper being read explaining to us how much money it would require to evangelize the worlda calculation which I regarded as vanity of vanities and nothing morefor if mountains of money were put before us it might just as well be shoveled into the infernal deep for all the good it could doif regarded as at all essential! Our checkbook needs more golden treasure and, thank God, we have it!

Depend upon it, when the Church is fit to be trusted with money, she will have it. Pecuniary straitness is only an index of lack of Divine Grace and is so far a good thing, because it brings before us in palpable form our real poverty before the Most High. But Brothers and Sisters, for the conquest of the world, the strength lies in the man Christ Jesus, since in Him all fullness dwells! And in Him we have all the necessary power at our disposal. We are never to say, Those thieves and criminals are too depraved to be converted, for in our Lord there is fullness of power to convert the most abandoned! We are not to say, That alley in the darkest part of the city will never be cleansed from its abominations. Jesus could cleanse Sodom, itself! We are never to leave a tribe of savages unevangelized because they are too degraded, nor are we to quail before an uneducated and subtle nation because it is too skepticalall power for all cases is in JesusHe is the armory of the house of David! In Him we shall find a thousand bucklers, all shields of mighty men! Let us go to the armory and we shall receive the invincible weapons of our Holy War, yes, and the strength with which to wield themthe might which ensures victory!

Beloved, the text puts away from us, as far as the east is from the west, every conceivable objection that may be raised as to what a saint can do, for surely the very thought of difficulty is rendered absurd by the fact of all fullness residing in our Lord on our behalf! It is not a fullness for merely teaching, but a fullness for convincing! It is not a fullness for simply convincing of sin, but for converting and bringing to full salvation! It is not a fullness for justifying the Believer, alone, but a fullness for sanctifying himand not a fullness for sanctifying him merely for a little whilebut a fullness to keep him to the end! It is a fullness which can fill him with all the fullness of God! Come to whatever place you may, you shall not say, Here I am at a nonplus, but there will you find a new illustration of the might of the eternal God which dwells in Christ Jesus!

The fact is, Beloved, we have a superabundant force in Christ and if we did but know it, instead of talking about the struggles of the Church and the strain that is put upon us to hold our own, the joy of the Lord would give such strength to us that we should not remember our own efforts, but like the flood which rushes down the mountain after the rain, the flush of life from Jesus would speed on with a tremendous force, leaping over every obstacle and filling our souls to the brim! God grant us to feel that we do not serve a little Christ nor a stingy Lord. Our God is the God of the hills as well as the valleys! And in the strength of the Lord Omnipotent we triumph in every place! Only let us serve God in real faith and we know not what we may live to see!

God grant us to know this first Truth of God that there is a fullness in Christand in the strength of that fullness we may cryForward and upward!

II. The next encouraging fact is that THE FULLNESS IS IN JESUS NOW. It pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell. The glory of the past exercises a depressing influence upon many Christians. We have heard with our ears and our fathers have told us the wondrous things which You did in their day and in the old time before them. But we dolefully complain that the golden age of Christianity is overits heroic times are matter of history. Indeed, this feeling is transformed to fact, for scarcely any Church now existing realizes that it can do what its first promoters did! All appear to be quite sure that these are bad times and but little is to be done in them. We do not expect, nowadays, to find a Methodist so full of fire as the first field preachers. The Quakers are never as fanatical and even the Primitives are not Ranters now! The old reproach has ceased because the old ardor which provoked it has cooled down. So far so

bad.

I see grave cause for sorrow in all this. A people are in an evil case when all their heroism is historical. We read the biographies of former worthies with great wonder and respect. But we do not attempt to follow in their steps with equal stride. Why not? It has pleased the Father that in Jesus all fullness should dwell, a fullness for Paul, a fullness for Luther, a fullness for Whitfield, and blessed be God, a fullness for me and a fullness for you! All that Jesus has given forth has not exhausted Him! Christianity has not lost its pristine strengthwe have lost our faiththeres the calamity! Oh, ignoble sons of glorious sires, you have degenerated, but not your Master! And if, even in your degeneracy, you would cast yourselves

upon your unchanging God, you would rise to more than the strength of your sires and do yet greater things than they!

The fullness of Jesus is not changed. Then why are our works so feebly done? Pentecost, is that to be a tradition? The reforming days, are these to be only memories? I see no reason why we should not have a greater Pentecost than Peter saw and a Reformation deeper in its foundations, and truer in its building up than all the reforms which Luther or Calvin achieved! We have the same Christ, remember that! The times are altered, but Jesus is the Eternal and time touches Him not. But we are not such men as they. What? Cannot God make us such? Are we weaker than they? The fitter to be instruments for the mighty God! Away with the cowardice which thinks the past is never to be outdone! Is not the Lord of Hosts with us? Is anything too hard for Him? We must labor to eclipse the past as the sunlight eclipses the brightness of the stars!

The mass of professors have their eyes only on the future. The good times are coming, by-and-by, but they are not here yet. We look forward with much hope to the golden age that is to be, when we shall see the fullness of Jesus and nations will be born in a day! Brothers and Sisters, does my text say, It pleased the Father that in Him all fullness shall one day dwell? No, but, in Him should all fullness dwell. Whatever has been done can be done nowand whatever shall yet be done, can be done today, by His Grace. Our laziness puts off the work of conquest. Our selfindulgence procrastinates. Our cowardice and lack of faith make us dote upon the millennium instead of hearing the Spirits voice today! Happy days would begin from this hour if the Church would but awake and put on her Strength, for in her Lord all fatness dwells.

When the Son of Man comes, shall He find faith on the earth? Some doubting ones say, We do not wonder that there is success in such a place, but we cannot have it. We hear of earnest ministers and we conclude that where they labor God will send the blessing, but not to our ministry. We conclude that when yonder woman gathers the young people around her, it is no wonder that blessing comes. Does Christ depend on ministers or on holy women? Have you said, Alas, I cannot have the blessing. Why not? How dare you limit the Holy One of Israel? You who dwell in towns where all is cold around you, do you despair? Is it in your minds that Christ is dependent upon the circumstances in which He has placed His servants? It pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell. What if the servants are emptytheir Master is not! If the means of Grace lack power, Grace from above is still Omnipotent. Only fly to the Fountain and the dried up streams need not distress you.

Furthermore, our Churches believe that there is a great fullness in Christ and that sometimes they ought to enjoy it. The progress of Christianity is to be by tides which ebb and flow. There are to be revivals like the spring and these must alternate with long lethargies like the winter. O accursed Unbelief, will you always pervert the Truth of God? Will you never understand this Word of GodIt pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell? It is not the Lords purpose that a fullness should reside in Jesus during revivals and then withdraw. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever! The highest state of revival should be the normal condition of the Church. When her martyrs are most selfsacrificing, her missionaries most daring, her ministers most bold, her members most consecrated, she is, even then, below her standardshe has not fully reached her high callingto come down from her position would be sin!

God grant us Grace to feel that we have not to drink of an intermittent spring, nor to work for Christ with an occasional industrybut as all fullness dwells in Himit is ours to believe that today we can have all the blessing of a true revival! That today we can go forward in the power of God! That at this very hour we lack for nothing which can lift the Church into her highest condition of spirituality and power! God grant us to receive Grace for Grace today!

III. Thirdly, THE POSITION OF THIS FULLNESS IS RICHLY ENCOURAGING TO US IN THE MATTER OF OBTAINING IT. It pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell. Brothers and Sisters, you have heard what we have said about the fullnessour words are very poor and poverty-stricken compared with the factbut listen! The fullness is placed where you can receive itwhere you can receive it now, for it is placed in Him who is your Brotherbone of your bone and flesh of your flesh! It dwells in Him who loves to give it, because, as our Head, He delights to communicate with His members!

The plenitude of Divine Grace dwells in Him who is, Himself, yours! Since He is yours, all that is in Christ is yours! You need not pray as if you had no inheritance in the blessing which you seek. Christ is the Trustee of the fullness of God and the property of it is vested in His people you have only to ask of Him and He will give you that which is yours, already! Why do you hesitate? How can you linger? The Father has placed His Grace in Christ because it gratifies His love to His Son. It pleases the heart of the great God to see Jesus adorned with the fullness of Deity and every time Jesus gives to Believers, the great heart of God is gladdened! How can you hesitate about receiving it if it pleases God for you to partake in it? You may go with great spirit and comfort, since Jesus Himself is honored by your going to Him. He obtains Glory by distributing of His fullness to empty sinners, who, when they receive Grace, are sure to love Himhow can you think Him reluctant to bestow the gift which will increase His Glory?

Do you not know, too, that when you go to Christ, you gain even by the act of going? I am so thankful that Christ has not put my fullness in myself, for then I should not require to go to Him so often, or if I did go to Him I should not have an errand to go upon of such importance as to justify my seeking an audience. But now, every time I get to Christs door I can plead necessity. We go to Him because we must go. When is there an hour when a Believer does not need to receive from Jesus? Go, then, Beloved, since it blesses the Church, it honors Christ, it pleases God and it is the way of soul enrichment for yourselves! What place of resort could be so attractive as the Person of the Well-Beloved? If God had put His fullness into an angel, we should not feel greatly drawn to himbut since He has caused it to dwell in Jesus, He has put it where we love to have it where we feel at home, where we are glad to go often! Yes, where we

would love to abide and never to go away, but to be forever receiving of Him.

I delight to think that this fullness is placed in Christ because He is the Man who receives sinners and, therefore, you saints who have lost your evidences, you Believers who have acted inconsistently and have not lived up to your privileges, you may say, we cannot go for this fullness to God, Himself, but we will joyfully go to the Savior of sinners. If you have been, till now, self-deceived, and your experience has all been a mistake, you can still come to the sinners Savior, to whom the thief looked up in his expiring hourand from whom your first mercy came! Come, Brothers and Sisters, why do you hesitate? Why do you linger? You who know what Christ is, come, I pray you, with swift feet to the place where all you need is storedand take all your heart requires! Yes, come for the highest degrees of Grace and for the largest measures of successand you shall have them, for Christ delights to give exceeding abundantly above what we ask or even think!

IV. And now I have to pass on to another argument. I want to use each head as a hammerand may Gods own Spirit wield it. The next is this, that FROM THIS FULLNESS WE HAVE, MANY OF US, ALREADY RECEIVED. Is not that an argument for still further exercising faith in Jesus? I know of no argument equal to that of practical experience. They must come who have come before! The sweetness of this honey remains upon the tongue and we long for more and cannot be satisfied till we have taken up the dripping honeycomb once again.

Now, see, Beloved, the text says, Of His fullness we have all received. That is, all the saints in former days have received of this fullness. There was not in John any good thing but what he received from his Master. There was not in the noble martyr Stephen one grain of courage but what he received from Christ. Paul, Apollos, or Cephasthese had nothing but what they took from Him If they received everything, why should we hesitate to do the same? Of ourselves it is also true that all our Graces came from Jesus. This is true of the greatest saint and true of the least. Do you remember when you first received Divine Grace? It brings to my mind right joyful memories of the hour when first these eyes looked to Him and were lightenedwhen I received pardon from His dying love and knew myself forgiven!

Since your conversion, dear Brothers and Sisters, everything good you have ever had, you have received from our Lord. What? Have you drunk out of your own cistern? What treasure have you found in your own fields? Nakedness, poverty, misery, deaththese are the only possessions of Nature. But life, riches, fullness, joythese are gifts of Divine Grace through Jesus Christ! Are you accepted before God? He justified you! Have you been kept? He has preserved you! Are you sanctified? He has cleansed you by His blood! Do you know, by full assurance, your interest in the Fathers love? He gave you that assurance! All you have and all you ever

will haveall that every saint that shall ever be born shall have that is worth having comes out of the fullness of Christ!   
The crowded ranks of the white-robed above, without exception, confess, Of His fullness we have all received. I hear them sing, this morning, as they keep a glorious Sabbath Day aboveand this is one sweet stanza of their song, Of His fullness we have all received, and Grace for Grace. Come then, Brothers and Sisters, what prevents us from receiving? Ah, you say, I cannot imagine that I can be a Christian of the highest type. Why not? Have you not received life? Why should you not receive life more abundantly? Have you not already been pardoned? Why should you not have the full assurance of that pardon? Have you not already been taken up from the horrible pit and out of the miry clay? What hinders but that Christ should set you upon a rock and put a new song into your mouth and establish your goings?

But I cannot hope to be so useful as some are. Why not? According to your faith so shall it be to you! God has given you one convert, why cannot He give you a hundred? You have been blessed to a dear child in Sunday school and you have rejoiced over that one jewel as a precious Godsend! Why should you not dive, again, and bring up other pearls for your Immanuels crown? I would stir in you a sacred ambition! I would provoke you to the highest style of Christian manhood and the most heroic form of Christian service! What you have received is the pledge of what you may receive, but, indeed, you have already obtained a good deal more than yet remains to be received!

Christ is yours and by that fact all things are yours! What you now need is included in what you already have! You only need to realize itby faith call it your ownand practically to live upon it. May God enable you to do so! Of His fullness have we all receivedwhy should we not receive more?

IV. The last blow of the hammer shall be thisTHE GIFTS WE HAVE ALREADY HAD ARE NOT TRIFLES, for John says we have received Grace for Grace, which is a mode in the Greek language of expressing the superlative. We have received the highest Grace, superlative Grace. The gift of Jesus Christ is the highest Grace that even God, Himself, can bestow nothing can go beyond that! Listen to this, thenHe that spared not His own Son, but freely delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? I charge you, let that text enter into your heartsand when you feel straitened in prayer and tempted to say, No, not here, I cannot rise so high, I am not qualified for that attainment do, I pray you, remember the gifts already received by which Jesus opens your mouth and bids you ask great things.

The Father has given you His Son! How can He deny you anything? The expression, Grace for Grace, may mean Grace answering to Grace Grace which was in accordance with Grace already givenGrace preparatory to what is yet to come. Has not the Father given you such Divine Grace as you had capacity to receive? If there had been more room you would have had more. If you had exercised more faith, He would have given you more joy. If you had possessed more hope, you would have had more realization. He has always come up to, and even gone beyond, the measure of our expectation. Is there, in your soul, this morning, an enlargement? I feel it in my own heart! I feel a dissatisfaction with my present attainments! I pant to know my Lord better! I am discontented with

what I have done for Him up to now! I long to do 10 times more for His Glory!

Do you feel the same? Oh, then He will keep in touch with you! Yes, He will do exceeding abundantly above all you ask, or even think! That text does not say, Above what you can ask or think, as people will persist in saying. That is not true because we can ask and can think as great things as God Himself will give, and He means us to ask before He gives. Our capacity for asking is, as a general rule, the measure of His giving, but the Scriptures say He will do exceeding abundantly above what you ask or think. Now, are you thinking great things and asking great things? Do not be afraid! The Lord will not let you outstrip Him! Be enlargedand as large as your faithso large shall the blessing be.

Then, dear Friends, Grace for Grace may mean Grace upon Grace, like Pelion upon Ossaone mountain piled upon anothereach Grace eclipsing the light of that which went before. This we have already known. When we first believed in Christ, pardon for sin seemed everything. But when we came to know that we were justified in Christ Jesus, that appeared to be a much greater blessing. And when we understood that we were adopted and were the sons of God, that new delight surpassed the former joy! The Lord has led you into Divine Grace which has surprised you and lifted you up from one point to another. I speak to many Brothers and Sisters here who must confess that their present state is very different from their Christian infancythey now know what they never thought they could know. Why, there are doctrines that some of you can enjoy this morning which you used to think frightfully high doctrines! You once could not appreciate them, yet they are simplicities to you now! And there are conquests over sin which you could not have achieved in your boyhood. But now in your Christian manhood you can take up dragons and destroy them.

Now, dear Brethren, as you have been surprised with mercy, you are to be surprised with more mercy, and the Lord says to you, Son of man, I will show you greater favors than these. Greater joys are yet to be known! You have entered the room of silverthat inner door will lead you to a chamber of gold! And beyond that there is a door in the wall which he that is taught of God shall opena door which will admit you into a chamber of diamonds! And when you shall come there and have seen the Glory and the exceeding riches of the Grace of God, there is still an inner chamber where that which eye has not seen nor ear heard shall be revealed to youa joy unspeakable, unthinkable, indeed! May we comprehend with all the saints what are the heights and depthsand know the love of Christ which passes knowledge.

Now of the things which we have spoken, this is the sum. We have a fullness in Christ as Believers which we ought to use in the following manner First, believe in great things! Do not sit down, as some do, in the little Meeting House where about 50 Brethren meet and expect the Lord to send a convert once every 12 months. And when He does send him, they worry him by the month together for fear he should not be one of the right sort! And when he finally comes in, they rejoice over him as one that finds great spoil in having picked up one solitary soul after 12 months ministry!

Oh, Brothers and Sisters, we have a greater God than this would imply! The little narrow thoughts which Christians have had as to the success of the Gospel cannot have come from a great God, can they? The day was when the very idea of sending the Gospel to the heathen was regarded by our orthodox Brethren as a piece of Don Quixotism, not to be attempted, and even now, if you say, All the world for Jesus, they open their eyes and say, Ah, we are afraid you are tainted with universal redemption, or are going off to the Arminian camp. God grant these dear Brethren new hearts and right spiritsat present their hearts are too small to bring Him much glory! May they get larger hearts, hearts something like their Lordsand may they have Grace given them to estimate the precious blood at a higher ratefor our Lord did not die to buy a few hundred souls, or to redeem to Himself a handful of people! He shed His blood for a number which no man can numberand His elect shall excel in multitude the sands which belt the sea!

Let us have great faith in what God intends to do. Believing these great things, let us expect them. Be on the qui vive for spiritual miracles. Expect to see hundreds converted! Wonder, when you hear a Gospel sermon, that the Holy Spirit does not save 3,000 by it! Ah, says one, I should be very much astonished if He did. I know you would, and that is why we do not see it! But we ought to wonder that there are not, and when we are as we should be, we shall see greater things than these! There is no weakness with God! That limping sinew is in Jacobs thigh, it is not in the Angels. That palsied arm is mans, not God'sno sinew of His arm can decay.

Sirs, do you think that He who smote the fields of Zoan with plagues is not Lord of idols and King of heathens? Do you think that He who divided the Red Sea cannot lead His people like a flock through the wilderness and bring them into the promised possession? Do you think that He cannot bring up His Church out of her bondage and set her feet in a large room? The Lord of Hosts is with us! Therefore let us expect things! Expecting great things, let us attempt great things! Let us each set about doing something for Christ, in the power of the Holy Spirit! Let us try what can be done! Let us not, if we are Sunday school teachers, be satisfied with going through the days lesson and feeling, There, that will do. Aim at the immediate conversion of every child in the class!

Do not let us say, as we go round with the tracts this afternoon, We will leave them and not say a word. Aim at getting a word about Jesus Christ with every person you meet with! As for myself, the preacher, let me come here to preach to you, not with the hope that perhaps, here and there, one will find a Savior, but with an earnest cry to Heaven that the Holy Spirit will comprehend, in the lines of His electing and redeeming love, the whole mass of you, and make this Tabernacle into a golden casket in which all of us shall be the jewels, and take it right up and keep it in His bosom forever!

Last of all, let us not talk about this, but let us set about doing it! Shall we never have, in our midst, men who will go among the heathen to preach Jesus Christ? We had two lately, are there not two more? Young men and young women, will you not consecrate yourselves to the Lord

and go into exile for His sake? Have we none such? We have here, this morning, good women and good men, too, who are at work among the heathens of the east end of London and the worst parts of our city. Are there no others to do the same? There is room for scores of you to be as devoted to God as our dear Brother, Dr. Barnardo, or our Sister, Miss MacPhersonand why not you? Why should not the same anointing come upon you and qualify you for useful work?

Will you not, this very day, preach Christ in the streets? Will you not consecrate yourselves to be whole burnt offerings unto Christ, for Him to live, for Him to die? O soldiers of the Cross, will you loiter in the march? The enemy still holds citadels which belong to Christ and you, by a desperate push, may seize them! Swift as eagles and strong as lions, press onward and win the victory! Why do you hesitate? The powers of evil linger not! The hosts of Hell are ragingthey call up all their strength against the Lord of Hostsand will you stand back? Have you no courage? Is your blood turned to water? Has the Spirit of God departed from you?

Oh, let it not be so, but may God launch us upon the enemy like thunderbolts from His own Omnipotent hand! And yet may it be seen throughout the world that there are men who have received of the fullness of the Crucified One and who, therefore, can give it forth to others and point them to Him in whom the Father is well-pleased that all fullness shall dwell. The Lord be with you all. Amen.

**PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMONJohn 1:1-34.** HYMNS FROM OUR OWN HYMN BOOK436, 415, 249.   
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Sermon #3553 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

THE FULLNESS AND THE FILLING   
NO. 3553

A SERMON   
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, MARCH 1, 1917.   
DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.   
And of His fullness have we all received, and Grace for Grace John 1:16.

ONE Sabbath I was staying in an Italian town on the other side of the Alps. Of course, the whole population was Romish. Two or three of us, therefore, being Protestants, held a little service for the worship of God in the simple manner that is our habit. After this, I went out for a walk. The weather being hot and sultry, I sought the outskirts of the town to get to as quiet and cool a spot as possible. Presently I came to an archway at the foot of a hill where there was an announcement that any person who would climb the hill with proper intentions should receive the pardon of his sins and five days indulgence. I thought I might as well have five days indulgence as anybody else, and if it were of any advantage, to have it laid by in store. I cannot tell you all I saw as I went, first one way, and then another, up that hill. Suffice it to say that there was a series of little churches, through the windows of which you might look, as one in his boyish days looked through a peepshow. The whole scene and circumstance of the Passion and death of Christ were thus modeled, beginning with His agony in the Garden, where He was represented in a figure as large as life, with the drops of bloody sweat falling to the ground. The three disciples were a stones throw off, and the rest of the Apostles outside the garden wall. Every feature looked as real as if one had been standing upon the spot! I scrutinized each group narrowly and carefully read the Latin text which served as an index, till I reached the top of the hill, where I saw a garden, just like an English garden, and as I pushed open the door I faced these words, Now there was a garden, and in the garden there was a new sepulcher. Walking down a path I came to a sepulcherso I stooped down and looked inas Peter had done. There, instead of seeing a picture of the corpse of Christ, I read in gilded letters these wordsof course, in the Latin tongueHe is not here, for He is risen! Come, see the place where the Lord lay. Passing on, I came to a place where His Ascension was represented. On the summit was a large church, into which I entered. No one was there, yet the place for me had a marvelous interest. High up in the ceiling there swung a rude representation of the Lord Jesus Christ, and round it were statues of the Prophets, all with their fingers pointing up to Him. There was Isaiah, with a scroll in his left hand, on which was written, He was despised and rejected of men, a Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with grief. Further on stood Jeremiah, and on his scroll was written, Behold and see if there was ever sorrow like unto My sorrow, which was done unto Me. All round the church I read in great words, that were large enough to be seen, though they were blazoned on the top of the ceiling, Moses and all the Prophets spoke and wrote concerning Him.

Now, though I cannot take you to see that remarkable sight, which I shall never forget, I would gladly bring before your minds eye something like it. Suppose that all the saints who lived from the days of Adam, down to the times when Malachi closed the Old Testamentall the saints who lived in Christs time and then on through the early ages of the Church in the days of Chrysostom, and Augustine, and all the holy men who afterwards gathered around the Reformers, and all who in every place have served God since thensuppose they all stood in one vast circle? To whom do you suppose they would, every one, point? To whom would they all bear witness? Why, with outstretched arm, everyone of them would turn to the Lord Jesus Christ and speak His praise! Could you then enquire into their individual history, you would find among them characters exceedingly diverse, though all remarkably beautiful. Some renowned for courage, others for gentleness. Some for patient endurance, others for diligent laborand yet all inspired by a common faithall of them aglow with fervent gratitude! All of them looking with steadfast gaze and intense love towards ONE from whom they had received every gift that profited themand that One, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Savior of men! The rule would admit of not a single exception. From each man in his own proper position, from every man in his own particular calling, from all the individuals severally in their own personal experience, the innumerable voicesdistinct, but blending in chorus would go up from earth to Heaven, saying, Of His fullness have we all received, and Grace for Grace. Then I think from the excellent Glory would come a response. The inhabitants of Heaven would echo back the strain, Of His fullness have we all, the glorified spirits, received, and Grace for Grace. This is the testimony of the Church militant, and of the Church triumphant! Yes, it is the testimony of all who in every place and at every time have come and put their trust under the shadow of His wings!

Our text seems to suggest two thoughts the fullness and the filling upon each of which I will attempt to say a little, a very little. With so infinite a theme, we can do no more than children do when they take up a little seawater in a shelltheir tiny scoop cannot embrace the ocean. I stand on the narrow edge of a vast expanse and leave the boundless depths to your contemplation! His fullness! An inexhaustible reservoir! Our filling! An illimitable endowment! Beloved, the river of God, which is full of water, can well supply the little canals that are fed from such a fountain with Grace for Grace!

I. I said THE FULLNESS. It is His fullness, the fullness of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Oh, what a fullness He has! The fullness which belongs to Him personally! Note this well! Forget it not! Our Redeemer is essentially God. By Nature He is Divine. He has condescendingly taken upon Himself our nature and He is most truly and assuredly Man. Very God! For to Him belong all be attributes of Jehovah. Very Man! For when He took our flesh and blood, He accepted the entire sympathies of our creatureship. In His complex Nature, He possesses fullness. In Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. He has the fullness of Omnipotence and all power is given unto Him as Mediator in Heaven and in earth. Omnipresence is His to perfection, for where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I (He said) in the midst of them. He has essential wisdom. Even when on earth, He did not commit Himself, because He knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man, for He knew what was in man. In Him is fullness of justice. The Father has given all judgment unto the Son. Shall not God judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He has ordained, whereof He has given assurance unto all men in that He has raised Him from the dead? In Him is fullness of mercy, for, through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins. The attributes of God make up a perfect total. The unity, with all its uniqueness, is His! Divisions and subdivisions are ours. The fractional parts of which we take account are but the breaking up of a great fact to our weak understanding. Think as you may, your thoughts cannot describe or compass God, for God is all that is good and blessed! And as is God, so is Christall the Divine Attributes are contained and represented in Christ Jesus in their fullnessnot diminished by His humiliation, but resplendent by His triumph!

In Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead. He is the express Image of the Fathers Person, the brightness of His Fathers Glorynot more Glorybut the brightness of His Fathers Glory. What confidence this ought to inspire in our hearts! The fullness from which you and I derive the Divine Grace we receive is none other than the Infinite fullness of God Over All, blessed forever, whose name is Immanuel, God With Us! There was also a fullness in Christ in respect to His Manhood. Nothing was lacking to Him that is involved in being by Nature and Constitution a perfect Man. He was pure. He did not inherit any sin. His disposition did not tend towards any evil. Still, all that pertains to the original creatureship of man as created by God did Christ possess in the fullness of development. Hence, my Brothers and Sisters, there is in Him at this moment a fullness of sympathy. He is not such a High Priest as cannot be touched with a feeling of our infirmities, but He was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin! Do not suppose that Jesus is less human than you are, yourselvesHe is fully human. Do not imagine that He is less tender than you would be towards the weak and sufferingHe is full of tenderness. His heart melts with love. A mother has often a tenderness that we do not find in a father. Masculine strength and courage do not always blend with the gentle, sympathetic qualities of woman. Howbeit when God created man in His own image, male and female created He them. The virtues, if I may say so, of both sexes were combined in our Lordthe suavity as well as the staunchnessthe feminine as well as the masculine of our common humanity! Human nature in its totality and completeness was fully possessed and thoroughly represented by Him. The sympathetic nature which melts at a tear and smiles at the joy of others, was as truly His as the heroic nature that parleys not with fear, but acts with promptitude and suffers with fortitude, like a warrior in the hosts of the Lord! There is thus a fullness of humanity as well as a fullness of Divinity in Christ Jesus, our Saviora fullness of perfection in His blessed Person which may well fix your trust and rivet your admiration!

In our Lord, likewise, there is what I may venture to call, for lack of a better word, an acquired fullness. He has sojourned on earth and rendered entire and undeviating obedience to the Law of God, having taken upon Himself the form of a Servant, and by His righteousness earned wagesa fullness, an everlasting wellspring of merit! Throughout His whole life He honored the Divine Law and glorified God on the earth. In doing His Fathers will, His action was so voluntary and so vicarious, that He has accumulated an inexhaustible fund of merit which all of us who believe in His name may plead before the Fathers Throne. More especially did His death consummate the obedience and constitute its sterling worth, its intrinsic virtue. His death, with all its surroundingsfrom the bloody sweat in the Olive Garden to the last cry, Into Your hands I commend My spiritwas sublime. All through the scourging and the spitting, the shame, the wounding, His Crucifixion, the thirst, the desertion and the death, itself, He was working out an Atonement for us

*Bearing, that we might never bear*

*His Fathers righteous ire.*   
And now with Him risen from the dead, raised to the right hand of the Majesty on high, there is a fullness of prevalence in His intercession when He pleads His blooda fullness of cleansing power when the Spirit applies the blood to the guilty consciencea fullness of peace to the heart when His blood speaks better things than that of Abel! In that fountain filled with blood drawn from Immanuels veins there is a fullness that never can be exhausted by all the sin of man! He has finished the work which His Father gave Him to do. Now the Covenant is ratified with Him that He shall see of the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied. In these respects we are convinced that there is an acquired as well as a personal fullness in our precious Lord!

No less has He a fullness of dignity, of high prerogative. He is a Prophet. By Him are all His people taught, warned, counseled and encouraged with a blessed hope. He is a Priest, and by Him they are cleansed from sin and consecrated to God. Moreover, He is also a King, spreading the patronage of protection over all His liege subjects and ordaining peace for them. Under His beneficent rule, they prosper! You good Shepherd! You great Shepherd of the sheep! There is no office or obligation that was necessary for our welfare, but You have taken it and undertaken it on our behalf! You are to us all that we require and all that we could desire! Join all the qualities involved in name or fame that commend themselves most closely to your heart, because they meet your necessities, or draw forth your sympathies, and you shall find that He comprises them all in liberal, lavish fullness! Nor has His prerogative any limit. As a Priest, who has once offered a Sacrifice of everlasting prevalence, His absolution or His benediction is final and irrevocable! As a Prophet, His authority is unimpeachablethe authority with which He teaches allows of no appeal. As a king, He has right as well as might on His side. In the midst of Zion, willing subjects yield to His beneficent sway! In the outer world, reluctant rebels must submit themselves to His scepter! He is no Priest whose vain pretense has no valid prescript. He is no Prophet whose teaching is uncertain in its tone, or limited in its range. He is no King whose prerogative is not sanctioned by His wisdom and whose government awakens no fealty of love. But in the administration of all His offices, our Lord Jesus Christ shows a fullness of qualification and gives a fullness of satisfaction! In such respects He has no rivalnor is there any room for a rival to arise!

And let me say here that the power with which our Lord exercises these offices may well command our devout confidence. Do you need to learn the truth? Oh, come to the Prophet of Nazareth, and you shall find that there is a satiety of truth in His teaching such as was never found in heathen groups, or even to the same extent in Hebrew Seers! Or do you need acceptance before God. Oh, then, come you to the Priest who is not of the tribe of Levi, but a Priest after the order of Melchisedec, whose royalty confers dignity on His sacerdotal office! He can present your sacrifice with the much incense of His merit that is acceptable before the Throne of God. Or do you need strength? Do you need one to fight your battles, to take hold of the shield and the buckler, draw out the spear and handle the bow? Behold, the Hero of Israel, whose exploits are told in your songsJesus, the King by right of conquest, as well as by right Divinehas a fullness of power and majesty with which no adversary can overcome! He reigns! His reign is the consolation of His people, the guarantee of their peace! These are bare outlines. Time would fail me to enumerate all His offices. They are very numerous but, however numerous, Christ possesses them all! He enjoys the prerogatives peculiar to them all in the fullest degree. He possesses the power to exercise them all to the fullest extent!

But in Christ there is verily a blessed fullness of every kind of perfection. Whatever there may be that is lovely or of good repute is to be found in Christ. All that is virtuous or amiable in the character of menall that is noble and illustrious in the endowments that Heaven bestows on the most privileged of creaturesour Lord possessed. It was said of Henry the Eighth that if all the likenesses of tyrants had been lost out of history, they might have been reproduced out of the one character of that monstrous tyrant-king! So if all the holy features of Patriarchs and Prophets, of saints and martyrs that ever lived were blotted from the canvas of history, they all might be painted afresh from the one life of the Divine Person of our ever-adorable Lord Jesus Christ! In Him there was not only one perfection, but all perfections meet and blend to make up one matchless perfection. There was not one sweet alone in Him, but in Him all sweets combine in a perfect sweetness! John has love, Peter courage, Paul zealeach saint has his own peculiarity, but in Christ all the qualities of goodness and Grace converge! He exhibits them in the highest degree and the purest harmony. After such manner are they incorporated in Him as to produce a Character the like of which was never known before, nor ever shall be witnessed again!

And never forget that a fullness of the Holy Spirit abides in Christ. The Lord gives not the Spirit by measure unto Him. He has the residue of the Spirit. His is the head upon which the anointing oil is fully poured. We, who are but as the skirts of His garments, are favored with some droppings thereof, but the fullness of the anointing of the Spirit was bestowed upon Jesus Christ our Lordand from Him, His members must receive the portion they enjoy!

His fullness ! I linger on the word, for I revel in the meditation. Such a fullness as admits of no diminution, for it is an abiding fullness! What though all the saints of every age have come to Christ, and drawn their supplies from Him, He is just as full as ever! Think not that those who first came drank of a copious fountain that has been partly drained by the myriads who have since slaked their thirst. The Apostles received of His fullness and so do we! They without prejudice to uswe without prejudice to those who shall follow after us. When I came to Christ 1800 years after the Apostles came, yet I received of the fullness at just the same rate as when Peter, John, or Paul received it. Should this dispensation last another thousand years, and some poor, trembling wretch should come to the foot of the Cross to receive mercy, he will not receive Christ half-full, but He shall receive of Christs fullness, for it is an abiding fullness! It is never less than fullnever can be more than full. In Him there is an Infinity of Grace and Truth. Such fullness is there in Him at all times, under all your circumstances of trial, yes, and under all conditions of sin, too! The fullness of Christ to supply will always exceed the faith of the Believer to seek. And when you feel your emptiness more than you ever did before, then you will set the most store upon His abounding towards us in all wisdom and prudence. Considering, then, His abiding fullness, His inexhaustible fullness, His available fullness, I entreat you to avail yourself of this fullness now without demur, without delay! As there is a fullness, so there is

II. A FILLING.   
This is to be our second part. I must speak of it with brevity. Of His fullness have we all received. Surely, then, all the saints were empty before! You are empty, my Brother, and so was Abraham, so was Paul. Grace, the free Grace of God, has made all the difference between Peter and Judas, though the one repented and the other despairedthe one traveled the heavenly roadthe other went down quickly to Hell. They stood on equal footing in transgression, till Grace made them to differ! What radical difference is there between one man and another from a legal point of view?   
All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. All alike have to come to Christ, empty of merit, or they would never come at all! That was a pretty tale we heard the other day, and it points to a right good moral. A worthy, consistent, industrious woman was married to a low, worthless, dissipated husband. Both of them, however, were alike ignorant of the Gospel. They came together to the House of Prayer. They heard together the tidings of mercy. They each believed and each of them received the Saviorand they both were saved the same waythey both found mercy on the same terms! To the rich, free, Sovereign Grace of God they cried with one another in ascribing the praise. That is a fact. It occurred last week. I do not know whether this makes it more convincing to you, but I might say, as Elihu said to Job, Lo, all these things works God oftentimes with men, to bring back his soul from the pit, to be enlightened with the light of the living!

Observe that the filling is universal. All the saints partake of it. Of His fullness have we all received. There are manifold diversities of experience among the Lords people, but in some things they share and share alike. Some saints do not undergo the stress of trial and tribulation that others pass through. Here, however, there is no partiality. They have, everyone of them, received out of Christs fullness! Not one of them could do without receiving it! Not one of them could receive it from any other hand than that of the Divine Benefactor! They earned it not. They accepted it. They received it from Jesus Christ!   
This is peculiar to the saints. While it says, Of His fullness have we all received, manifestly a certain body of people have become partakers of a privilege which it is no less evident that all men have not received. What thousands and tens of thousands there are who, when invited to the Gospel feast, reject the call, make a wretched choice, and rather starve than come. We all! That is, all of those who have believed! And who are, we, or what are we, that such Grace should be given to us in preference to anybody else? Ah, Brothers and Sisters, little cause enough have we for self-satisfaction! On the score of deserving, no choice had ever fallen on us! We were the vilest, the least worthy, the least attractive and, in some respects, the least hopeful! Oh, Grace, it is your practice to come into the unlikeliest hearts, and it is the glory of Divine Love to find in darkest spots a home! We allwe who were once dead in trespasses and sins. We who were once lost like the prodigal son, lost like the wandering sheep, lost like the piece of moneywe who needed seeking, needed finding, need savingyet of His fullness have we all received. Recollect that the reception is peculiar to Believersit does not go beyond them.   
Be it clear, however, that there is, and must be, a personal reception in every case. Of His fullness have we all received. No one of us can receive it transmitted from another, but each one of us receives it directly from Him. Your fathers Grace cannot save you! It was a wise speech of the wise virgins. When the foolish virgins said to them, Give us of your oil, they replied, Not so, lest there be not enough for us and you; go rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. Family piety involves responsibilities, but it cannot stand in the place of personal godliness! Dear Hearer, you must go to Christ for yourself! All who ever were saved have done so, and you certainly will not be saved unless you are led to do the same! It is a personal filling. Of His fullness have we all received.   
The bounty is gratuitous. Notice the next words, and Grace for Grace. It is not said, Of His fullness have we all purchased, nor, Of His fullness have we all earned a share. It is all passive. We have received. What does the vessel do to fit itself for the water that flows into it? Why, it does nothing! All its doing can fit it to recede is an undoing that is to say, it empties itself to prepare itself to be filled. Oh, if any of you desire to find Jesus Christ, the doing must be in the way of undoing! You must be emptied to be filled! The preparation is a consciousness that you are not prepared! In such unpreparedness you are prepared for Christ! This is an enigma and a riddle. Those who think themselves prepared for Him are notbut those who know that they are not prepared are just the souls upon whom His Grace will come! Poverty, not riches. Blindness, not sight. Emptiness, not fullness. Sinfulnessnot virtuethese are the things Christ looks for. He is come to seek and to save that which was lostnot that which had won victories! Not that which was splendid in its own esteem, but that which was defeated, ruined, lost! If you are lost, He comes to seek and to save such as you are! Oh, you who were once lost, but now are found, bless His name that you have received of His fullness!   
And Grace for Grace! What do these words mean? We can only just touch them as a swallow with its wing touches the poolwe cannot pretend to enter into their depth. Grace for Grace. Does that mean that those who receive Grace under the old dispensation were afterwards led to receive the Grace of the new dispensation? Does it mean that we who have the Grace of conviction, with the Holy Spirit as a spirit of bondage, shall receive, by-and-by, the spirit of liberty, and get out of conviction, through conversion, into full pardon and enjoyment of peace with God? Is that the Grace, when Grace turns into Glory and we come before the Throne of God? Does it mean Grace by degreesGrace upon Gracea little Grace to begin with, and more Grace afterwards? He gives more Grace. Grace following on Grace and, further on, superabounding Grace, when Grace turns into Glory and we come before the Throne of Grace forever and ever? Does it mean that God leads us on, step by step, adding to our spiritual wealth, initiating us first into simple things and afterwards leading us into deeper matters? Grace for Grace.   
Yes, it means that, but it means more! God gives Grace in preparation for further Gracethe Grace of a broken heartto make room for deep repentance and abhorrence of sin! The Grace of hatred of sin to make way for the Grace of holy and careful walking, humiliation and faith in Jesus! The Grace of careful walking to make room for the Grace of close communion with Christ! The Grace of close communion with the Lord Jesus Christ to make room for the Grace of full conformity to His Image! Perhaps the Grace of conformity to His Image to make room for the higher Grace of brighter views of Himself and still closer incomings into the very heart of the Lord Jesus! It is Grace that helps us on in Grace. When a beggar asks you for a penny, and you give him one, he does not ask you for a sixpence. Or if you give him a shilling, he would not consider that an argument why you should give him a sovereign! But you may deal thus with Godif you have only got, as it were, an ounce of Grace, that is a reason why you should then pray God for a greater weight of Graceand afterwards for a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory! Believe that He gives Grace for Gracethat is, Grace that you may open your mouth for more Grace! The Grace you have expands your heart and gives you capacity for receiving yet more Grace. Do you not send your child to school to learn his ABCs? You may call that the Grace of learning his alphabet. Yes, but it is preparatory to his learning to read the spelling book. Well, but why does he learn to read the spelling book? Why, that is a preparation for something else! So one Grace gives us a preparation for another Grace, and thus as we have more Grace, we realize the blessedness of this Divine filling out of His fullness!   
Or, suppose we read the passage thusGrace answerable to Grace? Even this will admit of two constructions. Let God give me Grace to be a preacherHe will surely give me Grace to discharge the office! Perhaps He has given you Grace to teach in a Sunday school? Then you need a further supply of Grace to enable you to be an efficient teacher! Perhaps you have the Grace of resignation to suffer for Christs sake. You will need the Grace of patience to support you in the midst of pain or persecution! You are called to pray, and you yield yourself up to be a wrestler with God in prayer. This is a great Grace. Oh, may you have Grace answerable to that Grace, that when you get with the Angel by the brook Jabbok, you may take hold of His strength, plead His promise, His Covenant, His oath and never let Him go until He blesses you! Thus, a halt and fainting Jacob comes off as a prevailing Israel! May we thus always have Grace answerable to Grace! Grace for Grace may imply Grace received by us answerable to the Grace that is in Christ. Oh, that we Christians had Grace in some measure commensurate with the Grace that is treasured up for us in Him! All that is in Him belongs to you. Then the degree of your daily supplies ought to be proportionate to His ample, unlimited wealth and fullness!   
A young heir to a large estate, though not of full age, generally gets an allowance made to him by the executors, or the trustees, or the Court of Chancery, suitable to the position he is presently to occupy. If he has £100,000 a year in prospect, he would hardly be limited to a penny a week, like a poor mans child. We cannot suppose that he would have a mean allowance made him such as would barely enable him to live in a humble cottage on the rich domain he is entitled to. Oh, no, that would be a meager pittance out of all proportion to his position. When I see one child of God always mourning, another always doubting, and yet another always schemingI feel a kind of disappointmentI see they are living below their privileges! They do not seem to have Grace in possession answerable to the Grace they have had. We always advocate propriety, on the part of all our people, of living within their incomes, but I will defy the child of God to live beyond his income in a spiritual sense! You that have but little spending money are like the elder brother in the parable. You say, You never gave me a kid that I might make merry with my friends. And your Father replies, Son, you are always with Me and all that I have is yours. If you do not have it, it is your own faultit is all there and is freely yours! You have but to ask, and you shall receiveto seek, and you shall find. Oh, could we once get Grace in us at all like the Grace that is in Christ, what Christians we would be! No longer starlight Christians and moonlight Christians, but sunlight Believers, letting our light shine before the sons of men! Oh, to be among the three Mighties of our royal David! May each of us covet such a position as this and God grant it to us for His loves sake!   
Grace for Grace obviously means Grace in abundance. Like the waves of the sea, when one comes, there is another close behind it. Before you can say that one is gone, there is another coming to fill its place. There they come. Who shall count them? In long succession, wave follows wave. So is Gods Grace. Grace for Grace. One Grace has hardly come into your soul but there is another one! You have heard the story of Rowland Hill having a hundred pounds entrusted to him for the benefit of a poor minister. He thought that if he sent him the hundred pounds, it would be too large a sum to give him all at oncehe would scarcely know how to handle it and, perhaps, he would not be as thankful for it as if he had it doled out in smaller amounts. So he sent him five pounds, and wrote in the letter, More to follow. Letters did not come often in those days of nine penny or eighteen penny postage, but in about another week he forwarded another five pounds, and a note with it, More to follow. After a short interval he did the same, again, still saying, More to follow. So it went on for a long time, always with, More to follow, till the dear good man, I should think, must have been at his wits end to know what could follow when so many good presents came to one who needed them so much!

Now that is just how God has done with me, and I believe He is doing the same with all of you who are His people. He has sent you a mercy and when He has sent it, you might have seen, if you had looked at the envelope, that it was an earnest of further benefits and benefactions More to follow. The mercy you have received today has written upon it legibly, More to follow, and that which will come tomorrow will have upon it, More to follow. Grace for Grace. Oh, sing unto Him a new song! Let Him have fresh songs for fresh mercies and, as He multiplies the mercy, so do you multiply the praises you ascribe to His name!   
Grace for Grace! Does it not mean Grace from Him to produce Grace in us? We receive from the fullness of Christ, of His Grace, in order that it may be a living seed that shall produce Grace in us as its natural fruit! The Grace of gratitude should be produced in us by the Grace of generosity from God. We ought to be gracious with a holy joyfulness for all His goodness. I hope we shall have the Grace of patience under all sufferings and the Grace of zeal in all our labors. At a time like this, my Brothers and Sisters, when we are seeking the conversion of sinners with special efforts, may we have Grace from Jesus that shall make all the Graces fruitful and fragrant in us! So shall we be to the Savior as a garden of olives and pomegranates, of lilies and sweet flowersand may He take a delight in us! When Cyrus took the Greek Ambassador through his garden, he challenged him to admire its charms. The Spartan approved all he saw, but still his admiration was cool and critical. This garden, said its master, yields me more pleasure and satisfaction than you can imagine, or I can express. And why? asked the visitor. Because, replied Cyrus, I planted every tree in it myself. I planned all the paths and all the flowers have I reared. No hand but mine has dug the soil, tended the plants, pruned the trees, or done anything but my own. As toil and his trouble thus endeared the place to the king, so, truly, Christ can say when He looks upon His people, There is a fruitful branch thereI pruned that. He was sick, long laid aside from business. He feared his family would be starvedI was pruning him, then, but I love the fruit that is on him because I know how it came there. That plant yonder which is blooming now and shedding such a sweet perfume of love, well do I recollect when it was drooping and ready to die. I came and watered it. She, timid disciple, would say, Blessed be the gentle hand that shed the dew and poured nourishment on my poor, parched and withered root! Yes, the Savior gives us Grace for Grace that we may produce Grace! I leave the thought with you for meditation, and the issues for your edification, only praying that His Holy Spirit may work in you Grace for Grace.   
Oh, that all of you might receive Grace from Him. You will never get Grace anywhere else! Go to Him at once by faith, with humble prayer. Plenteous Grace with Him is foundall the Grace you shall ever require between now and Glory, you shall find stored up in Him! His Grace is our benediction. Of it may you one and all partake! Amen.

Adapted from the C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Version 1.0, Ages Software.   
PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #415 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

THE FULLNESS OF CHRISTRECEIVED!   
NO. 415

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON SUNDAY MORNING, OCTOBER 20, 1861, BY THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON

**And of His fullness have all we received.   
John 1:16.**

THERE is no occasion to inform the Christian heart who the Person is to whom reference is here made. The name of Jesus is to you a household word. No, it is the word which will be found written upon your hearts when you die. That immortal word shall be the keynote of your eternal song when you shall enter into the immortality which remains for Gods people. Jesus! How sweet is Your name to Your people. It is a sonnet of itself. It is the sum of all music summed up in two syllables. It is a hallelujah and the groundwork of an eternal hosanna in five letters. Jesus! We defy earth to equal it and Heaven itself to excel it. Jesus is Heavens highest melodyas it is earths sweetest delight.

The text informs us that there is a fullness in Christ. There is a fullness of essential Deity, for in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead. There is a fullness of perfect Manhood, for in Him bodily, that Godhead was revealed. Partaker of flesh and blood, made in all things like unto His brethren, there was nothing lacking that was necessary to the perfection of humankind in Him. There is a fullness of atoning efficacy in His blood, for the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleans us from all sin. There is a fullness of justifying righteousness in His life, for there is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.

There is a fullness of divine Providence in His plea, for He is able to save to the uttermost them that come unto God by Him; seeing He ever lives to make intercession for them. There is a fullness of victory in His death, for through death He destroyed him that had the power of death, that is the devil. There is a fullness of efficacy in His resurrection from the dead, for by it are begotten again to a lively hope. There is a fullness of triumph in His ascension, for when He ascended up on high He led captivity captive and received gifts for men. There is a fullness of blessings unspeakable, unknown. A fullness of grace to pardon, of grace to regenerate, of grace to sanctify, of grace to preserve and of grace to perfect.

There is a fullness at all times. A fullness by day and a fullness by night. A fullness of comfort in affliction, a fullness of guidance in prosperity, a fullness of every Divine attribute, of wisdom, of power, of love. A fullness which it were impossible to survey, much less to explore. There

is everything summed up in a totalthe gathering together of all things in One in Jesus. It pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell. In vain we strive to recount the holy wonder. It were a theme which would exhaust an angels tongue to tellthe fullness which resides in Jesus our Head and ever abides to answer our need.

And now what shall we say to these things? Of His fullness have all we received. The text seems to me to suggest four reflections. First, an appeal to our gratitude. Glory be to Christ! For of His fullness have all we received. Secondly, a notion of character, Thus may you know the people of God, for of His fullness have they all received. Thirdly, a sentence of admonition to believers, Be wise, oh you people of God, be grateful and be humble, for it is of His fullness you have received. And in the last place here is to the sinner a word of sweet encouragement, Come, all the saints invite you, for of His fullness have all they received.

1. To begin with the first the text constrains us to say, GLORY BE UNTO CHRIST FOR HIS FULLNESS, for of it have all the saints received.   
Appeal to those who died before the flood. Ask those who trod in the steps of Enoch. Go forward to Noah, to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Put the question to David and Samuelcome on through the Prophets, to Isaiah and Jeremyask them all, From where came your faith? From where your power to suffer and your strength to conquer? With united breath they answer, Of His fullness who as yet had not come in the flesh we by faith received. Ask the saints in later times. I summon you, oh you bright Apostles of the Lamb, From where came your noble testimony and your unwavering constancy? They reply with the voice of John, their leader, Of His fullness have all we received.   
Appeal to the martyrs on their racks, on their blood-stained gibbets, on their stakes and glowing fires. In their dungeons and damp dying places ask the tenants of ten thousand graves, From where came your triumph? And they reply at once, We have overcome through the blood of the Lamb. Of His fullness have all we received. You should go through the list of the Reformers. You should ask Luther and Calvin and Zwingle and Melancthon and Wickliffe and Huss and Jerome and Knox. And there is not one of them who will dare to say that he had anything of his own.   
You should turn over the list of the great preachers and summoning them one by one, you should say to Augustine, to Chrysostom, to Bernard and to those in later days, such as Latimer, Tindal and Hooper and to later still the men with Whitfield and with Wesley preached the Word, From where came your boldness in confession? From where your strength to bear the calumny of the age and to be the butt of human scorn and yet never to flinch, much less to withdraw your testimony. And they all reply, Of His fullness have all we received.   
Brethren, what a fullness must this bewhen you think that a multitude which no man can numbera company beyond all human count have all received Him! And there is not one of them that has received too littlethey are all, as Rutherford has itdrowned debtors to His grace. Or, as we put it, over head and ears in debt to Him. They are so indebted that they will never know how much they owe but they feel that an eternal song will not be too long to utter their grateful praise. Fullness, indeed, must there be in Him when all these streams have been continually flowing and yet He is not drywhen all there mouths have been filled and yet the granary is not empty. When all these thirsty ones have had their drink and yet the well springs up as free, as rich, as full as ever.   
But you must note again, to the praise of Christ, not only did they all receive of His sense, they all received all that they had. They had not, any of them, a part of their own. No Apostle could say, So far I am a debtor. But here I stand and claim the honor for myself. With sin begins and ends the whole story of man. But where good appears, there grace begins. Or, rather, the grace began

before the good. For every good desire, for every holy thought, for every well-spoken word, for every deed of daring, for every act of self-sacrifice let Christ be honoredfor everything has come of Him. If there is any virtue, any praiseanything that is lovely or of good reportgo and cast it at His feet, for from Him it came. He sowed the seed out of which it grew. He created the nature out of which these good things sprung.   
Oh what must the fullness be from which all the saints received all that they have! But there is another way of estimating the fullnessby remembering that, albeit, all the saints have received all these things, yet it remains undiminisheda fullness still. There is not a drop less in Christ though oceans have been taken away. There is not a spark less in that furnace though many fires have been kindled therefrom. There is not a farthing less in that treasury though millions of souls have been enriched. There is not a grain less in that granary nor shall there be a grain less even when the whole world shall be sownand all these sheaves shall come to the harvest.   
It is always blessed for the child of God to know that in Christ there is enough for all the saints, enough for each, enough for evermore. And when they have had all and everything that they can have still there is as much left as when they began. I noticed in Venice at the wells that the people came to them early in the morning because very soon afterward they were almost dry and it needed some two or three hours for the well to spring up again. Ah, but it is never so with Christ. Come early in the morning, O you thousands of seekers and that well is fullcome you at hot noon tide, O you thirsty ones and the well is fullcome when the sun is going down, you that are wearied with your day of toil, for the well is ever full.   
Ah, come at midnight, you whose sun is set, who are lost in the darkness of despair, for still you shall find that the well is fullnever exhausted. No, never diminishedalways springing up, always overflowing. So long as there shall be souls found who need to drink of His fullness, the supply shall be abundant.   
Though there are many things to say on each division of my subject, you must excuse me if I say but little. You must take the text home and think of it for yourselves. Spirits around the Throne, I hear you sing tonight, Of His fullness have all we received. Saints on earth, speeding your way to the eternal triumphs, join their song and say, Of His fullness have all we received. Let no voice be silent, let no tongue be dumb, but let every soul say, Of His fullness, too, have I received and glory be unto His name.  
II. Now for our second point. The text also teaches us HOW TO KNOW WHO IS THE CHRISTIAN, for it says, Of His fullness have all we received.   
There are some in this world who obtain their religion from their fathers and mothers. They go to church, or perhaps to chapel, because there is a family pew there and all their family used to go. They speak about our church and our denomination as though their grandfather had left his religion in his last will and testament for a legacy to them. Let such know that religion is not to be inherited. It is a personal matter. No man can stand sponsor for another. One of the most ridiculous and pestilent of human inventions is the idea of making one man stand representative for another, or an adult for a childeveryone must appear before God and be judged for ourselves.   
Jesus Christ is the only Surety. Verily, we should have enough to do to answer for ourselves at the last, without attempting to make a reply for other people. To our own Master we must stand or fall. We have a divinely appointed Substitute. Therefore we shall all gather around the judgment seat of Christ. But you have received your grace, you say, from your parent. If you have got it anywhere but from Christ then please remember you do not belong to the family of Christ. Others there are who have a religion of their ownthey have got it by good works. They have always acted uprightly. They have shut their shops on a Sunday. They do not cheatat least not often, not more than other people. They speak the truth and they endeavor to do their best.   
They would not mind helping a poor neighbor. Or if they are in richer circumstances, their guinea is always ready whenever the subscription list is placed before them. And they say, Well, if it does not go well with me, it will be hard with a great many people. That is quite correctindeed it will go very hard with a great many people. But this religion of theirs is of their own making. Then sometimes when men get rich they think they will, as it were, put the finest fruit on the top of the bushel and they leave a donation to some society. A very good plan, indeed, by the waybut a pitiful thing if it is left with the view of getting merit by it. So now they say, It will all be wellthere will be two or three alms-houses built. I have been a good fellow while I have lived and it will surely be well with me at the end.   
You do not belong to the same company as the saints who have gone before. You have evidently nothing to do with the Apostle Johnfor his fullness came from Christ. It is quite apparent you can never share his Heaven. You can never enjoy his bliss. You can never enter into his rest. What he had he owed to grace divine. But it seems what you have is of your own earning. Your robes are of your own spinning, your fire of your own kindling, your coin of your own minting, your merits of your own merchandise. Oh, be not deceived, these things will fail you at the last and you will find them as a dream when one awakes All your fine righteousness shall disappear as a shadow when your conscience is aroused upon your dying bed.   
But others have a better sort of religion than this. They do not believe the Calvinistic doctrinethat without Christ we can do nothing. They acknowledge that without Him we cannot do muchstill they pretend that with Him they can do just a little. If we cannot save ourselves yet we can believe in our own strength. So they take the first step. They begin the good work in themselves. And then their divines teach them that they must persevereyes, if they do not, if they will not do their part, God will leave them. The grace of God is dependent upon their good behaviorso they try to behave themselves to keep the grace of God.   
They use the grace of God as they call it. They try to hold on to the end of themselves. And what does it all come to? To which I say, it is very obvious that you do not belong to those old-fashioned saints who lived in the Bible timesfor all they had they received from Christ. They did not get the beginning from themselvesHe was Alphathey did not get the endingHe was Omega. They did not get anything from self. They sought and they found Christ for us. If you had asked an old saint his opinion about salvation he would have replied in the language of Jonah, Salvation is of the Lord.   
Free will doctrines, creature power and human strength, were unknown in Bible times. They were the invention of one Pelagius. They were new vamped and made a little tidy by Van Harmin, called Arminius. There are some who to this day have adopted these old shoes and clouted upon their feet and old garments upon them and all the bread of their provision is dry and moldy. And they appear like Gibeonites in the Lords hosts. I do not say but what many of then shall be savedbut they shall be hewers of wood and drawers of water in the midst of the congregation in their daysfor they never can come into the liberty wherewith Christ makes us free while they believe those adulterated doctrines, those traditions of men, instead of the doctrine and revelation of Christ Jesus the Lord.  
Now, let us try to find out the true Christianthe enlightened Christian. The true Christian has all from Christ. The Heaven-taught Christian feels it is so. You remember that the Apostle Paul said of himself that he was the chief of sinners. A little while before he says he was the least of all the saints and last of all he says, Though I am nothing. John Newton says, Young Christians think themselves littlegrowing Christians think themselves nothingfull-grown Christians think themselves less than nothing. So as we grow up we grow down. As Christ increases we must decrease. As He is glorified, the flesh gets dishonored in our esteem.   
Now, what do you say, Brothers and Sisters? Did you receive all the grace you have from Christ? Is He All in All to you? Are you resting wholly and simply and only on Him? Can you say as poor Jack did in that story I once told you   
*Im a poor sinner and nothing at all,   
But Jesus Christ is my All in All!*   
Have you learned to depend on Him for all things and on self for nothing? Have you seen the rottenness and emptiness of all human merit? Have you learned the deceitfulness and desperate wickedness of all human trust? If so, rejoice, for you belong to that company who can say, Of His fullness have all we received.   
Sometimes the devil will say to us, Well, you do a great deal in the cause of Christ. You do not have a moments rest from the moment you wake in the morning to the time you go to sleep at nightalways thinking of something for Christ and doing something for Him. And, then, proud flesh says, Ah, you have labored more abundantly than they all. No, no, my Brethren. When we come to look upon all our works, those of us who have toiled the most for ChristI am sure we cannot find any satisfaction in them. In reviewing all that I have attempted to do, I can only say, so far as my own personal experience goes, I am as heartily sick of my own righteousness as I am of my sins.   
I feel as much reason to have Gods grace over the best deeds as over the worst. I often lie down in the very dust of self-abasement feeling that I have not anythingno, not a rag of my ownno, not a grain of merit, not an atom whereon I can trust. As abject a sinner as there is out of Hellif I look into myselfit is my only satisfaction that I am enabled to look to Christ and to Christ alone. All that is of Natures spinning must be unraveled. All that is of Natures manufacture must be broken in pieces. We must unhoof the horses and burn the chariots of human strength in the fire, for thus says the Spirit, I will stain the pride of all glory and bring into contempt all the excellent of the earth. Yes, doubtless and we count all things His for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord. Here is our strugglethat we may win Christ and be found in Him, not having our own righteousness which is of the Law, but the righteousness which is of God by faith.

III. Thirdly, we draw from the text A SENTENCE OF ADMONITION TO THE BELIEVEROf His fullness have all we received.   
Should not the believer be of all men the most honorable? I have heard sometimes of a man being a Christian and yet being proud. Now a proud Christian is a singular contradiction. Yet you do know someyou would not say they were not godly peoplebut then, their coat is made of the best broad cloth and they think it would be a little going down if they were to speak to those who wear fustian or white coats during the week. They are a little better off in the world and so they do not receive their poorer Brethren. This is the most silly pride in the world. I have not a word to say about it. It is too mean to be worth a mans words spent upon it.   
But there is some pride which a Christian man will entertain and almost think it is humility. It is a pride about his experiencea pride of having grown wise at last. He thinks he has learned too much ever to be proud, which proves that he is puffed up beyond measure. He says, Well, those young people are very self-conceited. He looks down on beginners and says, Their greatest danger is to be lifted up with pride. While as for himselfgood sober man, so old and experiencedit is not possible that he should be proudyet proud all the while. To such we say, What have you that you have not received? I know people say it is more respectable to owe thirty thousand pounds than it is to break for three. But if I must be in debt, methinks I would rather be the smaller debtor.   
Yet how many there are because they have received more from God than othersthat is they are greater debtors than othersthey are proud. You have more gifts than I have. Well, it only means you have got twice as much work to do as I have. So you have got more wealth than I. That means you are more in debt to God than I and are you proud of being in debt? Let the Christian be a humble-minded man. We talk of humility. What a lump of pride we arefussy, stuck-up, wanting to have respect paid to us. If somebody comes between the wind and our nobility, we are upset. If somebody abuses us, what a state we are in. And oh, if anybody calls us ill-names, how harshly we consider ourselves treated.   
If we thought less of ourselves we should not be quite so sensitive. Where should dust go but on the dunghill? And where should they put the man who knows himself to be vile but in the worst place? Yes, let them put us therethey will not give us worse than we deserve if we come to know ourselves in the sight of God. Yes, we may say of the slanderer, Man, you have not hit it, you have not found out my fault. If you knew me better you could hit me harder. Yes, we might sometimes say to some cruel enemy, You have made some mistake there, for I am innocent of that before God. But if you had read my heart and known how false I have been to my Lord and how unbelieving, you might have exposed me and hit me in a sore place and smitten me under the fifth rib.   
I think we ought always to say, Well, we do not deserve it for that, but we deserve it for something else, so we will take it patiently and be willing that men should wipe their shoes on us if it will but glorify Christ. Yes, let them call us devils if we may but help to do angels work in redeeming men. Let them scout us, hiss at us and say, Yah! there goes a hypocrite! or anything else they like, if we may but magnify Christ while living and enjoy Him when we shall come to die. Be humble Christian, for what have you that you have not received?   
Next, let us be grateful. All that we have we have received from Christ. Let us love Him. When our friends give us love we give them love in return. But what is that which we owe mother, father, husband, wife, or friend compared with what we owe to Christ? Let your hearts burn, let your love be inflamed. Fall at His dear feetembrace them with affection. Spend and be spent for Him. Live unto Him and be ready to die for Him. For all you have you have received of His fullness. I think that what we want as a Church is more recognition of the gifts we have as coming from Christ. I do not think we have the gratitude we ought to have to Him. We do not make sacrifices for Him. We give, it is true, to this cause and to that, but are there half-a-dozen Christians here that have ever made a sacrifice for Christ?   
He gives us blood and we give Him a few tears. He gives us sweat and we give Him cold services. He gives us groans and we give Him languishing hymns. He gives us life and death, body, soul and spirit and we give Him only what we can spare after we have first looked to ourselvesand not all that in most cases. Let us feel, O God, let us feel gratitude to Christa fire within our bones and a flame within our hearts and a sevenfold strength in our spiritsnot only to believe in His name, but also to suffer for His sake. Let gratitude be the inspiration of our lives.   
IV. I have not time nor strength to enlarge further upon these points. Therefore the last and not the least important. The text seems to me to be A MOST SWEET INVITATIONA MOST BLESSED ENCOURAGEMENT TO POOR NEEDY SINNERS.  
So, Sinner, you need tonight a new heart. You will never be able to make your heart new yourselfHe must give it to you. So, Sinner, you need repentanceyou can never repent of yourself. He is exalted on high to give repentance. So you need a sense of your own sin and sinfulness He can make you feel it, for He felt it all Himself. So you do feel your sin, you say and you want to have it pardonedHe can pardon it and without exception He has power to forgive sins on earth. Tell me not how vile you have beenHe can pardon you. Say you are guilty of aggravated crimes He can forgive you. Tell me not, even, that you have stained your hands with bloodHe is able to wash out that stain and make you whiter than snow.   
Sinner, Sinner, Sinner! Do you need tonight to have your aching heart filled with peace?He can do it. Of His fullness have all the host in Heaven received. Of His fullness have all the saints on earth received. And you, poor weeping Sinner, you may, you shall receive, too. They had nothing to bring to Him any more than you have. They came to Him black in sinas black as you and He washed them. They came to Him lostlost as you can possibly beHe saved them and He can save you. He asks you to do nothing of yourself, but to trust Him and Him alone. He is God. Oh, trust the Omnipotent One. He is perfect Man. Oh, trust the Meritorious One. He died. Oh, trust His dying sacrifice.   
He lives. Oh, trust His authoritative plea. Sinner, if we asked you to trust a man, we should think it right that you should object. If he pretended to be a priest and asked you to trust him, you might turn upon your heel with a sneer. But I bid you trust in no mere man but in Him that died upon the Cross. And He is worthy of your trust. Yonder millions redeemed from death and Hell will tell you, Worthy is the Lamb!and thousands here below will tell you, too, That He is worthy of all your confidence. May the Spirit of God graciously lead you out of self into Christ and enable you once for all to put your trust in Him.   
I will tell you, tonight, an anecdote which I think I have repeated before, but not in this house. There was a poor man who had been a long while burdened in spiritone night he had a dream. To dreams we attach no importance. But this dream happens to be an allegory. He dreamed that he stood at the gates of Heaven, longing to enter but he dared not and could not, for sin had shut him out. He was longing to come but he dared not. At length he saw approaching the pearly gates a company of men who came on singing. They were goodly to look upon, dressed in white robes.   
So he stepped up to one of them and he said to them, Who are you? And they replied, We are the goodly fellowship of the Prophets. He said, Alas! I cannot enter with you. And he watched them until they had passed the gates and he heard from outside the voice of song as they were received with welcome. Cast down and troubled, he watched until he saw another company approach and they came with music and rejoicing. He said to them, Who are you? They were great hosts who had washed their robes and they replied, We are the noble army of martyrs. He said, I cannot go with you. And when he heard the shouts a second time ascending from within the gates, his heart was heavy within him at the thought that it was not possible for him to enter there.   
Then came a third company and he detected in the main the Apostles and after them there came mighty preachers and confessors of the Word. He said in his heart, Alas! I cannot go with you, for I am no preacher and I have done nothing for my Master. His heart was ready to break, for they entered and were lost to his sight. And he heard the triumphant acclamations as the Master said, Well done, enter into the joy of your Lord. But as he waited, he saw a greater company approaching. He marked in the forefront Saul of Tarsus, Mary Magdalene, the thief that died upon the Cross. And they came streaming on.   
So he said to one of them, Who are you? And they replied, We are a company of sinners whom no man can number. We are saved by blood through the rich, free, sovereign grace of God. Indeed, all the companies might have said the same and the dream would have been more complete. But as this poor man, with the tears in his eyes heard this word, he said, Thank God, I can go with you, for I am a sinner like you and like you I trust in the merit of Him that died on Calvary. So he joined their ranks and was about to enter but he said in his heart, When we come, there shall be no songs. They will admit us, but it will be in silence, for we bring no honor to God. We have done nothing for Himthere will be no voices of music when we come in.   
But to his surprise the acclaim was louder, the music was more melodious and the shouts of acclamation were louder far, while they said, Here are they who come to complete the number of the host whom Jesus bought with His blood.

Now, Sinner, let your ear be attentive and let your heart bow down to listen while I admonish you. What? Though you are a poor sinnerif you believe in Christ, you can come in as a poor sinner! Indeed, this is the way we all must come, for there are not, after allthough our imagination, like the dream, may suggest itthere are not two ways of entrance. We all come to Him emptyto be filled naked, to be clothedlost to be saved. Let me, then, just put the way of salvation plainly to you all.  
He that believes and is baptized shall be saved. So said Christ. This was the commission which He gave to His Apostles. What is it to believe? To believe is to trust Christ. To put it as the Negro said, Massa, I fall flat down on de promise. That is to believeto fall flat on the finished work and sure promise of Christ.   
The Lord enable you to be rid of self and self-confidence and to trust Christ. Then let Hell roar, let earth rage, let the Law thunder, let the precept threaten, let condolence accuse. But oh, let the Son of God arise. Bound by His Word, He will display a strength proportioned to your day. He will never suffer you to perish, neither shall any pluck you out of His hand. Amen.

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THE FULLNESS OF JESUS THE TREASURY OF SAINTS   
NO. 858

**DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, FEBRUARY 28, 1869, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**Of His fullness have we all received and Grace for Grace. John 1:16.**

THESE are not words spoken by John the Baptist, as a cursory reader might imagine, but they were written by John the Evangelist. The verse preceding is a paragraph cast into the midst of the Gospel, causing a temporary break. Omitting that verse, we read as follows: The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father), full of Grace and truth; and of His fullness have we all received and Grace for Grace.

In its more limited meaning, as it stands in its connection, the text appears to teach that while Jesus Christ dwelt on earth there was a Divine Glory about His Person and Character which His Apostles and disciples clearly beheld, perceiving in Him and in His teaching a fullness of Divine Grace and the Truth of God. And further, that this Grace and Truth were Divinely contagions, so that the disciples participated in it and men took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus and learned of Him this being especially true of the Apostles who drank most fully into the life and power of Jesus and continued to reveal to the world, after their Master was taken upthe Grace and Truth of the Gospel committed to them.

But this passage is not to be restricted to so limited a senseit is of far wider range and of much greater depth. We understand it of our Lord Jesus in the whole of His Character and work. Looking beyond His earthly life we see Him in His Crucifixion, His Resurrection, His Ascension, His sitting at the right hand of God and His Second Advent. And beholding Him as the all-sufficient Savior, we this day behold His Glory, the Glory as of the Only-Begotten of the Father, full of Grace and Truth! And we, that is, the whole range of the saints in all ages past and in all periods to comewe receive out of this fullness superabundant Grace!

I. In discussing this text I shall first remind you of the ONE GLORIOUS PERSON concerning whom this verse is written. There are other persons in the verse, but they are comparatively insignificant. We all are mentioned as the receiverswe occupy the most humble place. The one throne of the text, (and a glorious high throne it is), is reserved for Him who is intended in the pronoun, His. Of His fullness have we all received. We know that this is no other than that august Person whom John calls, The Word, or the speech of God, so called because God in Nature has revealed Himself, as it were, inarticulately and indistinctly but in His Son He has revealed Himself as a man declares his inmost thoughtsby distinct and intelligible speech.

Jesus is to the Father what speech is to us. He is the unfolding of the Fathers thoughts, the revelation of the Fathers heart. He that has seen Christ has seen the Father. Would you have me see you? said Socrates, then speak, for speech reveals the man. Would you see God? Listen to Christ, for He is Gods Word, revealing the heart of Deity. Lest, however, we should imagine Jesus to be a mere utterance, a mere word spoken and forgotten, our Apostle is peculiarly careful that we should know that Jesus is a real and true Person, and therefore tells us that the Divine Word, out of whose fullness we have received, is most assuredly God!

No language can be more distinct. He ascribes to Him the eternity which belongs to GodIn the beginning was the Word. He clearly claims Divinity for HimThe Word was God. He ascribes to Him the acts of GodWithout Him was not anything made that was made. He ascribes to Him self-existence which is the essential characteristic of GodIn Him was life. He claims for Him a Nature peculiar to GodGod is light and in Him is no darkness at all. And the Word is the true light, which lights every man that comes into the world. No writer could be more explicit in his utterances, and beyond all question he sets forth the proper Deity of that Blessed One of whom we all must receive if we would obtain eternal salvation.

Yet John does not fail to set forth that our Lord was also Man. He says, the Word was made fleshnot merely assumed manhood, but was made. And made not merely Man as to His nobler part, His Soul, but Man as to His flesh, His lower element. Our Lord was not a phantom, but One who, as John declares in his Epistle, was touched and handled. The Word dwelt among us. He tabernacled with the sons of mena carpenters shed His lowly refuge and the caves and mountains of the earth His midnight resort in His later life. He dwelt among sinners and sufferers, among mourners and mortals, Himself completing His citizenship among us by becoming obedient to death, even the death of the Cross.

See, then, my beloved Brothers and Sisters, where God has treasured up the fullness of His Grace! It is in a Person so august that Heaven and earth tremble at the majesty of His Presence and yet in a Person so humble that He is not ashamed to call us, Brethren. The Apostle, lest we should by any means put a second person in comparison with the one and only Christ, throughout this chapter continually enters caveats and disclaimers against all others. He bars the angels and shuts out cherubim and seraphim by saying, Without Him was not anything made that was made! At the creation of the world no ministering spirit may intrude a finger. Angels may sing over what Jesus creates, but as the Builder of all things He stands alone.

Further on the Apostle guards the steps of the Throne against John and virtually against all the other witnesses of the Messiah, albeit among those that are born of women there was not a greater than John the Baptist, yet, he was not that Light. The stars must hide their heads when the sun shinesJohn must decrease and Christ must increase. No, there was One whom all the Jews reverenced and whose name is coupled with that of the Lamb in the triumphant song of Heaven! They sang the song of Moses, the servant of God and of the Lamb. But even he is excluded from the glory of this text, For the Law was given by Moses, but Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ. Moses must sit down at the foot of the Throne with the tablets of stone in his hands, but Jesus sits on the Throne and stretches out the silver scepter to His people.

Lest there should remain a supposition that another person yet unmentioned should usurp a place, the Apostle adds, No man at any time has seen the Father. The best and holiest have all, alike, been unable to look into that excellent Glory! But the Word has not only seen the Father, but has declared Him unto us! The text is as Tabor to us and while in its consideration, at the first we see Moses and Elijah and all the saints with the Lord Jesus, receiving of His fullness, yet all these vanish from our minds and our spirit sees no man, but Jesus only. Gazing into this text, one feels as John did when the gates of Heaven were opened to him and he looked within them and he declared, I looked and lo, a Lamb stood on the Mount Zion.

He saw other things afterwards, but the first thing that caught his eye and filled his mind was the Lamb in the midst of the Throne! Brothers, it becomes us as ministers to be constantly making much of Christ, to make Him, indeed, the first, the last and the midst of all our discourses! And it becomes all Believers, whenever they deal with matters of salvation, to set Jesus on high and to crown Him with many crowns. Give Him the best of your thoughts and works and affections, for He it is who fills all things and to whom all things should pay homage.

II. Secondly, there are TWO PRECIOUS DOCTRINES in the text. The first doctrine teaches us that in this glorious Person of Jesus all fullness is treasured up, and the secondwithout which the first might yield us little comfortthat all this treasure of Divine Grace is received by His saints, so that all His saints receive all they have that is gracious and truthful from Him.

1. First consider this master Truth of God, that all Divine Grace is treasured up in Christ Jesus. His fullness, says the text. Ah, what a word, His fullness! If I had no other text given me to preach from until all preaching should be ended, this might suffice. His fullness! O Brothers and Sisters, here is a fullness which cannot be measured for length, or breadth, or depthfor He is filled with all the fullness of God! In Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. The fullness of which the text speaks particularly is His double fullness of Grace and Truth. There is in Jesus Christ a fullness of essential Grace for it is His Nature to overflow with free mercy to the miserable sons of men.

It was a fullness of Grace in Him that made Him enter into the Eternal Covenant and undertake Suretyship engagements for us. It was a fullness of love and Grace which sustained Him in the discharge of His liabilities as our Great Substitute and the fullness of Grace it is which constrains Him, still, to persevere in His work, saying, For Zions sake I will not rest, and for Jerusalems sake I will not hold My peace. In Christ there is a fullness of Grace to impart to us and to that the text refers a fullness of pardoning Grace, so that no sin can ever exceed His power to forgive!

It refers a fullness of justifying Grace, so that He justifies the ungodly. A fullness of converting Grace, so that He calls to Him whom He pleases. A fullness of quickening Grace, for He quickens whom He wills. Here is a fullness of purifying Grace, for His blood cleanses us from all sin and a further fullness of comforting Grace, of sustaining Grace, of satisfying Grace, of restoring GraceJesus has a fullness in whatever office you regard Himand with whatever needs. He is never limited in any gift or Grace, but always full thereof. This fullness, time would fail us to rehearse! Drink of it! Plunge into it, and you shall know far more than I can, by any possibility, tell.

This, however, I may saythe fullness which dwells in Christ is, from the text, clearly proved to be an abiding fullness, for, mark, We all, says he, have received of it. And yet he calls it a fullness, still. It was a fullness before a single sinner came to it to receive pardonbefore a solitary saint had learned to drink of that river the streams of which make glad the Church! And now, after thousands and even myriads of bloodredeemed saints have drank of this life-giving stream, it is just as overflowing as ever!

We are accustomed to say that if a child takes a cupful from the sea it is just as full as before, but that is not literally truethere must be just so much the less of water in the ocean. But it is literally true of Christ, that when we have not only taken out cups fullfor our needs are too great to be satisfied with such small quantitieswhen we have taken out oceans full of Divine Graceand we need as much as that to carry us to Heaventhere is actually as much left! Although we each have drawn upon the treasury of His love to an extent so boundless that we cannot understand it, yet there is as much mercy and Divine Grace left in Christ as there was before. And it is a fullness, still, after all the saints have received of it.

Brethren, there is a fullness of Truth in our Lord as well as Grace, that is to say, everything which Christ says is not only true, but emphatically true. And not only true in one sense, but true in multiple sensestrue to the letter and to the jots and to the tittlestrue today and true tomorrow and true forever! True to one saint and true to every saint! True at one season and true in all seasons! There is a blessed emphasis of Divine reality in Christ Jesus. Every word He speaks is as the decree of God. Every doctrine that He promulgates is clear as the Great White Throne. In Him there is no admixture of error. Never man spoke like this Man, because His teaching is unalloyed gold. All doctrine which He reveals is as pure and celestial as the dew from Heaven.

Brethren, there is an abiding fullness of truth in Christ! After you have heard it for 50 years, you see more of its fullness than you did at first. Other truths weary the ear. I will defy any man to hold together a large congregation, year after year, with any other subject but Christ Jesus! He might do it for a time. He might charm the ear with the discoveries of science, or with the beauties of poetry. And his oratory might be of so high an order that he might attract the multitudes who have itching ears, but they would, in time, turn away and say, This is no longer to be endured. We know it all.

All music becomes wearisome but that of Heaven! But oh, if the minstrel does but strike this celestial harp, though he keeps his fingers always among its golden strings and is but poor and unskilled upon an instrument so Divine, yet the melody of Jesus name and the sweet harmony of all His acts and attributes will hold His listeners by the ears and thrill their hearts as nothing beside can do! The theme of Jesus love is inexhaustible! Though preachers may have dwelt upon it century after century, a freshness and fullness still remain.

2. The second doctrine is that all the saints have received all of Grace out of the fullness of Christ. It is not one saint who has derived Grace from the Redeemer, but all. Of His fullness have we all received. And they have not merely derived a part of the blessings of Grace from Jesus, but all that they ever had they received from Him. It would be a wonderful vision if we could now behold passing before us the long procession of the chosen, the great and the smallthe goodly fellowship of Apostles, the noble army of martyrsthe once weeping but now rejoicing band of penitents. There they go! I think I see them all in their white robes, bearing their palms of victory.

But you shall not, if you stop the procession at any point, be able to discover one who will claim to have obtained Grace from another source than Christ. Nor shall one of them say, I owed the first Grace I gained to Christ, but I gained other Grace elsewhere. No, the unanimous testimony is, of His fullness have we all received. My inner eye beholds the throng as the procession pauses before the Throne of God. Oh, can you see how every man prostrates himself before the Throne of the Lamb and altogether they cry, Of His fullness have we all received?

Whoever we may be. However well we may have served our Master. Whatever honor we have gainedthough our Lord has helped us to finish our course and to win the prizeyet it is ALL of himNon nobis Domine! Not unto us, not unto us, but unto Your name be all the praise! What a precious Truth of God, then, we have before us, that all the saints in all ages have been just what you and I must be tonight if we would be savedreceivers! They did not, any one of them bring anything to Christ, but received from Him.

If they, at this moment, cast their crowns at His feet, their crowns were first given to them by Him! Their robes are wedding garments of His providing. The whole course of saintship is receptive. None of the saints talk of what they gave. None of them speak of what came of themselves, but they all bear testimony without a solitary exception that they were all receivers from Jesus fullness! Oh, but this casts mire into the face of human self-sufficiency! What? Not one saint who had a little of his own? Not one of all the favored throng who could furnish himself? No, not one! Did none of them look to the works of the Law? No, they all went to Jesus and His Grace and none to Moses and the Law.

Did none of them trust in priests of earthly anointing? Did none of them bow down before holy fathers and saintly confessors to obtain absolution? There is not a word said about such foolishness! Nor even a syllable concerning appeals to saintsbut all the saved ones received direct, from His fullness, who fills all in all. I must not leave this second doctrine, however, without noting that these receptive saints received very abundantly. They drew from an abundance, even a fullnessand they also drew largely, as indicated by the words, and Grace for Grace, which words are only difficult to understand by reason of the extent of meaning hidden in themfor they might be translated a dozen ways with equal accuracy.

Do they not mean this?Just as Samson slew so many Philistines that he cried out, Heaps upon heaps, so our Lord has given to His people Divine Grace at such a rate that they have Grace upon Grace for abundance? They have received from Him such a plenty, such a plenitude of Divine Grace and the Truth of God that as the ancients fabled Mount Pelion to be piled upon Ossa by the giants to make a staircase to the skies, so our great Savior has piled mountains of Grace upon mountains of Gracethat on these, as on a stupendous ladderHis elect might climb to the Throne of God! Not one step to Heaven is other than of Divine Graceand all comes out of His fullness.

III. We advance to the third point and mark THREE EXPERIENCES indicated by the text. And first, Beloved in the Lord, if you and I would receive of the fullness of Christ, it is imperatively necessary that we should have an experience of our own emptiness. All saints receive of Christ, but no vessel can receive beyond the measure of its emptiness. The more full it is, so much the less is its capacity for reception. And the more empty it is, so much the greater the space which can be filled. This is a hard lesson for human nature, for we firmly believe in ourselves.

You say, I am rich and increased in goods, and have need of nothing. We learn this with our mother tongue and we repeat it so often that we believe it! And like the Pharisee, we make it our daily boast, God, I thank You that I am not as other men are. The Pharisee would see no chaff in his wheat, whereas Divine Grace makes us to be like the publican who could see no wheat in his chaff and would only say, God be merciful to me a sinner. It is hard going down the ladder of self-knowledge. We give up with great reluctance our flattering opinions of ourselves. We are hard to empty of the notion of our own inherent meritand if the Lord spills that upon the groundwe then hold to the idea of our own inherent strength!

What if we have no merit, yet at least we will have some, by-and-by, and we spin out our poor resolves as freely as a spider spins her web and the fabric is as frail. And if our notion of power is taken from us, we then betake ourselves to our self-justification by endeavoring to persuade ourselves that we are not responsible! Or, wrapping ourselves in despair, we declare that we cannot help ourselves and wickedly cast our ruin upon destiny. Man is hard to be dragged away from the rock of self-justification. Like Theseus in the old mythology, he is glued so fast to the great stone of self-conceit which lies hard by the gates of Hell, that a stronger than Hercules is needed to tear him from it! And even such a deliverer must rend him from it, leaving his skin behind.

When the Lord comes and makes the sinner stand before His bar and plead, Lord, I am guilty, the man is made ready to receive of Christs merits because he is emptied of his own. Hear him again: Lord, I would gladly repent and believe, but oh, for this I have no strength! Be You my Helper. The mans own power is gone and with it his hardness of heart. He confessed that he has willfully and wickedly sinned, and now the Lord pours out His Grace and mercy. Our Lord withholds from those who are fullbut He is always ready to give to those who are empty! Never does He keep back anything from those who are consciously in need. Never does He give anything to those who say they need nothing.

There must be in each of us, then, an emptiness of self if we are to enjoy the fullness of Christ. But he who knows the emptiness of self is not, therefore, saved. The man who knows he has the fever is not cured by that knowledge. The man who knows he is condemned to die is not, for that reason, pardoned. It is a dreadful thing to stop short with a mere sense of sinwe must go on to the second experiencea personal reception of Christ Jesus. Here I shall put the question to each of my hearers, especially to professors of religionHave you received out of Christs fullness? I am not asking you whether you are Church members. We sorrowfully know that it is one thing to be that, and quite another thing to receive Christ.

I do not ask you whether you received the ordinance of the Lords Supper. Alas, to receive bread and wine is a very different thing from feeding upon the flesh and blood of Jesus Christ! The one is a carnal act which Judas might perform, who had a devil, but the other is a spiritual act, possible only for spiritual men. Oh, says one, do not put high standards before us. No, I am not. I am putting the lowest standard that can prove a soul to be savedhave you received Christ? I want to call your attention to the marvelous simplicity of this one act by which salvation comes to all the saints. It is receiving. Now, receiving is a very easy thing. There are 50 things which you and I cannot do, but, my dear Friend, you could undoubtedly receive a penny, could you not?

There is not a man, nor woman, nor child here, so imperfect in power as to be unable to receive. Everybody seems capable of receiving any amount. Mark, then, in salvation you do nothing but merely receive. There is a hand, a beggars hand and if it is needed to write a fair letter, it cannot do that, but be assured it can receive! Try it, and the beggar will soon let you know. Look at that hand again. Do you see that it has the palsy? It quivers and shakes! Ah, but it can receive, for all that! Many a palsied hand has received a jewel. But do you not see that in addition to being filthy and palsied, it has a foul disease? The leprosy lies within and is not to be washed out by any mode of purification known to us, and yet it can receive!

The saints all came to be saints and remained saints through doing exactly what that poor dirty, leprous, quivering hand can do. All their Divine Grace came by receiving! So, dear Hearer, I am not setting up a high test, though I am assuredly setting up a very safe and necessary one. Have you received out of the fullness of Christ? Did you come all empty-handed and take Jesus Christ to be your All? I know what you did at first. You were for accumulating the shining heaps of your own merits and esteeming them as if they were so much goldbut you found out that your labor profited not, so at last you came empty-handed and said, My precious Savior, do but give me Yourself and I will have done with merit. I renounce all merit and all doing and working and I take You to be everything to me.

Then, Friend, you are saved if that is true, for the acceptance of Christ is the mark of the saint. I said there were three experiencesthe first was emptiness. The second is receiving. And the third is that blessed experience, the discovery that all we receive comes to us by Divine Grace. Look at the last words, And Grace for Grace, which words may be read, And Grace because of Grace, that is to say, the only reason why we get Grace is because of Grace! Grace is the cause of itself. It is a self-creating thing. God will have mercy on whom He will have mercy. He is gracious because He is gracious and He gives Divine Grace to men NOT because they deserve it, or ask for itbut because He is gracious and chooses to bless them. I trust, beloved Brethren, you all have experienced this. If you know your own emptiness and Christs fullness, I am sure you know, in a measure, the doctrine of Divine Grace and I hope you will go on to know it more and more. May you also get Grace to have more GraceGrace to qualify you for a higher degree of Grace!

Now, you do not get some Grace from Gods Grace and then the rest from your own efforts, but every step you have to go from the gate of the City of Destruction up to the pearl gates of the New Jerusalem, is all Grace. The road to Glory is paved with stones of Grace. The chariot in which we ride to Heaven is all of Grace. The strength that draws it and the axle that bears it up is all of Grace and Grace alone. In the whole Covenant of Grace, from the first letter of the charter down to its last word, there is nothing at all of merit or mans goodness, but it is Grace, Grace, Grace. As Grace laid the foundation, so Grace brings out every stone and as we sing

*It lays in Heaven the topmost stone,   
And well deserves the praise.*

I cannot make out where some of the Lords children get their creed when they preach up the dignity and free will of man. There are good people but who seem to me to use part of the speech of Ashdod and only part of the speech of Jerusalem. To my mind, free will seems such an incongruity when tacked on to Divine Grace and makes a mans ministry like Nebuchadnezzars image, with its head of gold and its feet of claythe two things do not consort. O for a Gospel that is all of one piecethat reveals the sinner as saved by Grace from first to lastthat God may have all the praise!

IV. As briefly as possible we shall speak of FOUR DUTIES. 1. First, if we have received from Christ all we have, then let us praise

Him. If we live on His fullness, let us magnify and bless His name. Gratitude is a natural virtue and it ought always to be in us a spiritual Grace. O let our tongues talk well of Him to whom we owe everything! There was a poor man who was a pauper, but a kind friend had taken care of him and the old man was never better pleased than when he could ramble out his thanks to passing strangers. Thats a dear man who lives up at the white house, there, Sir.

Do you see these clothes? He has given me all. I have not a rag on me but what is of his finding and I have a nice little cottage down there and, you know, he gave it to metold me I might live there rent free! He lets me walk through his grounds and tells me I am welcome to all I can desire. It was the old mans joy to expatiate upon the extraordinary goodness of his benefactor. I wish we all imitated him. Do you see anything that is happy and peaceful in me? It all came from Jesus. I am a poor worm with nothing at all in myself that I could boast of, but if there is anything at all that could commend the Gospel, I received it all from my dear Lord and Master who has done more for me than tongue can tell!

Brethren, speak more of Him and sing more His praise! If you have the gift of song, never prostitute it (as I think it must be) to light, giddy, loose verses. Keep your sweetest notes for Him. Music, reserve your charms for him. If the things of this world might claim a note or two, yet, oh, let Him have the loudest of your harmony. You daughters of Israel, go forth to meet your Davidfor if any of this world has helped youif Saul has slain his thousandsthis David has slain His ten thousands! The mightiest of your foes He has overthrown. One of the best ways of praising Jesus is by trusting Him more. Faith is often compact praise. A trustful heart has in it the quintessence of music. Jesus loves to be trustedit is a true, if indirect, form of gratitude, when we repose confidence because of mercies received.

Once more, if you wish to praise the Prince of Peace, as I trust you do, go and beg harder of Him. Go to Him this very night and say *The best return for one like me,   
So wretched and so poor,   
Is from Your gifts to draw a plea,   
And ask You still for more.*

You cannot do your Lord a better turn nor make His heart more glad by way of praising Him, than by opening your mouth wider than ever tonight that you may receive more out of His fullness than you have ever had since you have known Him!

2. The second duty is thisif up till now we have received out of Christs fullness, then let us repair to Him again. As you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him. I find it my best and safest way and I recommend it to you all, to live daily on Christ, as I did when first I trusted in Him. If I have ever known Him at all. If He has ever been revealed to me and in me. If He has ever answered my prayers. If He has ever blessed me to your souls and made me the spiritual parent of any that are in the skies, I do know that I had it all from Him, for I never had a grain of anything good of my ownall my Grace has been the free grant of His sovereign will!

But Satan says, Ah, but you never knew Jesus! Well, if I never did, I know what to do now. I will go to Jesus at once. If I never did go to Him before, I will hasten to Him now. Now, when I go to Jesus Christ in that way, not as a saint but as a sinnernot as a preacher but as a poor, miserable offenderI find my comfort returns to me. I would like to be as a babe, always hanging on the breast of Jesus love. I would like to be the fruit which remains on the bough and so grows ripe and sweet. I would like to be always locked up in Christs pantry and never live on what I had before fed on, but feeding evermore! To this duty I invite you tonight. If you have receivedcome and receive againyou have not received the whole of Christs fullness yet!

But all that is in Christ is meant to be received. Jesus Christ is like the sunHe is a storehouse of light, but the light is there to be shed abroad. He is like the cloudsa storehouse of waters, but all that is in Him is to descend in showers upon thirsty souls. There is nothing in Christ but what was meant to be distributed! He is like Josephs granaries in Egypt, full of corn for hungry men. Do you read of mercy in Christ?say, That mercy was meant for a needy sinner. Even I will have it. Little children, when they come to the table, seem to know by instinct that everything there is meant to be eaten, so they cry, Give me this. Give me that.

Now, in this be children. If you see anything in Christ, however rich and rare, however precious and choice, say, Lord, give me that and give me that, for it is all meant to be given awayit is all provided on purpose to meet the needs of the Lords people. So we leave that duty, but I trust not till we have attended to it.

3. The third duty is, if you have been receiving of Christ, try to obtain more, for the text says, Grace for Gracethat is, Grace upon Grace Grace to fit you for higher Grace. If you are no richer than the old Believers under the Law and you have found only Jewish Grace, come and ask for clearer views. If you have Grace as a babe, ask Grace to be a young man. And if you have grown to be a young man, ask Grace to be a father. Aspire to the highest point of Christian perfection! In other matters we are very covetous, but in the things of God, what an accursed contentment we soon fall into!

I use the word advisedly, for it is accursed, since it brings the curse of barrenness upon us. I loathe to hear a Believer say, Well, if I am but just saved, that is enough for me. If I may but just get in behind the door in Heaven, I shall be content. So you will, my dear Brother, but you ought not to talk that way! Your business is to show forth as much of Christ to His Glory as you possibly can. What? Are you so selfish that if you can creep into Heaven that will content you? I would Like to carry my Master a whole casket of jewels in my bosom! I would gladly say to Him, Here am I and the children whom You have given me. I would desire to die with the sweet satisfaction, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith, therefore there is laid up for me a crown of life that fades not away.

Wrestle for more Grace! If you are up to your ankles, wade into this river of gracious fullness up to your knees. If you are up to your knees, be thankful, but do not be content. I ask you to advance till you are up to your loins and be not fully satisfied even then. Forget the things that are behind, be not satisfied till you find a river to swim in! Strike out till you feel you are utterly out of your depth and then dive into it and strike out! Glory in Christ to think that it pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell and be glad that you have learned to comprehend with all saints what are the heights and depths and to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge.

4. The last duty and the last word. If you have received of Christ, encourage others to receive of Him. Indeed, you need not go far for the encouragement, for you may first of all look at home. If Jesus Christ received you, whom will He not receive? If my Masters heart opened wide its doors to let me in, I know He has received one of the blackest that ever was accepted. And I feel confident in recommending you, poor, needy, troubled, conscience-stricken Sinner, to come to Jesus by simple trust tonight! I am sure if He had meant to reject you, He would not have accepted me. If you want to encourage souls to come to Christ, what a wonderful text this is: Of His fullness have we all received.

I must bring that little dream of mine up to your minds eye again. There are all the saintsmillions of themand they tell you, all of them, that they were all receivers. Now, suppose you were a beggar. You know what beggars do. If they go to a door and get anything, they make a little markyou and I do not understand it, but it means, Good house to knock at. And the next beggar who comes sees that token and he knocks boldly. If they get nothing, of course, they make some scurvy remark or another, after their own fashion, which the next beggar understands.

Now, I have already made that mark on Christs door and I have told you of it! It is a good house to knock at, for I have tried it. But suppose, being a beggar, you were to meet some 50 or 60 tramps, all coming down the street and they were to say to you, Are you in the same trade as we are? Yes, I am a beggar. Well, they say, theres a good house down there, we have all of us been to it and they have given us all something. What? Given something to all of you? Yes, to every one of us. What? To that man yonder? Why, he looks good for nothing! Ah, well, they gave him something. What? To the whole of you? Yes. Then I shall be as quick as I can to knock and get the next turn.

Why, of course, everybody would feel that that is the shop to beg at where nobody has been rejected. Now, since the world began there never has been a sinner who sincerely asked for mercy through faith in the precious blood of Jesus who has been rejected! Since Adam was cast out of the Garden, there has never been a sinner, whoever he might have been, that has cast himself by simple trust upon the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ, whom God has cast out! Well, but if they all received and all received, of His fullness, why not you?

One thing moreit may be that you will still say, Perhaps the Lord will change His mode of dealing and reject me! Oh, but let me tell you, He has pledged Himself that He will not, for, in addition to all those who have received at His hands, there is a promise given, Him that comes unto Me, I will in no wise cast out. He cannot cast you away, for He has said He will not and that word, no wise, is like the flaming cherubs sword, which turns every way, not to keep you out of the garden of life, but to keep out all your doubts and fears.

Observe, I will in no wise cast out. Then, if any man says, But I am too old, that cannot be the reason for your rejection, for Christ has said, Him that comes, I will in no wise cast out. Oh, but I have sinned beyond all reason. I have gone to an excess of riot. Sir, Im a damnable sinner. No one can say too bad of me. I do not care what you are! He cannot cast you out, for He has said, in no wise, that is, on no account, on no consideration, under no circumstances! If you come to Christ, Heaven and earth may pass away and yon blue sky may be folded up and put away as a worn-out mantle, and the stars shall fall like withered leaves in autumn, and the sun be turned into darkness and the moon into bloodbut NEVER shall a praying, trusting sinner be cast away from the Presence of God!

O come, then, you most guilty, you most empty, you most worthless! Come and welcome! Hark! The silver trumpet sounds tonight, Come and welcome! Come and welcome! Come and welcome! Come to the dear wounds of Jesus and be hidden there! Come to the fountain filled with blood and be cleansed there! Come to the heart of Christ in Heaven by trusting Him and be saved both now and forever!

May God bless you and everyone in this great house tonight! May He bless every one of you young women up there and of you men down there and you strangers thronging the aisles! May every one of us have to say, Of His fullness have we all received and Grace for Grace. The Lord bless you. Amen.

*PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMONJohn 1:1-18.*  
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BEHOLD THE LAMB OF GOD   
NO. 1987

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, OCTOBER 16, 1887, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. John 1:29.**

JOHN the Baptists one business was to bear witness to Christ. He was the morning star which heralds the rising sun. When the Sun appeared, he had no more reason for shining. You cannot account for John except by Jesusthe one reason for Johns existence is Jesus. I wish it might be so with us. May we be able to say, For me to live is Christ. May our life be such that it cannot be understood apart from Jesustake Him away and our whole character would become an inexplicable mystery! I am afraid that some professors could be easily interpreted apart from Christ perhaps could be better accounted for if there were no Christ. But if we are like John, true witnesses to Jesus, we shall find in Jesus the conscious purpose of our being and His Glory will be the clue to all the windings of our lives. For this purpose were we born and for this end have we come into the world, that we may bear witness to the Lord Jesus Christ! Search and look, my Brothers and Sisters, whether it has been so with you.

When our Lord was thus set forth by John, it is well to note the special character under which He was declared. John knew much of the Lord Jesus and could have pictured Him in many lights and characters. He might especially have pointed Him out as the great moral example, the Founder of a higher form of life, the great Teacher of holiness and love. Yet this did not strike the Baptist as the head and front of our Lords Character, but he proclaimed Him as One who had come into the world to be the great Sacrifice for sin. Lifting up his hand and pointing to Jesus, he cried, Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world. He did not say, Behold the great Exemplarno doubt he would have said that in due season. He did not even say, Behold the King and Leader of a new dispensationthat fact he, by no means, would have denied, but would have gloried in it. Still, the first point that he dwells upon, and that which wins his enthusiasm is, Behold the Lamb of God. John the Baptist views Him as the Propitiation for sin and so he cries, Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.

My Brothers and Sisters, we may depend upon it that this must be a very practical Truth of God, for John was pre-eminently practical. What is the sum and substance of his teaching but, Repent. Bring forth fruits meet for repentance. The axe is laid unto the root of the trees? He has a word for everybody that comeseven the Roman soldiers are told to be content with their rations. John is no theorist or quibbler about dogma. He deals with life and character and demands works meet for repentance. Yet he makes a great point of our Lords being the Sacrifice for sin. This, indeed, is the text of his life-sermon! Rest assured that there is something wonderfully practical about that Truth of God! And those who becloud it under the notion of being practical are laying aside the best instrument of doing good to men. For the reformation of manners and the overthrow of evil, and the setting up of the Kingdom of Righteousness throughout the world, there is no Truth of God like that which reveals Jesus as the Sacrifice provided by God for removing the sin of men!

The stern Baptist, the true Elijah who grappled hard with sin and laid the sword of repentance to its throat, saw that nothing could be done unless he pointed out the Lamb of God, by whom the worlds sin is taken away. When repentance is the sermon, Jesus must be the text and the substance of the discourse! He puts life, power, energy into what otherwise would be a dead moral essay. O you who would save men from sin, take care that you preach the great Sacrifice for sin! It is clear that this doctrine has to do with repentance, for the Apostle of repentance introduced ithe whose first word was, Repent, brought forward Jesus as the great Sin-Bearer, for he saw what I wish all would see, that there is a very intimate connection between the creation, growth and purity of repentance and the sin-bearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Brothers, the fact is, the more we have to do with penitent sinners, the more we feel the need of a sin-bearer. O you that have never sinned and are wrapped up in your own self-righteousness, you imagine that you can enter Heaven by your own works! The bearing of sin by the Lamb of God does not seem to you at all necessary, but if you once dwelt, as John did, in the midst of a burdened people who came lamenting and confessing their sins, you would feel that nothing could bring them into reconciliation with God but faith in the appointed Atonement. Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world, is the text which evangelists love because without it they cannot face the troubled ones who throng around them!

My Brothers, in proportion as you wisely love your fellow men you will prize the Sacrifice for sin. Your practical dealing with a perishing people will make you prize the Savior. Oh, what would I do if I were sent to preach to this vast throng and had no sin-offering to declare to you! Might I not break my heart before a task so useless, so cruel, as to have to denounce sin and yet to have no pardon to declare and, consequently, no hope? Now that I can tell of One who bore in His own body on the tree the transgression, iniquity and sin of men, I find my task a solemn one, but certainly not hopeless, nor even dreary! Happy, indeed, am I to be permitted to set forth so blessed a salvation! Blessed are the lips which are allowed to cry, Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world. You see, then, that the practical character of Johns mission made him all the more at home in setting forth the sacrificial Character of our Lord.   
If John the Baptist had not felt that the Character of our Lord, as a SinOffering, was the chief matter, he might have fitly pointed Him out as an example at the time when he delivered the words of our text. The Savior had not yet revealed to anyone the fact and meaning of His future death. His Passion was as yet a thing in the dim future, while His life was just blossoming out into public observation. He had newly left the holy quiet of the parental roof at Nazareth and the charm of early holiness was on Him. Should not the world now mark Him, that His example might be known throughout its entire length? In His retirement, His conduct had been such that the austere and devout Baptist had noticed itand had felt bound to acknowledge that his younger relative was a worthier Person than himself, saying, I have need to be baptized by You. But John does not seem, when he beholds the Lord after His baptism, to think of His godly life already commenced, nor of that holy life which he could foresee in Him. Rather he fastens his eyes upon the sacrificial Character of that wondrous Personage and dwells on that, alone, saying, Behold the Lamb of God. Brothers, that age needed an example as badly as ours does, but it needed a Savior still moreand John sees first that which is first!

Let me add that the time was doubly opportune for dwelling upon our Lords example, since He had just returned from His famous temptation in the wilderness, wherein He had rehearsed His life-struggles. You cannot, in reading the narrative, piece in the 40 days temptation in the wilderness anywhere else but just here. We read that our Savior, after His Baptism, was led up immediately into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil. Tempted He was, but He yielded in no point. In the threefold battle He vanquished the power of darkness at every point, and now, armed for the fray, in mail which He had tried and proven, the Champion stood before John! And it would not have been singular had the man of God cried out, Behold the Perfect One, in whom the prince of this world has no place. Copy His supreme example! But no, the great Baptists eyes rest not on thatthe blood and wounds of the Passion are before his minds eye and beyond all else he sees the sacrificial Character of the wondrous Being who now stands in the midst of the throng. The fact that He is the appointed Victim for human sin enwraps the whole soul of the preacher and he cries, Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.

Brothers and Sisters, I desire to be in the same case with John the Baptist. I would have my thoughts of Christ concentrated upon His atoning death henceforth and evermore! During the little time in which I may be spared to lift up my voice in this wilderness, I would bear witness to the Lamb of God! The years may be short in which I may guide this flock, but around the Cross shall be to me, forevermore, the place of green pasturesand from the Sacrifice of our Lord shall flow the still waters. Many others are dealing with other aspects of our Lords work. Some, I doubt not, faithfully, and others with evil intent. I may very well leave them to do their best or their worst, for at least one may be allowed to be baptized for the Crucified, separated unto the Cross, dedicated to the Atonement by blood. I know no Atonement but Substitution, no Substitute but Christ. Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. To the declaration of that fact I set myself apart to lifes end.

I. To come still closer to our text, I would have you notice, in the first place, that JOHN SET FORTH CHRIST AS A SACRIFICE WITH EVIDENT PERSONAL PERCEPTION OF THE FACT. When a man says, Behold! he sees something himself. He sees that something with clearness and he desires you to see it and, therefore, he cries, Behold! Behold! John had, from his birth, been ordained to be the herald of the Christ. But he evidently did not know who the Lamb of God might be. As a babe, he leaped in the womb when he came near to the mother of our Lord. But yet he did not know Jesus as the Lamb of God. He says, I knew Him not.

Some suppose that John and Jesus had never met during their early years, but I find it hard to believe. I see quite another meaning here. John knew Jesus, but did not know Him as the Sin-Bearer. I think he must have known the life of the Holy Child, his near relative, while He grew in favor both with God and man, but he had not yet seen upon Him the attesting seal which marked Him as the Son of God. John admired the Lords Character very much, insomuch that when He came to be baptized by him, John said, I have need to be baptized by You. Yet John says, I knew Him not. He knew Him as one of high and holy character, but as yet he saw not the token which the Lord God had secretly given to his servantfor he saw not the Spirit of God descending and resting upon Him. John shrewdly suspected that Jesus was the Son of the Highest, of whom he was the forerunner, but a witness must not follow his own surmises, however correct they may be! John, as the Lords servant, did not dare to know anything of his own unguided judgementhe waited for the secret sign. Certain preachers tell their people anything they invent out of their wonderful brains, but the true servant of God has no business to put forth his own thoughts or opinionshe must wait for a word from God. The message should come straight from the MasterThus says the Lord. John, though he saw about this wondrous Jesus such marvelous traits of Character that he was sure He was much greater than himself, yet says, I knew Him not. He would know nothing but as it was revealed to him by the Lord God who sent him.

But when, at last, he received that personal token when he plunged our blessed Master into the waters of the Jordanand saw the heavens opened and the Dove descendand heard the Voice saying, This is My beloved Son, then he knew Him and was, therefore, sure. When he afterwards spoke, he did not say, I think this is the Lamb of God, or, I am under the impression that this is the Son of God. No, he boldly cried, Behold Him! See for yourselves. This is the Lamb of God! I speak with the accent of conviction! Nothing can shake me. The Master has given the sign and, therefore, I bear confident witness. Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.

From then on, to John the Baptist, the Lord Jesus Christ was more than He appeared to be to any others. To those who looked at the Savior, He would have seemed to be a plain, humble Jew, with nothing particular to mark Him out, except it were the gentleness of His demeanor and a certain heavenliness of carriage. But to the Baptist, He was now before all and above all! When a person was to be baptized, he confessed his sins to John. But when Jesus came with no sins of His own to confess,

did He whisper in Johns ear, I bear the sin of the world? I think He did, but in any case, this was true to the Baptists mindand to him, Jesus was the matchless Sacrifice, the one Atonement for human sin.

This was an extraordinary Truth of God to John. It took a miracle of Grace to make a Jew see, The Lamb, who takes away the sin of the world. The Jew thought that the Sacrifice of God must be only for His chosen peoplebut John saw beyond all bounds of nationality and restrictions of raceand clearly perceived in Jesus the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world. Remember that John was of a priestly racehe was familiar with lambs for sacrifice. But as a priest, he never saw a lamb for sacrifice in a place far off from the consecrated shrine. There was only one altar and that was at Jerusalemand there the lamb of sacrifice must benot by Jordans lonely stream. Yet John saw, in a place never dedicated in any peculiar manner to the service of God, the one great Sacrifice standing in the midst of the people. Behold, he says, this is the Lamb of God. See how well the Lord had taught him and how fully he had broken away from natural prejudices!

Beloved, I pray that each one of us may know, for himself, Jesus as the Sacrifice for sin. You were brought up as children to believe that Jesus is the Lamb of God, but all Revelation in the Book must again be revealed to the heart, or it will not be really known and perceived. For the life of the Truth of God to enter into our life it must become a matter, not of headcreed only, but of heart-belief. That Jesus is the Substitutionary Sacrifice, the Propitiation for our sins, the Expiation for our iniquity, must be taught us by the Holy Spirit. I can truly declare among you that I do not preach this doctrine of vicarious Sacrifice as one among many theories, but as the saving fact of my experience! I must preach this or nothing! I know nothing among you save Jesus Christ and Him Crucified, because I have neither hope nor comfort outside of the great atoning Sacrifice. He was made sin for us, even He who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. He was made a curse for us, as it is written, Cursed is everyone that hangs on a tree.

Pray that each one of Gods people may have a clear knowledge of Christ as the sin-bearing Lamb and have it written on his individual consciousness, for then nothing will shake him out of it. When men find their own deliverance from sin and their own peace with God flowing out of the atoning Sacrifice, this great Truth of God becomes a part of their inward experience and it can never be torn from them. O my Brothers and Sisters, when the great Sacrifice has saved you, you will never be able to doubt it! You will sooner doubt your own existence than doubt this blessed fact, that He bore our sin in His own body on the tree, and that through Him we are reconciled unto God! It was a matter with John of personal perception.

II. Let us advance a little. JOHN SET FORTH OUR LORD AS EMPHATICALLY THE SACRIFICEBehold the Lamb of God. This is more than John would have said of all the lambs that he had ever heard or read of since the first appointment of sacrifice. He remembered the firstling of the flock which Abel offered and the sacrifice of a sweet savor which Noah presented. He knew the sacrifices of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. He was familiar with the lamb of the Paschal Supper and those of Israels high festivals. He remembered the thousands of offerings that had been presented by David and by Solomon, and by other kings in the great national acts of worship. But passing them all by as if they were all mere shadows, he points his finger to the Man, Christ Jesus, and he says of Him, This is THE Lamb of God.

In this I think the Baptist comprehended everything that went before. There was the daily lamb of which I read to you in the commencement of the service, from Exodus 29. There had been slain before the Lord a lamb every morning, and a lamb every evening, all the year round throughout the centuries of Israels history. Always and ever the continual sacrifice of the lamb was the symbol of Jehovahs dwelling with His people. But John puts his finger down upon a single Sacrifice and says, This is the Lamb. All the other daily lambs had been but prefigurations of this! Behold the Lamb.

Let me also call your attention to another wonderful lamb, the Paschal lamb, slain on the night when Israel went up out of Egypt, when each Hebrew smeared the lintel and side-posts of his door with bloodand the sight of that blood sufficed for the deliverance of the family, according to the Word of Jehovah, When I see the blood, I will pass over you. These Passover lambs were many and sacred to every Jewish mind! But John passes them all over and says, Behold the Lamb of God.

Do you not think he also had in his mind the lamb spoken of by Isaiah, the great evangelical Prophet? Had he not in his memory that famous passage, He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter? John the Baptist cries, This is He of whom the Prophet spoke, Behold the Lamb of God.

Yes, and if Johns eyes had been turned to the future as well as to the past, so that he could have looked down the centuries and shared the visions of the Seer of Patmos, he would have seen the Lamb in the midst of the Throne, and have heard the song unto Him that was slain! But after seeing all the visions of the coming Glory of the Lamb, he would still have kept his finger pointed towards the blessed Christ of God, standing among the people, and would have said, Behold the Lamb. All that you read of sacrifice and sin-bearing in the Old or the New Testament. All that you have ever heard, or ever shall hear, of the putting away of sin, if it is true, is all centered in this line, Behold the Lamb. It is a great thing when we can focus our testimony upon a single point! Let every servant of God do so and bear his witness that there is none other name given among men whereby we must be saved! There is no other purgation for sin in the whole universe save that great Sacrifice which takes away the sin of the world!

III. We will go a step further againJOHN, IN DESCRIBING OUR LORD JESUS IN HIS SACRIFICIAL CHARACTER, WAS VERY EXPLICIT IN DECLARING HIM TO BE THE SACRIFICE OF GOD. He says: Behold the Lamb of God. These words contain a great depth of meaning. The Lamb of God. Did not the Baptist thus recall the day when Abraham walked with Isaac towards the mount that God had told him of? And Isaac said to his father, My Father, behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering? And Abraham answered, My Son, God will provide Himself a lamb for the burnt offering. John, standing centuries after, seems to say, Now is the saying of the Father of the faithful fulfilled! Behold how God provides! Behold the Lamb of God.

Under the old Jewish dispensation, if a man sinned, he said to himself, I must go and find a lamb. And he went out to his own flock, or else to his neighbors and he bought a lamb. That was his lamb which he brought for his own trespass. But you and I have not to go and find a lambGod has already provided a Lamband we have only to accept the Lamb of God. And is it not a wonderful thing, that He, Himself, against whom all sin was leveled, provided the Sacrifice for sin? Behold the sin of man and the Lamb of God. Jesus is the Fathers best Beloved, His choice One, His only One and yet He delivered Him up for us alland Gods Son became Gods Lamb! O my Father, my Father, do I sin and do You find the Sacrifice? But if a Sacrifice must be found by the Father, why was it found so near His heart? He could find the Sacrifice for sin nowhere but in His own bosom. He had but one Son, His Only-Begottenand God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son. Jehovah gave His only Son to be a Sacrifice! Let Heaven and earth be filled with astonishment!

Beloved, if you think of it, who else could have provided a Sacrifice for the sin of the world? None will pretend to such ability. And when God, Himself, provided a Sacrifice, what other could He have found but His coequal Son? Who else could render the honor which was due to the broken Law? Who else could offer to Divine Justice the vindication which it demanded? Justice must be violated, or else man must perish foreverthere remained no way of escape from this dilemma until the Son of the Highest condescended to become a Sacrifice and put away sin by His own death. So, you see, the Lord must, Himself, provide the Sacrificeand that Sacrifice must be His only-begotten Son.

I do not think I can preach more, for a faintness has come over me, nor is there need for more if you will but chew the cud of this one precious Truth of God Jesus is the Lamb which God provided and He is the Lamb which God Himself presented at the altar. Yet I must rouse myself to say a little more. Who was it that sacrificed the Lamb of God? Who was the priest on that dread day? Who was it that bruised Him? Who put Him to grief? Who caused Him the direst pang of all when He cried, Why have You forsaken Me?

Was it not the Father, Himself? This was one point in the hardness of Abrahams testTake now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and offer him for a sacrifice. He must, himself, officiate at the sacrifice! This, the great Father did! He is the Lamb, the Lamb of God. And now, today, the bright side of this Truth remains. He is the Lamb that God always accepts, must accept, glories to accept! Bring you but Jesus with you and you have brought God an acceptable Sacrifice! You cannot fail to be forgiven when you come pleading the name of Jesus. If you should bring the fattest of your flock and the choicest of your herd, you might hear God say, I will not accept your sacrifice! But when you bring Gods own Sacrifice, He cannot reject you! You are accepted in the Beloved! There is such acceptance of Christ with God that it overlaps your unacceptableness. It covers your sin. It covers

youit makes you to be dear to the heart of God!

Thus far have we come with this blessed text, even unto waters to swim in. Behold the Lamb of God.   
IV. Lend me your ears a little longer while, in the fourth place, I show you that JOHN SET FORTH THIS BLESSED SAVIOR AS BEARING AND BEARING AWAY OUR SIN. You that have the Revised Version will please notice that the Revisers follow the Authorized Version in the body of the translation and say, Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, but they have done wisely by putting in the margin, bears the sin. Both meanings are here. In order to the bearing away of sin, there must first be the bearing of it. The Lord Jesus both took sin and took it away.   
Dwell for a minute on the first fact, that sin was actually laid on Christ. I saw the other day, among the abominations of the Stygian Bog, across which I have been compelled to gaze of late, such a foul teaching as this that the transference of sin is immoral. Yet is not Scripture full of it? The Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. Sin was borne by Christyes, actually borne by Him. He Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree. They may make what they like of it. I am not going to explain or apologize, but I say without hesitation that the sin of the world was laid upon Christand He bore itand bore it away! The heaviest thing in the universe is sin! The earth has been known to open beneath the unbearable load of it. Neither angels nor men can stand under the load of sinit sinks them lower than the lowest Hell! When sin was laid upon the Lamb of God, He bore itbut He sweat, as it were, great drops of blood, and He was exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death. To have borne up the weight of the world would have been nothing compared with bearing the sin of the world.   
The best of all is, however, that our Lord did not only bear the load, but He took it away. He takes away the sin of the world. The sin which was laid upon Christ did not remain there! He took it awayit remains no more. We read in Scripture many things about sin, as that God forgives it, blots it out, forgets it, casts it into the sea, puts it behind His back and a great many other expressive figuresbut this is, in some respects, the best of themHe takes it away! Blessed be His name! My Hearer, if you believe in Jesus, you need not ask, Where is my sin? Jesus took it away! By bearing it, He bore it away. It is gone, gone foreverit is utterly abolished. The day comes when the sins of Jacob shall be sought for, and they shall not be found; yes they shall not be, says the Lord. Our glory is that by the Sacrifice of Christ upon the Cross, sin was made an end of. He finished transgressions, made an end of sin and brought in everlasting righteousness! This is a Gospel worth believing, worth living for, worth dying for! Let all teaching be accursed that comes in opposition to it! This is Heaven to a soul whose sins are dragging it down to Hellsin can be forgiven, for Jesus is the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world. What a sight is this to see! Those eyes can never again be sore that have once seen sin put away by Jesus!   
V. I must, however, call your attention to another point which is that JOHN REPRESENTS OUR LORD AS REMOVING SIN CONTINUALLY. Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Behold the sin of the world as one huge mass and Jesus deals with it as a whole and takes it away. John does not speak in the past tense nor in the future, but He speaks in the presentHe takes away the sin of the world. Our Saviors atoning Sacrifice, though it was but once offered, is perpetual in its effect. He must die at a certain point of time and there were reasons why His death should have taken place at the particular moment when it did. Yet time does not enter into the essence of it. The Sacrifice might have been offered a million years ago and, as the Lamb of God, He would still take away sin. Or the actual Sacrifice might further have been postponed, if Infinite Wisdom had so chosen, and yet the Lamb of God would now have taken away sin.   
The date of His death is not the questionHis Sacrifice is effectual before and after the event. Our Savior was the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world, in the purpose, Covenant and thought of God. His Sacrifice saved Adam, Noah, Moses, David and all the elect before the name of Calvary had become illustrious. Before He died, He stood before John the Baptist as taking away the sin of the world! And now, today, though His death is a matter of 1800 years ago, He still takes away the sin of the world. In His Person He was always the Sin-Bearer and through His death He puts sin away forever. By one Sacrifice He has forever put away sin! His eternal merits forever remain a sweet savor unto the Lord God and forever remove the foul offense of human transgression. As the Great Purifier, He continually takes away and will continue to take away the sin of the world!   
Blessed be God, I have, today, a Savior as fresh and full of power as if He had been crucified this very morning for my sin! He is now as able to save me as if He were at this hour on the Cross! Those dear wounds of His, in effect, perpetually bleedin His case, the print of the nails is the token of an inexhaustible fountain of merit which is always flowing forth for the removal of my guilt, eternally efficacious, ceaselessly sin-cleansing. This is where we rest! It is the most grand fact in the history of all ages that Jesus takes away the sin of the world. We do not know what happened before this solar system was created and we do not need to know. We cannot prophesy what is going to happen when yon sun and moon and stars shall disappear like transient sparks from the anvil of power. But there never will be any new fact which can equal this first of the Truths of Godthat the Son of God assumed human nature and, in that Nature, bore sin and bore it away. This is the Truth to be looked at beyond all othersBehold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.   
Although I am too weak to preach to you as I desire, I feel great joy for myself in looking to the Sin-Bearer who has taken away my sin. How I wish that all of you felt the same! This is the pith and the marrow of my theology. But you must take the Lamb of God for yourselvesyou must know Him for yourselvesyou must believe in Him for yourselves and He will surely take away that sin which now burdens you. He will take it right away, so that it shall never burden you again. He will blot it outit shall cease to be! You shall be no more under condemnation, but shall be free from it forever! God help you to know Jesus, of whom I speak to you!   
VI. The last point is thisJOHN WITNESSED TO THE ALLSUFFICIENCY OF THE DIVINE SACRIFICEWho takes away the sin of the world. No other in all the world can take away sin but the Lamb of God. There is no sin which He cannot take away. There is no limit to the value of His great SacrificeHe takes away the sin of the world. There is no other sin-bearer, no other atonement, no other satisfaction. No purgatory in the present nor in the future can take away sin! No supposed remedial pains in Hell are possibleneither lapse of years, nor bitterness of regret can take away sin! Jesus takes away the sin of the world and beside Him there is no other!   
Mark you, He takes away the sin of the worldall manner of sin that was ever done in the world, by all sorts of men, of all races, in all places! He removes sins of long duration, of aggravated criminality, of crying heinousnessany sin that can be compassed within the bounds of the worldChrist takes away! O repenting sinner, though your sins should be as many as the hairs of your head and each one as black as the midnight of Tophet, yet Christ takes away each sin! Though you should have cursed God and slain your fellow men, yet such sin as this comes within the range of the sin of the world. Even as another text puts it, God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life, so is this text to be understood! Jesus so takes away the sin of the world that whoever believes in Him shall no longer be guilty of sin, but shall be forgiven and be justified before God!   
Do you hear this? There is nothing in this text to shut any man out of mercy! Behold, I set before you an open door. There is everything in my text to induce every one of you who is conscious of guilt to come to the Lord Jesus and accept Him as your Substitute and Sacrifice. Christ shall take away no mans sin that does not believe in Him. Christ has so taken away sin that whoever believes in Him shall live. If you will come, now, and lay your hand on this Divine Sacrifice, you shall find it All-Sufficient, whatever the nature of your guilt may be. O delightful Gospel! How sweet to preach it!   
I have done when I have said this. John the Baptist appears to me to have relieved his mind by the utterance of my text. He was full of weariness because of the scribes and Pharisees, doctors and doubters who had been warring around him. He had been put on the defensive and had been harried with innumerable questions. First one and then anotherthis question and that question. And now John ends the wordy duel by pointing to One whose Presence was joy to his heart! There stands the Savior and John stops his argument and cries, There He is! Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.   
It is to me a supreme joy to turn aside from those who becloud the everlasting Gospelto leap out of the midst of controversy and to cry to you with exultationJesus is the Son of God! He is the Sacrifice for sin! He takes it away! Believe on Him and live! There is more joy in one sermon than in years of disputation. Oh, that everyone in this congregation might believe in Jesus and live! What a refreshment it is to the preachers mind to get to his message at last, to get away from the bamboozlement of those who confound plain Truth, and to come to matter-of-fact dealing with eternal salvation. There, let them question and quibblethe blood of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, cleanses us from all sin!

With what certainty the Baptist speaks! He does not, for a moment, hesitate, or speak with cautious reserve. No debate disturbs the foundation of his confidence. Before his eyes he evidently sees the Sin-Bearer and he bids others see Him as he sees Him. To him no doubt remains, for he had seen the heavens opened above the head of Jesusand he had heard the voice of God, Himself, saying, This is My beloved Son. Dear Friends, the marks which prove our Lord Jesus to be the vicarious Sacrifice for sin are as clear to me as ever they were to John the Baptist! I dogmatize because I feel more than sure as to my Lords being the great Sacrifice for sin! I could not doubt this doctrine if I were to try to do so. My hope, my joy, my very being hinge on my Lords Substitution. This truth is woven into the warp and woof of my being. Jesus suffered in my place!   
A leader in the religious world tells us that we have not yet obtained a satisfactory theory of the Atonement. Let him speak for himself! Thousands of us know what we believe and know what Jesus did for us! Where has the man lived? What comfort in life and death is there for one who cannot see clearly this first of Truths? I thank God I have a definition of the Atonement which is to me most clear, sure and full of comfort! Here it isHe Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree. I can live by that and I can die by that. I am sick to death of the ever-repeated cant about, theory of the Atonement. I have no theory, for I believe in the Atonement, itself! God keep us steadfast in the faith once delivered to the saints and our consolation will abound.   
And yet, once more, there seems to be a deep anxiety on Johns part in the words of my text. He says, Behold the Lamb of God. And he does so for the sake of those around him. We do not desire others to believe with us because we need them to keep us in countenance. John was not a man cut out of brown paper, in the same shape as thousands of othershe was an original, self-contained individual. He knew how to see the Lamb of God for himself, whether other people did or did not see Him. When I preach to you the doctrine of the vicarious Sacrifice, it is not because I am unable to believe this Truth, alone. Long ago I ceased to count heads. Truth is usually in the minority in this evil world. I have faith in the Lord Jesus for myself, a faith burned into me as with a hot iron. I thank God what I believe I shall believe, even if I believe it alone! If I am the last man to glory in the Substitution of the Lord Jesus, I shall count myself honored to bear His Cross alone.   
But there is great love to his fellows in the heart of every man who has seen the Lord Jesus Christ as bearing sin. That great deed of love makes the beholder feel that he would have all men look and live. Were you ever half-starved and did you find bread? Then I know you pitied your famishing brother. Our very instincts lead us to spread the blessing which we have received. Even dogs would do that. A poor dog had his broken leg healed at the hospital and not many weeks after, he brought another lame dog to the same house of mercy. We also long to see men come to Christ because we have had our broken hearts healed by His tender hands. We love because He first loved us! Brothers and Sisters, I was ready to perish under a sense of sin! I was all but damned! I felt the wrath of God surging in my soul like a sea of fire! I found no relief or comfort. Even the Word of God did not cheer me. They told me of believing in Jesus, but till I learned that this Jesus was Gods great appointed Sacrifice for sin, I saw nothing in Him to cheer me. When I learned that He had borne the penalty and satisfied Justice, then I found out the glorious secret and my conscience was at rest! Conscience within us reflects, as in a mirror, the facts of the case as God sees them.   
God causes an awakened conscience to require that which His justice requires. The demand of the conscience is the echo of the demand of the Divine Government. Conscience requires Atonement because the necessity of the case and the nature of God require it. When I learned that there was such an Atonement provided, oh, then I rested most sweetly! I wish you all did! You that have no atoning sacrifice to plead, how can you bear the weight of your sins? What will you do with them when the death-damp is on your brows? You for whom, according to your own creed, no debt was paid, no penalty enduredhow will you answer Justice in her great and terrible day? Believers look to Jesus as discharging all their debt and they are not afraid of the day of account! But where will you look? Oh, what will you do?   
Do not remain without faith in Him who stood in the sinners place! His work is exactly what your mind needs, to give it peace. The satisfaction of Jesus will give your mind satisfaction, but nothing else will. Conscience, like the horse-leech, cries, Give, give, and it will never cease its cravings till it meets with Christ, whose one full satisfaction will content it forever. Behold the Lamb of God. I shall meet you all in the Day of Judgment and I tremble not to do so, for I have told you all the Truth of God so far as I know it. If you reject the Sacrifice for sin, I cannot help it! But, I beseech you, receive it and find that the Lamb of God has taken away your sin! Go in peace. The Lord go with you. Amen.

**PORTIONS OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON Exodus 29:38-46; Isaiah 53; John 1:19-51.** HYMNS FROM OUR OWN HYMN BOOK412, 331, 416.

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THE BAPTISTS MESSAGE   
NO. 2646

A SERMON   
INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS-DAY, OCTOBER 29, 1899.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, JULY 2, 1882.

**The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! John 1:29.**

JOHN was the herald of Christ. He came to bear witness to Him and to prepare the way for Him. In olden times when kings traveled, they were accustomed to send heralds before them to announce their coming, and to prepare the way for them. And I have read that on several occasions the herald wore such gorgeous appareladorned with gold and lace that when he went into some of the towns and villages, the people thought that he must be the king, himself! So they made ready to receive him with royal honors. When he said, No, I am not the king, I have merely come to sound the trumpet and to say that he is coming, they wondered what the king, himself, must be like if his herald was so resplendentand it is said that in several instances they refused to receive the king when he came, for they said, The man who told us that he was only your servant was a far finer looking man than you are, and much more grandly dressed. So, when the king arrived and they saw that he was but plainly dressed, as kings usually are when not wearing their state robes, they would not receive him.

Something like that happens with some of Christs heralds, but it did not occur in the case of John the Baptist. He was not arrayed in soft raiment or rich apparel. He came straight up from the wilderness clothed in a garment of camels hair and with leather trousers about his loins and his food was locusts and wild honey. Nor was there anything at all about Johns mode of speech which was likely to attract attention to himself and make men think less of his Master when He should come. I wish that all of us, when we go forth as Christs heralds, crying, Behold the Lamb of Godand that is our main business here belowwould take care that we were never so grand in our style of thought or language that when the Master, Himself, comes in all His wondrous simplicity, men would begin to despise Him because they remembered the fine tones of His pretended herald! No, let us be simple and plain whenever we have to speak of Christ and when our King, Himself, comes, let us step back and get out of sight, that He, alone, may be seen, and that all the peoples hearts may be won to Him.

I have plunged into the middle of my subject at the very beginning of my sermon, for that is the theme on which I want to speak to you. First, I am going to describe the true messenger, John the Baptist, or anyone else who is like he. Then, secondly, I hope to talk about the true messageBehold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world. And then, thirdly, I must say a little upon the true reception of this message, telling what they do who really hear and believe the true messenger of God.

I. First, then, let us think of THE TRUE MESSENGER and, as I know that there are many here who try to do good by speaking for the Lord to their fellow men, let this first part of my subject be a lesson in selfexaminationnot by way of discouragement, but rather of encouragement, I hope, to those whom I am addressing. Who are they who will be acknowledged by Christ, at the Last Great Day, as the true messengers of God? What are the special characteristics by which they may be known?

Well, first, the true messenger is one who sees the Lord Jesus for himself. The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him. To be His herald and witness, John must see Jesus and he must see Jesus coming to him. Those Prophets who lived a long while before the coming of Christ were but dim seers compared with John the Baptist. He was like the morning star which is so near the sun that it is the brightest of the stars. We see it shining almost like a little sun and then, when the sun rises in all its brightness, the star disappears. John was a burning and a shining light and all who came before him were, in Christs judgment, inferior to him. He said to the multitudes concerning John, What did you go out to see? A Prophet? Yes, I say to you, and more than a Prophet. For this is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, who shall prepare Your way before You. Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there has not risen a greater than John the Baptist. This was the difference between John and the Prophetshis sight of Christ was clearer than theirs because he was nearer to Christ. And his view of Christ was brighter, fuller and clearer than that of all who had gone before.

Yet they were also true witnesses to Christ, according to the light they had. Our Savior said to the Jews, Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day: he saw it and was glad. And if he had not seen Christ by faith, he could not have been one of the witnesses who testified beforehand concerning Him. All the Prophets looked through the haze of the ages and, by faith, perceived their Lord. And then they wrote of Him and spoke of Him to the people. The ancient name for a Prophet was a very instructive onehe was called a seerand you and I, Beloved, must see Christ or else we cannot bear witness to Him. As the Prophets saw Christ by faith and as John actually looked upon Him and then bore witness to Him, so must you and I see Him. Not with these eyesthat sight is reserved until the Resurrectionbut with the eyes of our spirit, with the eyes of our mind and heart we must see Jesus before we can rightly speak of Him.

Are you anxious, my Brother, to go and preach? Have you seen Jesus? If not, what can you say when people ask you, What is He like? Who is He that we should believe in Him? You must look unto Him before you can speak of Him and, the more steadfastly you gaze upon Him, His work, His offices, His humiliation, His glorification, the better will you be able to bear your witness concerning Him. You will then speak more surely and confidently for your God if you can testify concerning that which your heart knows to be true because you have perceived and enjoyed it yourself!

Yes, and if you have seen Him in the past, try to see Him, again, and to be continually looking unto Jesus. Let not any of us go and talk to our Sunday school class, or preach from the pulpit, or write a letter about our Lord until we have had a fresh glimpse of Him. It is wonderful how nimbly the pen or the tongue moves when the eye has just feasted itself upon Christ! The Psalmist said, My heart is overflowing with a good theme: I speak of the things which I have made touching the king: my tongue is the pen of a ready writer. When you have, yourself, been with Christ. When you have just come forth from the ivory palaces of communion and fellowship with the Lord Jesus, all your garments will smell of myrrh, aloes and cassia! And your words will have some of the precious savor clinging to them. So again I say that we must see Christ or else we cannot be witnesses to Him.

And, therefore, let us fix our hearts, our thoughts and our meditations so completely upon Christ that when we cry to other men, Behold the Lamb of God, it will be because we have just beheld Him ourselves! If a man who is blind were to stand up in the street and cry, Behold, people would be apt to ask, What can a poor blind man bid us look at? He cannot see anything himself. If you say to the people, Behold Christ, yet all the while your eyes are turned toward yourself and you are wondering whether you will get through the sermon all rightwhether you will have a fine conclusion at the end and what the congregation will think of it when you have donethat will be like saying, Behold! while you, yourself, are looking the other way! And other people will look in the same direction! They will be sure to do as you do and not as you say. And if you do not behold Christ, neither will they! Our inward thought, conviction and belief must be in strict accordance with our outward speech, or else we shall misrepresent ourselvesand our message will be poorly delivered and will fall without power upon our hearers.

I also remind you that we must preach Christ as coming. Why, says one, He has come! I know that He has, but He is coming again. It is a blessed thing that, whereas the Prophets saw Him as coming, they only differed from us in this respectthat we can look back to His first coming, as they looked forward to it. And we can also look onward to His coming a second time, without sin unto salvationand so we are to speak of Him as coming. It is grand preaching when the preacher can see Christ coming, when he can behold the Throne of Judgment set and can gaze upon the King in His beauty sitting upon it, and see Him reigning over all, King of Kings and Lord of Lords! It is glorious when he hears the hallelujahs of the approaching millennial age even while he is preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ! Lo, He comes, he says, and he sees Him coming, for he is not like the virgins who had fallen asleep and so did not watch for the bridegrooms appearing. Oh, for open eyes, expectant hearts and earnest tongues to see, and long for, and tell of our coming Lord! This is the way the faithful witness preaches Him to the people.

But, next, the true messenger calls upon men to see Jesus. He calls them away from seeing other things and bids them look, and, behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! God-sent servants do not say, Look to the priest! Look to the altar! Look to the sacraments! Look to yourselfcome and confess your sins and I will give you absolution! No, no, no, no! Forever and forever NO! They do nothing of that sort. The priests of Antichrist do that, but the servants of Christ cry, Behold the Lamb of God. Our great difficulty is to get mens eyes off themselves, off their works, off their forms and ceremonies, off mere creed-religion and to get them to look at the living Christ who is still among us bearing the sin of all who truly seek His face!

O dear Hearers, I know that I am, in this respect, a faithful witness. Wherever else I fail in my testimony, for my souls labor and travail, even unto anguish, is to get you away from depending even in the slightest degree upon anything else but what Christ has done! I would not wish you to have the shadow of a shade of a ghost of a pretense of a confidence anywhere out of Christ! Jesus is the only hope of sinners! Let Him be A to you, and Z, and all the letters betweenthe beginning and the endand the middle and everything else! Take your eyes off all ministers, all books, all feelings and even all believing! Do not even fix your gaze on your own faith. You know that the eye cannot see itself. Did you ever see your own eye? In a mirror, perhaps, you may have done so, but that was only the reflection of it and you may, in like manner, see the evidence of your faith, but you cannot look at the faith itself. Faith looks away from itself to the Object of faith, even to Christ! And this is what the true witness desires. He will, if he can, keep men from looking anywhere but on his Master!

Some look at their repentance, but if you cannot keep your eyes on Christ, then away with your repentance! Some are always looking to their faith, but if there is a faith that hides Christ, away with it! Some need feelings and right feelings we may wish to havebut as for those feelings which come between us and Christ, away with them! It is not fit that they should live. Our one business is to get men away from anything and from everything, however good it is, that they may look alone to Christ Jesus, the Lamb of God!

The third mark of a true witness is that he leads his own disciples to Jesus. It is generally thought to be a good thing to lead another mans disciples beyond their master, but it is not always so easy to lead our own disciples beyond ourselves. The preacher is often conscious that there are many weak persons who stop short at what he says. To them it is a great help to faith that their pastor or their minister says such-andsuch. Well, for lame people, we do not object to crutches for a time, but we always anxiously pray that the faith of these poor cripples may not standat least, for any length of timein the power of man, but in Christ alone! I would say to you what the Apostle Paul wrote to the Galatians, though I wish I could say something that would be worthy to be placed beneath what he said, and so be more suitable for one so much inferior to him. He says, Though we, or an angel from Heaven, preach any other Gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. That is, Let us, ourselves, be accursed if we ever dare to lead you away from Christ. It is an imprecation upon our own souls if we dare to make ourselves your masters instead of your servants for Jesus sake!

It was a beautiful trait in the character of John the Baptist that he was so ready to pass on to Christ his own discipleshe did not want to keep them merely to swell the number of his own followers, but only kept them with him until he could point them to his Master. When we try to win souls, if we find that people have confidence in us and affection for us, let us use that influence not to attach them to ourselves except with the earnest desire to pass them on to Christthat they may become disciples of the Savior for themselves and grow up from being babes who have to be nursed to become strong men in Christ Jesus.

One more thing about John the Baptist which is also a characteristic of the true witness for Christ is that he lost himself in his Master. Without a single atom of regret he said, He must increase, but I must decrease. Oh, how grandly he witnessed for Christ by sinking himself until he was lost in Christ! And my Brother, it must be the same with youif you would be a true witness for Christ, you must say that which glorifies Him, even though it dishonors yourself! Perhaps there is a very learned man sitting over yonder and the temptation to the preacher is to say something that shall make him feel that the minister to whom he is listening is not so ignorant as some people suppose. But if there is an unlearned, simple sinner anywhere in the place, the preachers business is just to chop his words down to that poor mans condition and let the learned hearer receive the same message if he will!

Luther said, When I am preaching, I see Dr. Jonas sitting there, and Oecolampadius, and Melanchthon and I say to myself, Those learned doctors know enough already, so I need not trouble about them. I shall fire at the poor people in the aisles. That is the way Luther preached and God richly blessed his ministry because he did it. Though he was a truly learned man, he was willing to be reckoned as knowing nothing at all if by that means he could the better serve his Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Dear Brothers and Sisters, when you are serving Christ, do not also seek to serve yourself in a sneaking kind of way. It is easily done under the appearance of glorifying Christ, you may really be extolling yourself. You may even seek to win souls with the view of having the credit of doing itand if you do, you will spoil the whole work! It must not be so with you. This royal crown must be touched by none but Christ. You and I cannot really put the crown on His head, though we may wish to do so. Christ is greater than that monarch who, when the Pope was about to crown him, took the crown out of his hands and said, I won it myself, so I will put it on my own head. And Christ must crown Himself! The words we sometimes sing

*Bring forth the royal diadem,   
And crown Him Lord of all,*

are very good and right, but, after all, Christ is His own Glory and the Holy Spirit truly glorifies Him. How can we be worthy to put the crown on His head when we are not worthy to unloose the laces of His shoes! Oh, what poor things we are! We are not fit to be the dust under His feet! Glory, glory, glory be unto Him and unto Him alone!   
Thus I think I have said enough about the true messenger. Aim at being like John the Baptist in these respects, Brothers and Sisters, as God shall help you.

II. But now, secondly, we are to consider THE TRUE MESSAGE which is thisBehold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!   
In these few words we have the substance of the message to be delivered by Gods faithful ministers. First, John declared that God had sent His Son into the world that men might live through Him. He taught that Jesus of Nazareth is the eternal Son of God, appointed by Him to redeem mankind and that He came into the world on purpose that He might save His people from their sins. Oh, tell this wondrous story! Tell it till every wave bears onward the message and every wind moves it till all born of woman have heard the glad tidings that God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. All our hopes spring from Christ and Him crucified! They begin with Him and they end with Him. And whoever believes on Him has everlasting life! But whoever rejects Him by not believing Him, there remains no hope for himhe must be lost forever! There is but one way to Heaven, and that one way is marked by the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ!   
Further, in telling the true message, we must go on to explain that Jesus Christ is thus the Savior because He is the one Sacrifice for sin. This verse reads, in the margin, Behold the Lamb of God, who bears the sin of the world. And in that rendering there is a great Truth of God which is not to be kept back. Christ Jesus did actually bear the sin of His people in His own body on the tree. It was lifted bodily off those whom it would have crushed foreverand it was laid on Him. He was, indeed, the great Sin-BearerHe who knew no sin was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. Now here is a point at which some are always sticking. Robertson, of Brighton, with his magnificent genius, practically taught the Atonement in some such fashion as Dr. Duncan used to say, that Jesus Christ did something or other which, in some way or other, in some degree or other, made it possible for men to be forgiven! That was Robertsons notion of the Atonement, but we say not so! We say that He really took the sin of men upon Himself and who can read that marvelous 53rd Chapter of Isaiah without seeing that this is no figure, no metaphor, but literal Truth of Godthe Lord has made to meet upon Him the iniquity of us all! So says the Prophet. But what says the Apostle? Who His own Self bore our sins in His own body on the tree. And I cannot preach the Gospel without proclaiming this great Truth of Christs atoning Sacrifice and I do not mean to try to do so! I know of no way by which sin can be taken off us except by laying it on Him who was our Surety and our Substitute. And He did take it and He did bear itand the true messenger, sent from God, tells you thatwhatever else he may say or may not say.   
And he tells you more than that, namely, what the text says in our Authorized Version. Behold the Lamb of God, who takes awayas well as takes upon Himselfthe sin of the world. Oh, blessed wordtakes it away! Where did He take it! I will tell youAs far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us. He took the sin of all Believers away so completely that it sank into the bottom of the sea! God has cast it behind His back and it shall not be mentioned against them any more forever. There is no such thing, now, as the sin of the saints, for Christ has utterly annihilated it. He came to finish transgression and to make an end of sinsand if He made an end of them, there is an end of themthey are gone forever and those who believe in Jesus are washed white as the driven snow and clothed in His matchless righteousness! This is what the true messenger has to tell, that Jesus bore the sin of His people and that He took it right away. Oh, what joyous work is ours!   
This is to be our messagewe are to set Christ forth as the Object of faith. We are to say to men, Behold the Lamb of God. Is that all the sinner has to do? Yes, behold Him! Never was there another Savior like Christ Jesus our Lord. The mere looking at Him saves the soul! Whoever looks to Christ lives by that look and shall live forever. There is not a sinner in Hell who ever looked on Christ with the eyes of faithand there never shall be such a soul! And all who are in Heaven entered there simply through beholding the slain Lamb who takes away the sin of the world. Would you get there, young man? Then behold the Lamb of God and you shall get there! There is life in a look at the Lamb of God. Would you get there, poor sinner, driven and hunted about by the devil? Then behold the Lamb of God! Do but look out of the corner of your eye, if that is all that you can do. Look through your blinding tears. Look through the mists and clouds that surround you. Do but look unto Jesus and, as every bitten one who looked at the bronze serpent, lived, so every sick soul that looks to Christ shall liveand live forever!   
That is the Gospel, and it is a blessed Gospel to have to preach! And blessed is the messenger who proclaims boldly and plainly, in the name of Jesus, saying on Christs behalf, Look unto Him, and be you saved, all you ends of the earth. Look and live. May many do so at this very moment!   
III. Now I close by turning to the third head of my discourse which is THE TRUE RECEPTION OF THE MESSAGE. How can I truly receive this true message of the true messenger? Well, Brothers and Sisters, if we, by faith, behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world, observe what we shall do.   
First, we shall follow Jesus. Read from the 35th verse to the 37th Again, the next day, John stood with two of his disciples. And looking at Jesus as He walked, he said, Behold the Lamb of God! The two disciples heard him speak and they followed Jesus. That is to say, they did behold the Lamb of God and, believing in Him, they followed Him. And if you have really believed in Christ, you will try to walk in His footprints. You will call Him Master and Lord. He will be your Leader and Commander and you will willingly follow where He leads and cheerfully do what He commands. Christ has not come to give you license to sin, but He has brought you to liberty from sin. Blessed liberty! If you do, indeed, thus look to Christ, follow Him at once! Become His disciple, do what He bids you, feeling that it is   
*Yours not to reason why,   
Yours not to make reply*

but just to do as He commandsand believe what He teaches by the implicit faith which yields itself up entirely to Him. This is the test of real faith in Jesus, that the man is no more his own master, but takes Jesus to be his Master and follows wherever He leads.

The next thing that happens with those who give a true reception to the message is that they want to abide with Christ. The two disciples followed Jesus and, They said unto Him, Master, where do You dwell? He said unto them, Come and see. They came and saw where He dwelt and remained with Him that day. I do not know where He dwelt. I am sure that it was not a very luxurious mansion and, in later days, he had nowhere to lay His head. But as soon as ever these men had looked to Him and followed Him, they wanted to live with Him! Oh, that is the highest joy of a Christian, to live with Christ! A look of faith saves the soul because it is the beginning of a life of living with Christ forever and ever! I am afraid that some of Gods people fail to realize this blessed living with Christ. They get a little joy and they seem very pleased with it, but in a little time they lose it. Why is that? Because they rejoiced merely in their own joy and when a man does that, he will soon lose it. It is as old Master Brooks says, If a loving husband were to give his wife earrings, bracelets, jewels and then, instead of loving him for his gifts, she began to be in love with his presents and cared little for him, he would be inclined to take them away from her so as to have all her love for himself.

And surely it is so with Christ. He puts the earring of holy joy in His brides ears and she begins to say, Oh, how joyful I am! No, no, do not talk like that! I heard one, the other day, bragging about his own holiness and I thought to myself, That holiness which talks about itself is an unholy holiness. Do you think that holiness is a thing to be proclaimed about the streets, or set up for a show? Oh, no! As I think of the thrice-holy God, I lay my face in the very dust before Him. O Brothers and Sisters, true holiness is something very different from this tinsel stuff that men, in these days, boast about as they beat their drums! True holiness beats on its breast and gets away into its place of secret communionand if it has any beauties, it shows them only to the Lord in secret, with many a blush and many a lament that it is not much more nearly what it ought to be. O Beloved, may God grant us Grace to follow Jesus and to live with Jesus!

I said that some of Gods people do not seem to understand this living with Jesus, but why should not we? Why need we have doubts and fears? Why need we get away from Christ? Had we but the faith He deserves and believed in Him as He ought to be believed in, we might go from joy to joy and so ascend to Heaven as on a ladder of light! God give us this Grace of living with Christ! It is to be had by those who seek it aright.

Then, lastly, the proof which these people, who had seen Christ and followed Him, gave that they had really found Him was

that they went and tried to bring others to Him. They said to their kinsfolk and acquaintances, We have found the Messiah! We have found Jesus! Ah, you have never truly found Jesus if you do not tell others about Him! You know how children actwe ought to be children in all things before God. If a little child, in its rambles, were to find honey and its brothers and sisters were all around, I feel certain that it would give such a cry after it had first sucked its own fingers, that all of them would soon be plunging their hands into the honey, too! You have never tasted its sweetness if it has not made you cry, Come here! Was there ever such joy as this? Was there ever such delight, such rapture as this? It is the instinct of true children of God to desire to fetch others in to taste and see that the Lord is goodto share the unspeakable bliss which is already their own!

Many of you are coming to the Lords Table. As you come to it, I would whisper in your ear, Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! Never mind that bread and wine unless you can use them as poor old folks often use their spectacles. What do they use them for? To look at? No, to look through them. So, use the bread and wine as a pair of spectacleslook through them and do not be satisfied until you can say, Yes, yes, I can see the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! Then shall the Communion be really what it ought to be to you. God make it so, for our Lord Jesus Christs sake! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON:  
**JOHN 1:19-51; MATTHEW 4:12-24.**

John 1:19, 20. And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who are you? And he confessed, and denied not, but confessed, I am not the Christ. I am not the One anointed of God to save mankind.

21. And they asked him, Who then? Are you Elijah? Are you Elijah come back to earth?   
21. And he said, I am not. For, though indeed he was the true spiritual Elijah who was to come as the forerunner of the Messiah, yet, in the sense in which they asked the question, the only truthful answer was, I am not.   
21. Are you that Prophet? The long-expected prophet foretold by Moses?   
21-23. And he answered, No. Then they said unto him, Who are you, that we may give an answer to them that sent us? What do you say of yourself? He said, I am the voice. That is all. A voice and nothing more. John did not profess to be the Wordhe was only the voice which vocalized that Word and made it audible to human ears. He came to bear witness to the Christ, but he was not, himself, the Christ. I am the voice   
23-27. Of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the Prophet Isaiah. And they which were sent were of the Pharisees. and they asked him, and said unto him, Why baptize you then, if you are not that Christ, nor Elijah, neither that Prophet? John answered them, saying, I baptize with water: but there stands One among you, whom you know not; He it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe laces I am not worthy to unloose. How wisely does God always choose and fashion His servants! John is evidently just the man for his placehe bears testimony to Christ very clearly. He earnestly turns away all attention from himself to his Master and he has such a reverent esteem for Him of whom he is the herald that he puts all honor and glory upon Him.

28-30. These things were done in Bethabara beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing, The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world. This is He of whom I said, after me comes a Man which is preferred before me: for He was before me. You know, dear Friends, that Christ existed from all eternity, so, in very truth, He was before John. You know, too, the glory and the excellency of our Divine Master, so that, in another sense, He was and is before John and all other creatures whom He has made.

31-34. And I knew Him not: but that He should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water. And John bore record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from Heaven like a dove, and it abode upon Him. And I knew Him not: but He that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom you shall see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, the same is He which baptizes with the Holy Spirit. And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God. The secret sign of the descent of the Spirit, in dove-like form, upon our Lord, was given to John. And as soon as he saw it, he knew for sure that Jesus was the Sent One, the Messiah, and that he must point Him out to the people.

35, 36. Again, the next day, John stood with two of his disciples. And looking at Jesus as He walked, he said, Behold the Lamb of God! This was the same text from which he had preached the day before and it was the same sermon, somewhat shortened. So should it be with us

*His only righteousness I show,   
His saving truth proclaim   
Tis all my business here below   
To cry, Behold the Lamb!*

37. The two disciples heard him speak and they followed Jesus. Thus John was losing his own disciples. By his testimony to the Truth of God, he was sending them to follow the Lord Jesus Christ. And he did it well and gracefully. There are many who would find it a hard task to reduce the number of their disciples, but it was not so with John.

38-46. Then Jesus turned and saw them following, and said to them, What do you seek? They said unto Him, Rabbi, (which is to say, being interpreted, Master) where do You dwell? He said unto them, Come and see. They came and saw where He dwelt, and remained with Him that day (now it was about the tenth hour). One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peters brother. He first found his own brother, Simon, and said unto him, We have found the Messiah, (which is, being interpreted, the Christ). And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, He said, You are Simon the son of Jonah: you shall be called Cephas, (which is by interpretation, A Stone). The following day Jesus wanted to go into Galilee, and found Philip, and said unto him, Follow me. Now Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael, and said unto him, We have found Him of whom Moses in the Law, and the Prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip said unto him, Come and see. It was all a seeing Gospel. John said, Behold the Lamb of God! Then Jesus said, Come and see. And now Philip says the same. Faith is that blessed sight by which we discern the Savior! Whoever looks to Christ by faith shall live!

47. Jesus saw Nathanael coming to Him and said of him, Behold an Israelite, indeed, in whom is no guile! There is no craft or deception in this man, as there was in Jacob; he is a true Israelite, like Israel at his best.

48. Nathanael said unto Him, How do You know me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you. What Nathanael had been doing there, we do not know. Probably he had been meditating, or he may have been engaged in prayer. But this announcement was proof to Nathanael that Jesus could see all things and read mens heartsand know what they were doing in their chosen retreats. When you were under the fig tree, I saw you. Christ knows all of you who came in here tonight, in a prayerful spirit, seeking Him! And whenever men are seeking Him, you can be sure that He is also seeking them!

49. Nathanael answered and said unto Him, Rabbi, You are the Son of God; You are the King of Israel. You saw what I was doing in secret and by that token I perceive that You are Gods own Son.

50. Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said unto you, I saw you under the fig tree, do you believe? You shall see greater things than these. Those who are ready to believe Christ, on what may be thought to be slender evidence, shall see greater things than these. Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed. They shall gaze upon a wonderful sight, by-and-by!

51. And He said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter you shall see Heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man. You are a true Israelite, and you shall have Israels vision. You shall see the same sight as your father, Jacob, saw when he fell asleep with a stone for his pillow! Only your vision shall be far grander than his. Christ always knows how to meet the needs of our hearts and to give us something in accordance with our own expressions, and to make His answers fit our requestsonly He always far exceeds all that we ask or even think, blessed be His holy name!

Matthew 4:12. Now when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison, He departed into Galilee. Notice that there were at that time only two great ministers of God, John the Baptist, he must go to prison and to deathJesus, the Son of God, He must go to the desert to be tempted of the devil. If any Christians escape temptation, they will not be the leaders of the hosts of God! Those who stand in the van must bear the brunt of the battle. Oh, that all who are called to such responsible positions might be as prepared to occupy them as John was and as Jesus was!

13-16. And leaving Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zebulun and Naphtali: that it might he fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the Prophet, saying, The land of Zebulun, and the land of Naphtali, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles; the people which eat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up. Oh, the tender mercy of our God! Where the darkness is the deepest, there the Light of God shines the brightest! Christ selects such dark regions as Naphtali and Zebulun that He may dwell there and shine in all His Glory.

17. From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand. He was not afraid to give an earnest exhortation to sinners and to bid men repent. He knew better than we do the inability of men concerning all that is good, yet He bade them repent!

18-23. And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brothers, Simon, called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. And He said unto them, Follow Me and I will make you fishers of men. And they straightway left their nets and followed Him. And going on from there, He saw two more brothers, James the son of Zebedee, and John, his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets. And He called them. And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed Him. And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the Gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people. I like those words, all mannerthat is, Christ met every kind and every sort of sickness and disease. Perhaps you, dear Friend, are afflicted in your soul after a very peculiar fashion. Yes, but this great Physician heals all manner of diseases! None are excluded from the list of patients whom He can cure! Twice the words, all manner, are usedHealing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.

24. And His fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto Him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatics and those that had the palsy; and He healed them. Our Lord Jesus lived as in a hospital while He was on earth! Wherever He went, the sins and sorrows of men were all open before His sympathetic gaze. But oh, what joy it must have been to Him to be able to deal so well with them all! Am I addressing any who are sick in soul? Our Master is used to cases just like yours! Your malady is not new to Him. He has healed many like youof all that were brought to Him, it is written, He healed them. Lie before Him, now, in all your sin and misery, and breathe the prayer, Son of David, have mercy on me, and He will surely hear you and heal you, for He delights to bless and save all who trust Him!

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THE LAMB OF GOD   
NO. 3222

A SERMON   
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 1910.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, FEBRUARY 20, 1870.

*Behold the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world. John 1:29.*

[Two other Sermons by Mr. Spurgeon upon the same text are #1987, Volume 33 BEHOLD THE LAMB OF GOD and #2646, Volume 45  
THE BAPTISTS MESSAGERead/download both sermons, free of charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.]

BEFORE we plunge into our main subject, it is necessary to notice what is implied in our text, which is that the world was lost through sin and that all mankind had become guilty before God. You, therefore, my dear Hearer, are one of those who are thus guilty. Though you may never have broken the laws of your country, nor even the rules of propriety. Though you may be both amiable and admirable in your general deportment, yet, for all this, as there is none righteous, no, not one, you, also, are included among the unrighteous! It matters not what religious professions you may have made, or what outward forms of godliness you may have observedunless you have a better righteousness than your own, you are a lost sinner! I believe there is now present a Brother who, when he was first convicted of sin, tried hard to make himself a better man under the mistaken idea that this was the way of salvation. And when, one Sabbath night, he heard me say that all the reforms you could ever make upon your old nature would be useless as to the matter of salvation, but that, you must be born-again, he felt very angry and made a vow that he would never be found listening to me again! Yet here he is, rejoicing that the Lord has taught him to see himself as a lost, ruined sinner and to put his hearts trust in Jesus Christ, the sinners Savior!

It is very likely that if I had time to explain to you, my Hearer, the fullness of your sin and the utter ruin of your natural state, you, also, would grow angry. You would have no cause to be angry, for all that I could say would fall far short of the truth about your real condition in the sight of God! And it is most solemnly important for you to know that however high you may stand in the ranks of merely moral men, you are a lost soul and a condemned soul, as long as you remain without living faith in the Lord Jesus Christ! If you are angry with the minister of the Gospel who tells you this Truth of God, you are as foolish as a certain Brahmin whom I have heard of. His religion consisted chiefly in not eating any animal food or destroying any kind of life. The missionary told him that it was impossible for him to carry out such a religion as that, for, he said, in every drop of water that you drink, you swallow thousands of animals and so destroy vast quantities of animal life. Then he put a drop of water out of the cup from which the Brahmin had been drinking, under his microscope and so convinced him of the truth of what he had said. When the Brahmin saw the creatures moving in the water, instead of abandoning his false theory, he grew very angry and dashed the microscope upon the ground! He was not angry, you see, with the fact, but with that which revealed the fact! Like the lazy housemaid who said she was quite sure that she always kept the rooms clean but, it was the nasty sun that would shine in and make everything look so dusty! The fault is not in the Gospel which we preachso you should not be angry with it, or with usthe fault is in yourselves, in your own hearts and lives, and if you do not like to be told the truth about sin, it is a sure sign that your heart is not right in the sight of God! It is still true that everyone that does evil hates the light, neither comes to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.

Well then, with that Truth of God taken for grantedthat you, whom I am now addressing, have sinned and are, therefore, under Gods condemnation unless you are trusting in Christwe now come directly to our text. We shall take it not merely as though John the Baptist were speaking it, but as we may now use it from our point of view. It appears to me to be the whole Gospel in a very brief form. You may sometimes write much in a very few words and here you have an epitome of the whole Gospel of God in these few syllablesBehold the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world. I am going to ask and try to answer three questions. First, what is to be beheld? Secondly, what is to be done? And thirdly, why should we do this?

I. First, then WHAT IS TO BE BEHELD?   
The text mentions a Lamb, by which is meant a sacrifice. Under the Jewish Law, those who had offended brought sacrifices and offered them to God. These sacrifices were representations of our Lord Jesus Christ who is, the Lamb of God. Listen, my dear Hearer, and I will tell you the Gospel in a few sentences. As God is just, it is inevitable that sin should be punished. If He would pardon you, how can this be righteously accomplished? Only thusJesus Christ, His Son, came to earth and stood in the place of all those who believe on Him and God accepted Him as the substitutionary Sacrifice for all those who put their trust in Him. Under the Jewish Law, the lamb was put to death that the man might not be put to death and, in like manner, Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, suffered the pangs of death by crucifixion and the greater agony of the wrath of God that we might not suffer the pangs of Hell and the eternal wrath which is due to sin. There is no other way of salvation under Heaven but this! God cannot relax His Justice and He will by no means clear the guilty. But He laid upon Christ the full punishment that was due to sin and smote Him as though He had been the actual offender, and now, turning round to you, He tells you that if you trust in Jesus, the merits of His great atoning Sacrifice shall be imputed to you and you shall live forever in Glory because Jesus died upon the Cross of Calvary. If any of you would have your sins forgiven, and so enjoy peace with God, you must look by faith to that Sacrifice which was offered upon Calvary and keep your eyes of faith fixed thereand sooner or later you will certainly receive the blessings of peace into your souls!   
But the text not only mentions a Lamb, it says, Behold the Lamb of God, and I draw your special attention to that expression. It is not merely a Sacrifice to which you are to look, but the Sacrifice that God has appointed and ordained to be the one and only Sacrifice for sin! This is an all-important point. The Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all...It pleased the Lord to bruise Him, He has put Him to grief. If Christ had not been sent of God to be the Savior of sinners, our faith would have had no firm foundation to rest upon. But as God Himself has set forth Christ to be the Propitiation for human guilt, then He cannot reject the sinner who accepts that Propitiation! I need not raise any questions as to whether Christs Atonement is sufficient, for God says that it is and as He is satisfied with the Sacrifice offered by His only-begotten and wellbeloved Son, surely the most troubled conscience may be equally satisfied with it! Your offense, my Friend, was committed against God. If, then, God is content with what Christ has done on your behalf, and so is willing to pardon you, surely you need not enquire any further, but with gratitude you should at once accept the reconciliation which Christ has made! It is the Lamb of God whom I have to bid you, behold. It is Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who died on Calvary, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God. It was God who appointed Him to die as the Substitute for sinners. It was God who accepted this Sacrifice when He died and now, Jehovah, Himself, speaking from His Throne of Glory, says to the sinner, Believe on My Son whom I have set forth as the Propitiation for human sin. Trust in Him and you shall be eternally saved.

Still further, to bring out the full force of the text, notice the next words, Behold the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world. When Jesus Christ was put into our place, our sin was laid upon Him and sin, like anything else, cannot be in two places at one time. If, then, I, being a Believer in Jesus, know that all my sin was laid upon Christ, it necessarily follows that I have no sin left upon me! It has become Christs burden. He has taken it away from me. Yes, you say, but then the sin is still on Christ. Ah, but my Hearers, if our Lord Jesus Christ, Himself bore our sins in His own body up on the tree, He there endured all the punishment that was due to us, or an equivalent for it, and those sins were by that means put awaythat is to say, they ceased to beso they do not exist any longer! All my indebtedness to God was transferred to Christ and He paid all my debts! Then where are my debts now? Why, there are none! They are all gone forever. This is what Christ does for everyone who truly trusts in HimHe takes that mans sins absolutely out of existence so that they cease to be! Christ has accomplished the great work described to Daniel by the angel GabrielHe has finished the transgression, made an end of sinswhat a strong expression that is! made reconciliation for iniquity and brought in everlasting righteousness! How gloriously He has put sin right away for all who believe in Him! As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us. Of all sinners in the whole world who believe in Jesus Christ, it may be truly said that all their sins are gone past all recall God has cast them into the depths of the Red Sea of the Saviors blood and they shall not be remembered against them any more forever! It is thus that the Lamb of God takes or bears away sin!   
But whose sin does He take away? The text says, the sin of the world. By this expression I believe is intended the sin not only of the Jews, but of Jews and Gentiles, alikethe sin not only of a few sinners, but of all sinners in the whole world who come to Jesus and put their trust in Him! He has so taken away the sin of the world that every sinner in the world who will come to Him and trust in Him, shall have all his sins put away forever! Whether he is Greek or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, Barbarian or Scythian, bond or free, if he truly believes in Jesus, it is certain that Christ took all his sins away. Whether he was born 1800 years ago, or whether he shall be born in the ages that are yet to come, does not make any difference to this factChrist has borne his sins if he trusts in Jesus as his own Savior. This is the sign and token by which he may assuredly know that he has a saving and eternal interest in the precious blood of JesusHe that believes on Him is not condemned. The gate of Divine Grace is set very wide open in our textif it were not, some poor sinners would be afraid to enter! Oh, asks one, is this mercy for me? Is it for me? Well, Friend, I will ask you a question will you trust Christ? Will you come to Him this very moment and take the mercy that He freely presents to all who will accept it? If so, I am sure that it is yoursas sure as I am that it is mine!   
Possibly someone has come in here tonight hoping to hear something new, but I have nothing new to tell, nor do I wish ever to have anything more new than thisChrist Jesus came into the world to save sinners. Or this, God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. When Dr. Judson went home to America from Burma, there was a large congregation gathered together and they requested the returned missionary, the veteran of so many years of service, to address the assembly. He stood up and simply told the story that I have again told you tonightthe story of Christ suffering in the place of sinners and of Christ saving all who trust Him. Then he sat down and one who sat next to him said to him, I am afraid the friends are rather disappointedthey expected to hear something interesting from you. He said, I have spoken to them to the best of my ability upon the most interesting subject in the whole world! What could I have done better than that? Yes, said the other, but after having been so long abroad, they thought that you would tell them some interesting story. They did not think you would come all the way from Burma just to tell them only that. The missionary then rose and said, I should like to go home feeling that although I have come all the way from Burma, I do not know anything that I can tell you that I think is half as good for you to hear, or half as interesting, as the story of the love of Christ in dying to save sinners.   
The good doctor was right and I feel just as he didthat there is nothing so interesting as the story of the Cross! You need to hear it, you who are already saved. And you need to hear it, you who are not yet saved! You must hear it, for there is no hope of salvation for you except as faith shall come to you by hearingand especially hearing that portion of the Word of God which deals most closely with the Cross of Christ!   
One night, a dissolving-view lecture upon the Holy Land was being given and, as the audience, sitting in darkness, looked at a picture of Jerusalem, they were startled by a voice asking, Where is Calvary? Ah, and that is the question that many of you need to askWhere is Calvary? There must you turn your eyes where, between the two thieves, your Savior died. If you really look to Him as He dies there for guilty sinners, you are saved! And then whatever else you do not know, you know enough to save you, for you are wise unto eternal life! May the Lord graciously make you thus wise through the effectual working of His everblessed Spirit! So then, God in human flesh, the Divinely-appointed Sacrifice for human guilt, the Lamb of God, is what you are bid, in our text, to behold.   
II. But now, secondly, WHAT ARE WE TO DO?   
How are we to have a part and lot in that great Sacrifice which Christ offered on Calvary? The answer of the text is, Beholdthat is, look to the Lamb of God.  
*There is life in a look at the Crucified One!* Behold the Lamb of God means believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, trust in Him as your Savior, accept Gods Revelation concerning Him and rely upon Him to save you. This is the way of salvation!   
Notice how opposed this is to the idea that we are critically to understand the Doctrines of the Gospel before we can be saved. How many persons there are who want to know this and to understand that! They come to us and say, Here are two texts that do not seem, to us, to square with one another, and there are those two Doctrines of Divine Sovereignty and Human Responsibility which do not appear to be consistent with each other. Must we understand all the mysteries before we can be saved? O foolish people! They remind me of one who is shipwrecked and who, as the lifeboat comes up to the sinking ship, or to the spar upon which he is floating, says to the captain, Before I can get on board that lifeboat, I want to know the exact number of planks there are in it. And I really do not think that knowing that would content meI would also like to know how many rivets and bolts there are in the boat. And I also need to know what is the theory of the operation of the oars upon the waves and how it is that boats are propelled. If a man ever did talk thus, I am pretty sure that the captain of the lifeboat would exclaim, What a fool that man is! He is in danger of drowning, yet he talks like this! Come into the boat at once, or we must leave you to perish! And I also feel that you unconverted sinners have no business to set yourselves up as critics of the Word of God! There is something much simpler than that for you to do and the text bids you do itBehold the Lamb of God. Do not sit down to manufacture difficultiesbelieve on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved. There are various ways of using a piece of bread. One man may take it and employ it in rubbing out the pencil marks which he has made upon a sheet of paper. Another man may take it to an analyst and ask him to see how much alum the baker may have put into it. But the really hungry manthe one who gets the most good out of the piece of breadeats it! And that is what I recommend you to do with the Gospelnot begin to turn it about this way and that, not ask all manner of questions concerning itbut feed upon it! And the way to feed upon it is to accept it, believe it and especially to put your trust in Jesus Christ, who is the very Essence of the Gospel!   
Behold the Lamb of God, says the textthen that command is opposed to the question that troubles so manywhether they are elect or not! That is like wanting to read Hebrew before one has learned to speak English! Such people are not content to learn the A B C, the elements, the rudiments of the Gospel, firstthey first want to know the Gospels classics, or mathematics, or metaphysicsbut that cannot be! During the recent hard frosts I have struck up an acquaintance with a little friend who, I am afraid, may desert me, by-and-by, but our friendship has been exceedingly pleasant to each of us thus far. On the little balcony outside my study windows, I observed a robin frequently coming, so I took an opportunity, one morning, to put some crumbs there and I have done the same thing every morning since. And my little feathered friend comes close up to the window frame and picks up the crumbs. And I do not perceive that he has any difficulty about whether the crumbs were laid there for him, or whether I had any electing love towards him in my heart. There were the crumbshe needed them and he picked them up and ate them! And I can tell you that in doing so, he exactly fulfilled my purpose in putting the crumbs there! I thought that he acted very wisely and I think that if a poor sinner wants mercyand he sees that there is mercy to be hadhe had better not pause to ask, Did God decree me to have it? But go on and take it and he will then find that in doing so, he is fulfilling Gods decree! My little robin friend is very wise in his way, for he has called a friend of his to join him at the feast on the balcony. How he did it, I do not know, but he managed to tell a blackbird all about the crumbsand he brought him last Friday morning to see them for himself. The blackbird was rather shy at first, and stood for a while on the iron bar of the balcony. But after looking in at the study window, he happened down and neither he nor the robin asked whether it was my purpose that the blackbird should have any of the crumbs! But there were the crumbs and they were both hungry, so they came and fed together. So, if any of you find Jesus Christ for yourselves and you know some poor soul who needs Him, do not begin asking whether it is Gods purpose or decree that he, also, should find the Saviorgo and invite him to come to Jesus and then both of you come to the Savior together and then, just as the robin and blackbird exactly fulfilled my purpose in throwing out the crumbs, so, when you and your friend come to Christ, you will rejoice to find that you have, both of you, fulfilled the eternal purpose of the Divine Decree of the great heart of God! It is not your business to look into the book of Gods secret purposes, but to look to Christ, or, as our text puts it, to, behold the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world.

Ah, but this beholding of the Lamb of God is a thing to which men cannot readily be brought! I know many whose consciences are truly awakened and who see themselves as sinners in the sight of God, but instead of beholding the Lamb of God, they are continually beholding themselves! I do not think that they have any confidence in their own righteousness, but they are afraid that they do not feel their guilt as much as they ought. They think that they are not yet sufficiently awakened, sufficiently humbled, sufficiently penitent and so on, and thus they fix their eyes upon themselves in the hope of getting peace with God! Suppose that yesterday or the day before, you had felt very cold and, therefore, you had gone outside your house and fixed your gaze upon the ice and the snowdo you think that sight would have warmed you? Now you know you would have been getting colder all the time! Suppose you are very poor and you studiously fix your minds eye upon your empty pocketdo you think that will enrich you? Or imagine that you have had an accident and that one of your bones is brokenif you think very seriously of that broken bone, do you think that your consideration will mend it? Yet some sinners seem to imagine that salvation can come to them through their consideration of their lost and ruined condition! My dear unconverted Hearers, you are lost whether you know it or not! Take that fact for granted. If you would be saved, look not at yourselves, but behold the Lamb of God. He has been sent by His Father to be the Savior of sinners and it is by trust in Him that peace and pardon will come to you! I pray you not to suppose, for a single moment that your repentance, your tears, or your softened heart can prepare you for Christ! Do not come to Christ because you have a tender heart, but come to Christ to get a tender heart! Do not come to Him because you are fit to come, but because you need to be made fit! And remember that   
*All the fitness He requires   
Is to feel your need of Him.   
This He gives you   
Tis the Spirits rising beam!*   
Give up looking at yourself and behold the Lamb of God.   
Let me also, dear Friend, warn you against the notion that your prayers can save you apart from beholding Christ. I believe that it is both the duty and the privilege of every living soul to praybut that the first command to a sinner is to pray, I deny! There first command is, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. And when you have done that, you will soon get to praying. I think it is stated in McCheynes life, that after an earnest sermon, he found a man under deep concern of soul. And after saying a word or two to him, he said, I cannot stay longer with you, myself, but there is one of my elders who will pray with you. The elder did so and he prayed in so fervent a fashion that it was remarked that he seemed to be like Jacob wrestling with the Angel until he prevailed. The man afterwards came to see Mr. McCheyne and said to him, I am very thankful that I was at your Church that night. I feel very happy and I believe I am saved. Well, said McCheyne, what makes you feel so happy? Oh, he said, I have great faith in that good mans prayers. McCheyne at once said, My Friend, I am afraid that good mans prayers will ruin you! If that is where you are putting your confidence, you are utterly mistaken. He was quite right. And your own prayers will be just such an obstacle in your way if you trust to them instead of trusting to Christ! I know I pray, says one, and I am very earnest in prayer. Well, I am glad of that as far as it goes, but if you have not something better to trust to than your own prayers, your prayers will ruin you for the look of faith is not to be given to prayer, but to Christ! Our text says, Behold the Lamb of God. I have told you what that meanslook by faith to the Sacrifice that Christ made for sinners on the Cross at Calvarybut if you look to anything else for salvation, you will not find it! Even your prayers, apart from faith in Christ, will not save you from everlasting destruction! O Sinner, get away from everything else and come to Christ   
*None but Jesus, none but Jesus,   
Can do helpless sinners good!*   
This great Truth of God, that believing is the Divinely-appointed means of salvation, may be illustrated by the old story of the children of

Israel and the serpent of brass. [Other Sermons by Mr. Spurgeon upon this subject, are as follows#153, Volume 3THE MYSTERIES OF THE BRONZE SERPENT; #285, Volume 5MANS RUIN AND GODS REMEDY and #1500, Volume 25NUMBER 1500OR, LIFTING UP THE BRONZE SERPENTRead/download all these sermons, free of charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.] You

have heard it scores of times, yet I beg you to listen to it once more! When the people were bitten by the fiery serpents in the wilderness, they were commanded to look at the serpent of brass that was lifted upon a poleand whoever looked, lived. They had nothing to do but look! Moses lifted up the serpent and pointed to it and cried, Look! Look! Look! And be healed. Possibly there were some who said they were bitten too badly to look. Well, if they could not or did not look, they would die. They might think it was a proof of their humility to say, We are too sick to be cured, but if they did so, they would die whether they were humble or not! O my Hearer, do not be lost through a mock humility which is really abominable pride! You are not too great a sinner to be saved! I will venture to say that you will dishonor Christ if you ever think such a thing! So let not that sinful thought destroy you!

There may have been others who said, We shall not look to the bronze serpent for we have only got a mere scratchit will soon be gone. But you know a poison scratch means death and if your sin were only a scratch (it is much more than that) it would mean eternal damnation for you! So look to Jesus, I implore you, just as you are! Look now! Look and live!

Perhaps there was one who said, My father had a famous recipe for serpent bites. It was given to him by a celebrated doctor in Egypt, so we will mix up the proper ingredients and so get cured. Well, if any who were bitten were to act and speak like that, they would all diethe deadly venom would certainly destroy them, whatever ointments they might use! A look at the bronze serpent gave life, but the refusal to look brought death.

There may have been some fine gentlemen there who had imbibed skeptical notions during their life in Egypt. They were so clever that they thought they knew a great deal more than the Lords servant to whom God had specially revealed the only effectual remedy, so they turned on their heels and said, Such a remedy as this is utterly ridiculous! It is not according to the laws of physics that the mere looking at a piece of brass can heal people of the bites of snakes! So they perished. Notwithstanding all their learning and wit, notwithstanding their jeers at the Divinelyappointed remedy, they perished. And nobody in the whole camp was healed except those who were simple enough and wise enough to take God at His word. Then, though they were terribly bitten, though their blood was set on fire by the poison and though some of them were in a truly desperate statewhen they just looked at the bronze serpentin a moment their blood again flowed healthily through their veins and their strength returned to them in all its former vigor! And, dear Friends, there shall be no soul saved in the whole world except by looking to the crucified Christ of Calvary! All trust in christening, (or even in Baptism), in confirmation, in sacraments, in ceremonies, in priests, popes and relicsare all liesbut as long as Gods Word remains true, he who looks by faith to Christ, alone, must and shall be eternally saved! Oh, how can I utter this Truth of God so as to make it plainer, or how shall I plead with you so as to bring you all to trust in Christ? I cannot do this, but I pray the Holy Spirit to do it, for He canand then you will believe in Jesus and so receive everlasting life!

III. I must not detain you longer, as our time has fled. Otherwise I was to have answered a third question, WHY SHOULD WE THUS LOOK?   
The answer would have been that God has appointed this as the only way of salvation, that those who obey the command of the text will obtain immediate salvation and that, being saved, they shall have joy and peace in believing! But you who neglect or refuse to behold the Lamb of God must, without doubt, everlastingly perish! Of His infinite mercy, may God graciously grant that none whom I am now addressing may refuse to believe in Jesus, but may everyone look to Him and livelive now, and live forever!

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **JOHN 1:1-34.**

Verse 1. In the beginning was the Word. Christ the Word has existed from all eternity! He is the Eternal Son of the Eternal Father. He is really what Melchisedec was metaphorically, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life. In the beginning was the Word.

1. And the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The Word was as truly God as the Father was God, and as the Spirit was God. These Three are One, and have always been One. Very God of very God is that Jesus whom we trust, love and adore!

2-5. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made. In Him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. The light of Christ shone many times amid the darkness that enshrouded the world before His coming to live here in the flesh, yet comparatively few recognized that light and rejoiced in it. Christs light shines more brightly now, but the dark, benighted soul of man perceives not the brightness of our spiritual Lord until the Holy Spirit works the mighty miracle of Regeneration and so gives sight to those who have been blind.

6. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. What a descent it is from, The Word of God, to the man sent from God, whose name was John. Jesus Himself said concerning John, Among them that are born of women there has not risen a greater than John the Baptist. Yet, from the greatest of Prophets, what a climb it is to get up to Jesus Christ, the Son of God! There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

7-9. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through Him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. That was the true Light, which lights every man that comes into the world. John could not do thathe could only bear witness to Christ, the true Light, who alone is able to illuminate, in a larger or lesser degree, every man that comes into the world.

10. He was in the world, and the world was made by Him and the world knew Him not. Oh, what terrible estrangement sin has caused between God and man! What dreadful ignorance sin has created in the human mind! The world was made by Christ, yet the world knew Him not.

11. He came unto His own, and His own received Him not. To those who were chosen as His own out of all the nations upon the earth, to those to whom He was especially promised of old, to the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacobto these Jesus came, yet they received Him not.

12. ButThis is a blessed, But. Though Christs own nation, the Jews, as a whole received Him not, there was a remnant according to the election of Grace, there were some who received Him. But

12. As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name. How came those persons to receive Him when others rejected Him? There must have been some great change worked in them to make them different from the rest of their countrymen. And truly there was, for these were twice-born men

13. Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the  
will of man, but of God. [See Sermon #2259, Volume 38THE SIMPLICITY AND SUBLIMITY OF SALVATIONRead/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.]

So that those who receive Christ, those who truly believe on Christ, are people who have been born, as others have not been born, by a new birth from Heavena supernatural birth, so that they are a people set apart by themselves as those who have been created twicefirst as human beings just like others, and then as new creatures in Christ Jesus!

14-18. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the Only-Begotten of the Father), full of Grace and Truth. John bore witness of Him and cried, saying, This was He of whom I spoke, He that came after me is preferred before me: for He was before me. And of His fullness have we all received, and Grace for Grace

[See Sermons #858, Volume 15THE FULLNESS OF JESUS THE TREASURY OF SAINTS and #1169, Volume 20THE FULLNESS OF CHRIST THE TREASURY OF THE SAINTSRead/download both sermons, free of charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.] for the Law was given by Mos

es, but Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ. No man has seen God at any time; the only-begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him. There is no way of knowing God and being reconciled to God except as we receive Jesus Christ, His Son, into our hearts and learn of Him all that He delights to reveal to us concerning His Father through the Holy Spirits teaching.

19-23. And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who are you? And he confessed, and denied not but confessed, I am not the Christ. And they asked him, What then, Are you Elijah? And he said, I am not. Are you that Prophet? And he answered, No. Then said they unto him, who are you, that we may give an answer to them that sent us? What say you of yourself? He said, I am the voiceNot the Word, but the voice by which the Word was to be made knownI am the voice

23-27. Of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the lord, as said the Prophet Isaiah. And they which were sent were of the Pharisees. And they asked him, and said unto him, Why do you baptize, then, if you are not that Christ, nor Elijah, neither that Prophet? John answered them saying, I baptize with water: but there stands One among you, whom you know not. He it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe laces I am not worthy to unloose. See the true humility of this faithful servant of Christ! He does not dream of putting His own name side by side with his Masters. The unloosing of shoe laces was work for a slave to do, but if we are privileged to perform this work for Christ, it will make us as kings before Him! To do anything for Christto have even a menials place in His palace is better than being an emperor among men! May we have the portion of those who are not ashamed to unloose the laces of Christs shoes!

28-31. These things were done in Bethabara beyond Jordon, where John was baptizing. The next day John saw Jesus coming unto him, and said, Behold the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world. This is He of whom I said, After me comes a Man which is preferred before me: for He was before me. And I knew Him notWhen first I saw Him

31-34. But that He should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water. And John bore record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from Heaven like a dove, and it abode upon Him. And I knew Him not: but He that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom you shall see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, the same is He which baptizes with the Holy Spirit. And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God. Since Johns time, many others have borne similar testimony. We, also, have received Him and rejoice to say that He has baptized us with the Holy Spirit. All that John said of Him is trueand much more than John said is also true. He is the Lamb of God who has taken upon Himself the sin of all who believe in Him and, therefore, He is able to save unto the uttermost all that come unto God by Him. Oh, that all men would receive the testimony concerning Him which we find in this blessed Bookand which we delight to repeat in His name!

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THE LAMB OF GOD IN SCRIPTURE   
NO. 2329

**INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS-DAY, OCTOBER 8, 1893. DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, AUGUST 25, 1889.

**Again, the next day, John stood with two of his disciples. And looking at Jesus as He walked, he said, Behold the Lamb of God! John 1:35, 36.**

You all know the old, old story. The world was lost. God must punish sin. He sent His Son to take our sin upon Him that He might honor the Law of God and establish Gods government by being obedient to the Law of God and yielding Himself up to the death penalty. He whom Jehovah loves beyond all else came to earth, became a Man and, as a Man, was obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross. It is He who is called, in our text, the Lamb of God, the one Sacrifice for mans sin. There is no putting away of sin without sacrificethere is only one Sacrifice that can put away sinand that is Jesus Christ, the Righteous. He is Divine, yet HumanSon of God, yet Son of Mary. He yielded up His life, the Just for the unjust, the Sinless for the sinful, that He might bring us to God, and reconcile us to the great Father. That is the story and whoever believes in Him shall live. Any man, the world over, who will trust himself to Christ, Gods great Sacrifice, shall be saved, for this is our continual witness, He that believes on the Son has everlasting life. For God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

Tonight I do not intend so much to preach a sermon as to urge those who have seen the Lamb of God to look at Him more intently, to study Him more and especially to plead for the power of the Holy Spirit to reveal Him to them. I want to entreat men who have looked elsewhere, to now turn their eyes away from the fruitless search after peace and life, and to come and, Behold the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world. May the Spirit of God open their eyes and incline their hearts that, tonight, even tonight, they may look unto Him and live!

When John saw Jesus Christ on that memorable day, he, first of all, beheld Him, himself, and then he said to others, Behold the Lamb of God. Looking at Jesus as He walked, steadfastly beholding Him, watching Him, gazing with humble admiration at Him, he said, Behold the Lamb of God! Brethren, we cannot preach what we have not practiced! If these eyes have never looked to Jesus, how can I bid your eyes look at Him? Beholding Him, I found peace to my soul. I, who was disposed, even, to despair, rose from the depths of anguish to the heights of joy by looking unto Him! And I, therefore, dare to say to you, Behold the Lamb of God! Oh, that each one of you might believe our testimony concerning Jesus and look to Him and live!

What did John mean by saying, Behold the Lamb of God? Behold, in the Latin, ecce, is a note of admiration, of wonderment, of exclamation. Behold the Lamb of God! There was nothing of greater wonder ever seen than that God, Himself, should provide the Lamb for the Burnt Offering, that He should provide His only Son out of His very bosom, that He should give the delight of His heart to die for us! Well may we behold this great wonder! Angels admire and marvel at this mystery of godlinessGod manifest in the flesh! They have never left off wondering and adoring the Grace of God that gave Jesus to be the Sacrifice for guilty men. Behold and wonder, never leave off wonderingtell it as a wonder, think of it as a wonder, sing of it as a wonder! Even in Heaven you will not cease to wonder at this glorious Lamb of God!

I think that John also meant his disciples to consider, when he said to them, Behold the Lamb of God! So we say to you, Think of Him, study Him, know all that you can about Him, look Him up and down. He is Goddo you understand that He stood in the sinners place? He is Man do you know how near akin He is to you, how sympathetic He isa Brother born for your adversity? The Person of Christ is a great marvel how can God and man be in one Person? It is impossible for us to tell. We believe what we cannot comprehend and we rejoice in what we cannot understand! He whom God has provided to be your Savior is both God and ManHe can lay His hand upon both parties. He can touch your manhood in its weakness and touch the Godhead in its All-Sufficiency! Study Christ! The most excellent of all the sciences is the knowledge of a crucified Savior. He is most learned in the university of Heaven who knows most of Christ. He who has known most of Him still says that His love surpasses knowledge. Behold Him, then, with wonder! And behold Him with

thankfulness.

But when John says, Behold the Lamb of God! he means more than wondering or considering. Looking is used in Scripture for faithLook unto Me and be you saved. Therefore we sing

*There is life for a look at the Crucified One, There is life at this moment for you!*   
Beholding is a steady kind of looking. Believe then, in Christ with a

solid, abiding confidence. Come, you sinners, come, and trust your Savior, not for tonight, only, but forever! Believe that He is able and willing to save you and trust Him to do so

*Venture on Him, venture wholly,   
Let no other trust intrude.*

Take your eyes off everything else and behold the Lamb of God! You need not see anything else, nothing else is worth seeing, but behold Him. See how He takes your guilt, see how He bears it, see how He sinks under it and yet rises from it, crying, It is finished! He gives up the ghost. He is buried. He rises again from the dead because He is accepted of God and His redeeming work is done. Trust Him, trust Him, trust Him! Look and live, is now our messagenot, do and live, but, live and do! If you ask how you are to live, our answer is look, trust, believe, confide, rest in Christand the moment you do so, you are saved!

But, once more, when John said to His disciples, Behold the Lamb of God! it was a hint that they should leave off looking at John and turn their attention wholly to Jesus and follow Him. Hence we find that Johns two disciples left him and became the disciples of Christ. Beloved, we who preach long to have your attention, but when you give your attention to us, our longing, then, is to pass it on to Christ our Lord. Look on Him and follow Him, not us! What can we do, poor creatures that we are? Look unto Him! Mark His footsteps! Walk in them. Do as He bids you! Take Him for your Lord, become His disciples, His servants. Behold the Lamb of God and always behold Him! Look to Him, look up to Him and follow where He leads the way.

Thus I have put the text before you pretty simply. Now I want to talk to you a little about beholding this Lamb of God, taking a hasty run through various Scripture references to the lamb. And I will ask you, first, to Behold the Lamb of God in His connections with men. And secondly to Behold the Lamb of God in His benedictions to men.

I. Let us, first, BEHOLD THE LAMB OF GOD IN HIS CONNECTIONS WITH MEN.   
How was the Lamb of God first seen in the world? It was the case of the lamb for one man, brought by one man for himself, and on his own behalf. You all know that I refer to Abel, who was a shepherd, and brought of the firstlings of his flock, that is, a lamb, and he brought this lamb for himself, and on his own account, that he might be accepted of God, and that he might present to God an offering well-pleasing in His sight. Cain brought of the fruit of the ground as an offering to God. I think that there was a difference in the sacrifice, as well as in the man bringing it, for the Holy Spirit says little about the difference of the man, but He says, By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, and he was accepted because he brought a more excellent sacrifice. The one sacrifice was bloodless, the fruit of the groundthe other was typical of Christ, the Lamb of God and was, therefore, accepted. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering.   
Now, Beloved, our first view of Christ usually is here, to know Him for ourselves. I am a sinner and I want to have communion with my God how shall I obtain it? I am guilty, I am sinfulhow shall I draw near to the holy God? Here is the answer. Take the Lord Jesus Christ to be yours by faith and bring Him to God! You must be accepted if you bring Christ with you! The Father never repelled the Son, nor one who was clothed with the Sons righteousness, or who pleaded the Sons merit. Come you, as Abel came, not with fruits of your own growing, but with the sacrifice of blood with Christ, the Holy Victim, the spotless Lamb of Godand so coming, whoever you may be, you shall be acceptable before God by faith. Now, behold Him, each one of you for yourself!   
I know what someone will say, I hope to do that, by-and-by. I hope you do not so deceive yourself! I have heard that there was once a great meeting in the den of the arch-enemy and he was stirring up his lackeys to seek the destruction of men. One of them said, I have gone forth and I have told men that there is no God, and no hereafter, and no difference between sin and righteousness, and that they may live as they like! And there was considerable approbation among the evil spirits. But Satan, himself, said, You have done small service, for man has a conscience, and his conscience teaches him better. He knows that there is a God. He knows that there is a difference between sin and righteousness. He knows that there must be future punishment. You have done but little. Then another stood up, and said, I have done better, I think, most Mighty Chieftain, for I have told them that the Bible is a worn-out book, that it was a fable at the first, and that they need not believe it. There was a round of cheers, for they said that he had done splendid service for the cause of darkness.   
But Satan said, It is in vain that you meddle with the old Book! It has taken care of itself and it can still do so. There is no shaking it, it is like a rock. You have done service for a time, but it will soon pass away. And scarcely did any of the fallen spirits, after that, venture to bring forward his boasting in the presence of the terrible master who sat in the midst of them. But, at last, one said, I have told men that they have souls, and that there is a God, and that the Bible is true. I have left them to believe as they will, but I have whispered in their ears that there is plenty of time to consider all this. Then there was a hushand the great master of demons said, You have done best of all. This is my great net in which I take more souls than with any other, this net of procrastination or delay.   
Therefore say I to you, my Hearers, disappoint the fiend! Fly to Jesus. Fly to Jesus at once! Behold, not tomorrow, but tonight! Behold the Lamb of God, each man for himself!   
Now turn over the pages of this grand old Book and you will find the Lamb, next, in another connection. Israel was in Egypt and there they had the lamb for the familyIn the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house. Oh, I wish that you would all go on to behold the Lamb of God for your households! Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved. Why do you stop before you finish the verse? What said the Apostle to the trembling jailor? Not merely all that I have quoted, but more Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved, and your house. Are there not many Believers who do not believe for their house? Come, now, and believe in this provision of the Lamb for the house! Trust the Grace of God for that little girl, the last born, and for that boy who is still at school, who does not think much of these things as yetand for that son of yours who has left home and gone out as an apprentice. Oh, that the Lamb of God might be for him! Pray for him, tonight, and you older parents, pray for your sons who are married, and your daughters who have taken to themselves husbands and are away from you! The Lamb is for the house, pray for the whole household, tonighttake in your grandchildren, all you old folksall of them who are in your house. Pray that the Lamb may be for the house!   
I bless God that I can look upon all my household and rejoice that they are converted to Christ! My father has this joy, too! And my grandfather also had that joy! Oh, it is a great bliss to have families, generation after generation, all brought to Christ without exception! Why should it not be so? Let us cry for it! Surely we may expect the same blessing that God gave to His chosen people under the Law and expect it more largely. Grace does not run in the blood, but Grace often runs side by side with it, so that Abraham is loved, and Isaac, and Jacob, and Joseph, and Ephraim, and Manasseh. Thus the Covenant blessing goes on from one to another. Plead with God, tonight, that all in your house may be beneath the sprinkled blood of the Lamb and be saved from the destroying angeland that all with you may go out of Egypt to have a possession in the land of the promise!  
A little further on, following the Scripture, and asking you to still behold the Lamb, in the 29th chapter of that famous Book of Exodus, at the 38th and 39th verses, we come across Gods command for the lamb for the peopleNow this is that which you shall offer upon the altar; two lambs of the first year, day by day, continually. The one lamb you shall offer in the morning and the other lamb you shall offer at even. Here is the lamb for all the chosen people, the lamb for Israel! It began with the unit, it went on to the family and here the Lord, who loves the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob, makes His Tabernacle to be the central place where a lamb shall be offered for the whole nation! Think of it with delight, tonight, that Christ died for all His chosen people! He has redeemed them from among men. Though they are as many as the stars for number, or as the sand on the seashore, innumerable, yet that one Sacrifice has redeemed them all! Glory be to God for the blood of the Lamb by which the whole of Christs people are redeemed!   
Then let your mind take wing right out of the Old Testament into the New, for I have not time to trace all the successive steps. Come now to John, saying, in the 29th verse of this chapter, Behold the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world. Now you have gone beyond the bounds of Israel, and have come to the Lamb for the world. You have come to the Lamb of God who dies for Gentiles as well as for Jews, for men in the isles of the sea, for men in the wilds of Africa, for men of every color and every race, and every time, and every clime! Oh, glory be to God, wherever there are men, we may go and tell them of Christ! Wherever there are men born of Adams race, we may tell them of the Second Adam, to whom looking, they who look shall liveand in Him they shall find eternal life! I love to think of the breaking down of the boundaries that shut in the flow of Grace to one nation! Behold, it flows over all Asia Minor, at first, and then over all Greece, and then to Rome, and Paul talks of going to Spain and the Gospel is borne across the sea to England, and from this country it has gone out unto the utmost ends of the earth!

Well now, take your flight, if you can get beyond that, away to Heaven, itself, and there you will see the Lamb for all Heaven! Look at Revelation, the seventh chapter, and the 14th verse. No, you need not look it up, for you know it. All the saints in Heaven are standing in their glittering ranks, white-robed, pure as the driven snow. They sing and praise one glorious name, when one of the elders first asked the question, What are these which are arrayed in white robes, and from where did they come? He, himself, gave the answer, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.   
*Round the altar priests confess,   
If their robes are white as snow,   
Twas the Saviors righteousness,   
And His blood that made them so.*   
The blood of the Lamb has whitened all the saints who are in Heaven! They sing of Him who loved them and laved [washed] them from their sins in His own blood! I have often wondered why that second word was not brought into our translation, for it so beautifully fits the language of the beloved Apostle JohnUnto Him that loved us, and laved us from our sins in His own blood, and has made us kings and priests unto God and His Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. There is no whiteness in Heaven but what the Lamb has worked, no brightness there but what the Lamb has bought! Everything there shows the wondrous power and surpassing merit of the Lamb of God!   
If it is possible to think of something more glorious than I have already described, I think you will find it in the fifth chapter of Revelation, at the 13th verseAnd every creature which is in Heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power be unto Him that sits upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever. The day shall come when, from every place that God has made, there shall be heard the voice of praise unto the Lambthere shall be found everywhere men and women redeemed by blood, angels and glorious spirits, rejoicing to adore Him who was, and is, and is to come, the Almighty Lamb of God!   
I think I have given you something to consider if you turn over the pages of Scripture and follow the track of the bleeding Lamb.   
II. But now, taking you again over the same road a little, I want you, in the second place, to BEHOLD THE LAMB OF GOD IN HIS BENEDICTIONS TO MEN.   
The first blessing of all is that of Abel. He was accepted of God. He offered a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain. Well now, let anybody here who does not know it, try to learn this lesson tonight. You can only be accepted in the Beloved. God loves His Son with such an overflowing love that He has love enough for you, love enough for meif we are in Christ Jesus. He is the great conduit or channel of Gods love and that love flows through all the pipes to every soul that believes in Jesus. Hide behind your Lord and you are safe! Trust His name, living and dying, and nothing can harm you. How many dear hearts, when passing through the Valley of the Shadow of Deathwhen grim thoughts have clustered about themhave been cheered and comforted by the thought of Christ! Remember the monk who, as he died, put away the priest, the crucifix and everything else, and cried, Tua vulnera, Jesu! Tua vulnera, Jesu! Your wounds, Jesus! Your wounds, Jesus! I am not saved by what I can do, but by what He has donenot by what I have suffered, but by what He has endured. There hangs our everlasting hopewe trust to Christ in life and in death and we are accepted for His sake! Come, every sinner, bring the Lamb of God! Put Him on the altar and you shall be accepted at once, and you may at once begin to praise the name of the Lord!   
But then, as we go on, we find this Lamb of God useful, not only for acceptance, but also for rescue and deliverance. It is a dark and dreadful night. Egypt shivers and stands aghast. And just at midnight flies forth an angel, armed with the sword of death. In every house of Egypt there is heard a wail, for the firstborn is dead, from the firstborn of Pharaoh to the firstborn of the woman who turns the mill to grind the daily corn. Death is in every house! No, stopthere are houses wherein there is no death! What has secured those habitations? The father took a lamb, shed its blood, dipped a bunch of hyssop in it and smeared the lintel and the two side postsand then all sat down and feasted, undisturbed, on the lambcalm and happy. They rejoiced to have for food that lamb whose blood was the ensign of their safety. There was no crying, there, no dying there! Death could not touch the inhabitants of the house that was marked with the blood of the paschal lamb. Beloved, you and I are perfectly safe if we are sheltered beneath the blood of the Lamb of God! Nothing can harm us, everything must bless usand we may go to our beds, tonight, singing   
*Sprinkled afresh with pardoning blood,   
I lay me down to rest,   
As in the embraces of my God,   
Or on my Saviors breast.*   
We may rise tomorrow morning, if we are spared, and go into this busy world without any fear. The broad arrow of the King is set upon us in the blood-mark of the atoning Sacrifice, and we are safe, and safe forever. Glory be to the name of the Lord for this!   
Nor was that all. As I have told you, the blood of the paschal lamb was not only sprinkled for the protection of the house, but its flesh was the food of the inhabitants. Oh, Brothers and Sisters, we do not, at first, know what it is to feed on Christ! We are satisfied to be sprinkled with His blood, but the Believer, afterwards, finds that Christ is the food of his soul. His blood is drink, indeed, and His flesh is meat, indeed. Oh, what a festival have we kept over the Person of our Lord! Sometimes, when faint and hungry, we have begun to think of the Incarnate God, the bleeding Lamb, the full Atonement paid, and we have said, My soul is full, satisfied with favor, full of the blessing of the Lord. I do not know what there is in the Gospel if you take away the Atoning Sacrifice. It seems to me that there would be nothing left but chaff which might suit asses and horses, but would not be fit for men. Look to Jesus Christ dying in our place and here is something for the soul to feed upon, yes, and to be satisfied with, as with marrow and fatness!   
I pointed you, a little further on, to the lamb in the wilderness, the lamb offered up every day. That brings us to another point in our Lords work. We have had Christ for acceptance, Christ for safety, and Christ for food, now we have Christ for perpetual resort. The Lamb of God in the morning! Oh, blessed be God for a Savior in the morning! If the night has gathered anything of evil, He does then disperse it, as the sun dispels the darkness. But oh, what a precious thing to also have the Lamb of God in the evening! If in the day we have soiled our feet in traversing this busy world, here we come to the Fountain and we are made clean through the blood of the Lamb! Perpetual merit, perpetual intercession, perpetual lifegiving, perpetual salvation flow from Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God! He is not slain twice. His one wonderful offering has finished transgression and made an end of sin, but its efficacy continues as though He were sacrificed often, always supplying us with merit, so that, in effect, His wounds continually bleed. He is always a new Savior for me every morning, always a new Savior every night and yet always the same Savior, the same Christ! There is no getting weary of Him, there is nothing stale in Him. They may talk about a new view of the Atonement. I have no view of the Atonement but thisWho loved me, and gave Himself for me. Who His own Self bore our sins in His own body on the tree. And that old view of the Atonement is always fresh and always new to the heart and conscience!   
Well now, Beloved, when we again come to John, following our former run of thought, we find the Lamb of God useful for guidance, for when John said, Behold the Lamb of God, the two disciples followed Jesus and we read of some, These are they which follow the Lamb wherever He goes. The Lamb is our Guide. The Lord is a Shepherd as well as a Lamb, and the flock following in His footsteps is safely led. My Soul, when you need to know which way to go, behold the Lamb of God! Ask, What would Jesus do? Then do what Jesus would have done in such a case and you can not do amiss.   
Further on we find such a passage as this, telling us of victory through the Lamb of GodThey overcame him by the blood of the Lamb. The Lamb is a great Warriorthere is none like He. Is He not the Lion of the tribe of Judah? Though He is gentle as a lamb, yet against sin and iniquity He is fiercer than a young lion when it roars on its prey. If we follow Him, hold fast His Truth, believe in His Atonement and perpetually proclaim His Gospel, we shall overcome all error, all sin and all evil!   
Well now, this blessed Lambit is not easy to leave off talking about Him when one once beginsone is so blessed that you may well behold Him, for all happiness comes through Him. In Heaven you will see nothing without Him. Nothing, you ask? No, nothinghere is a proof of my words. The city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it, for the Glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. All the light, the knowledge, the joy, the bliss of Heaven come through the Atoning Sacrifice of Christ! Not Jesus only, but Jesus slain, Jesus the Lamb of God is the very Light of Heaven!   
And what do you think is the joy-day of Heaven, the time for the highest exultation? Why, the joyous day when all the golden bells shall peal out their glorious melodies, and all the silver trumpets shall ring out their jubilant notes will be the day of the marriage of the Lamb! It is the Heaven of Heaven, the climax of ineffable delight!! And the voice of the great multitude, as the voice of many waters and as the voice of mighty thunder, sings, Alleluia: for the Lord God Omnipotent reigns. Let us be glad and rejoice and give honor to Him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife has made herself ready. So that, at the topmost round of the ladder of eternal bliss, there you find the Lamb! You cannot get beyond Him. He gives you all He has, even Himself. Behold Him, then, and go on beholding Him throughout the countless ages of eternity!

I would to God that you had all beheld Him, and I pray you to behold Him tonight. It is but a little while and the death-film will gather about your eyesand if you have not seen the Lamb while yet you have mortal eyes, you will see Him, you will certainly see Himbut your vision will be like that of Balaam. I shall see Him, but not now: I shall behold Him, but not near. If it is with you, not now, it may be, not near. It will be an awful thing to see the Lamb with a gulf between yourself and Him, for there is a great, impassable gulf fixed in the next worldand when you see Him across that gulf, how will you feel? Then shall you cry to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sits on the Throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb! Jesus will still be a Lamb, even to the lostit is the wrath of the Lamb that they will dread! The Lamb is always conspicuous. He may be neglected, rejected, refused tonight, but He will be beheld in eternity and beheld to your everlasting confusion and unutterable dismay if you refuse to behold Him now. Let it not be so with any of you   
*You sinners, seek His face,   
Whose wrath you cannot bear!   
Fly to the shelter of His Cross,   
And find salvation there.*

Amen.   
EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: JOHN 1:1-37.

John is the majestic Evangelist. He is the high-soaring eagle with piercing eyes. His is the Gospel of the Son of God!   
Verses 1-3. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made. We cannot describe the Deity of Christ in clearer language than John uses. He was with God. He was God. He did the works of God, for He was the Creator. If any doubt His Deity, they must do so in distinct defiance of the language of Holy Scripture!   
4, 5. In Him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. Christ is still not understood. Jesus is still not known. How should darkness understand the Light of God? It opposes the Light of Godit has to flee before light, but it does not, it cannot understand the Light of God! O God, work a miracle in our dark hearts and fill them with the Light of Christ!   
6, 7. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through Him might believe. That is our business, too. We who are ministers sent from God bear witness of the Light, that all men through Him may believe. Oh, how often we go home and cry, Who has believed our report? We do not ask you to believe in usno, but in our Master, whose heralds we are. If we can lead you to faith in Him, we shall be glad, indeed! But, if not, we will sorrow because we have missed our mark and failed in our purpose.   
8, 9. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. That was the true Light, which lights every man that comes into the world. If any man has saving Light, true Light, he gets it through Christ. There is no other Lightall other light is but darkness visible. The Light in which we see God comes from Jesus.   
10. He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not. Strange was it that the Creator came to His own earth and yet He was unknown. Men mistook Him, they hated Him, they crucified Him whom they ought to have entertained with sacred hospitality and worshipped with holy loyalty.   
11, 12. He came unto His own, and His own received Him not. But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name. All men are not the sons of God! The doctrine of the universal Fatherhood is utterly untrue! They only become the sons of God who receive Christ and believe on His name. Otherwise they are heirs of wrath, even as others   
*To them gave He power to become the sons of God.*

13. Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. There is another birth beside the natural one never does the birth of the flesh make us Christians! If our ancestry should be a line of saints, yet are we born sinnerswe must be born again if we are to become saints. If we could trace our pedigree to a perfect man, if such there is, yet the birth by the flesh would not avail us. Sons of God are, born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

14. And the Word was made flesh. Here was the Incarnation of Him who made all things. He that is God, was made flesh.   
14. And dwelt among us, (and weThe Apostles   
14. Beheld His glory, the glory as of the Only-Begotten of the Father), full of Grace and truth. Oh, all you who would know Christ, learn that He is worth the knowing! He is full of Grace for your sinnership and full of truth for your ignorance! He can cleanse and He can teach. There is everything in Him that you need. You shall not be deceived, for He is full of the Truth of Godyou shall not be rejected, for He is full of Grace.   
15-18. John bore witness of Him and cried, saying, This was He of whom I spoke, He that comes after me is preferred before me: for He was before me. And of His fullness have all we received, and Grace for Grace. For the Law was given by Moses, but Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. No man has seen God at any time. He is too high, too spiritual to be perceived by human senses.   
18. The only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him. What of God we need to know, we may see in Christ enough to save us, enough to sanctify us, enough to make us all like the only-begotten Son of the Father.   
19, 20. And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who are you? And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ. With indignation he must have repelled the idea that he was the Messiah   
**I am not the Christ.**   
21-23. And they asked him, What then? Are you Elijah? And he said, I am not. Are you that Prophet? And he answered, No. Then said they unto him, Who are you? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What say you of yourself? He said, I am the voiceHumbly he reduces himself to a voice, but he was not a voice and nothing more. There was much that was mighty and wise in that voice.   
23-27. Of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the Prophet Isaiah. And they which were sent were of the Pharisees. And they asked him, and said unto him, Why baptize you, then, if you are not that Christ, nor Elijah, neither that Prophet? John answered them, saying, I baptize with water: but there stands One among you, whom you know not; He it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoelaces I am not worthy to unloose. How John hides himself behind his Master! He was a most worthy man, a truly great man, but he counted himself unworthy of the most menial service for Christ and felt honored by filling the office of a slave to unloosen His Masters shoelaces. It is better to be the slave of Christ than to rule vast empires! He who truly serves Him is glorified thereby.   
28, 29. These things were done in Bethabara beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing. The next day John saw Jesus coming unto Him, and says, Behold the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world. Now is he bringing out his message! Now is he pointing out his Master.   
30, 31. This is He of whom I said, After me comes a Man which is preferred before me: for He was before me. And I knew Him not. John knew Jesus very well, but he did not know Him as the Sent One of God, the Messiah, till after he had received the sign and token at His baptism. I knew Him not.   
31-34. But that He should be made manifest to Israel, therefore have I come, baptizing with water. And John bore record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from Heaven like a dove, and it abode upon Him. And I knew Him not: but He that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom you shall see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, the same is He which baptizes with the Holy Spirit. And I saw and bare record that this is the Son of God. Jesus and John must have been well acquainted with one anotherthey were closely relatedbut John was not to know anybody as the Messiah till he received the token from God. When he saw that token, then he officially knew and he bore instant witnessThis is the Son of God.   
35, 36. Again, the next day, John stood with two of his disciples. And looking at Jesus as He walked. With holy reverence, with loving awe, gazing upon this extraordinary Personas He walked   
36, 37. He said, Behold the Lamb of God! And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. This is our one business tonight, to cry, Behold the Lamb of God!

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BEHOLD THE LAMB!   
NO. 1060

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, JULY 14 1872, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**Behold the Lamb of God!   
John 1:36.**

IT IS the preachers principal businessI think I might say, his only businessto cry, Behold the Lamb of God! For this reason was John born and sent into the world, and such were the prophecies which went before concerning him. If he had been the most eloquent preacher of repentance. If he had been the most earnest declaimer against the sins of the times, he would, nevertheless, have missed his lifework if he had forgotten to say, Behold the Lamb of God. He did well when he baptized the repenting crowd. He spoke nobly when he faced the Pharisees and was a true hero when he rebuked Herod. But above all his chief errand was to herald the Messiah, to bear witness to the Son of God!

What we have said of John we may say of every God-sent ministerhe is sent to bear witness to the Christ of God and whatever else he may do, if he does not this continually, habitually, earnestlyhe is not fulfilling the errand for which his Master sent him, but has turned aside to baser ends. When any one of us who are called ministers shall die and come before the Lord to give our account, it will be a sorry thing for us if we can only say, Lord, I have preached the dogmas of the Church to which I belonged, unless we can also add that we have directed men to the living Savior.

Vain will it be to have argued with accurate logic and persuaded with lofty rhetoric unless we have uplifted Christ among the people. It will be idle to say, I have preached against the skepticism of the times. I have rebuked the sins which raged around me and have proclaimed what I knew of the glory of God in Nature and in Providence, for our chief and distinguishing work is to declare the name of the Lord Jesus and the power of His precious blood. As the stars called the Pointers always point to the Pole star, so must we always point to the Redeemer.

I think the minister who has failed to cry, Behold the Lamb of God, may expect at the last to be cut in pieces and to have his portion with the tormentors. I can scarcely conceive a doom too terrible for the man who dazzled his hearers with oratorical fireworks when he ought to have lifted up the Cross, or mocked immortal souls with the carved stone of his elocution when they were starving for the Bread of Heaven. Sermons without Christ condemn the preacher and delude the hearer. Sermons which do not point to Christ in them will be as hard to answer for as blasphemy or murder when the Judge is on His great white throne. It is cruel to amuse with trifles those whose souls are in jeopardy of eternal fire! Playing with mens souls is murderous work and truly, if the Lamb of God is not preached, the ministry is playing with souls, if not worse.

John, however, most thoroughly discharged his lifework, for he was ever saying, Behold the Lamb of God. Notice in the text the attitude of the preacher, for it is very instructive. Looking upon Jesus as He walked, John said, Behold the Lamb of God! The preachers eyes should be upon his Master while he points to his Master. They preach Christ best who see Him best. John had his own eyes fastened upon Jesus and therefore he did, by his own example as well as by his words, say, Behold the Lamb of God.

If you will take your place in a crowded street and stand for a few minutes looking at a certain object in the heavens, or gaze upward as if something were there to be seen, you will soon find that without asking others to do the same, a company will gather round you and begin to look in the same direction. Indeed, a vast crowd might be collected by no other action than by your gazing intently into the air! So John, in addition to his saying, Behold the Lamb of God, was doing the best thing to attract others to behold Himwhen he fixed his own eyes on Jesuswith a fixed wondering, admiring, adoring gaze.

John had no eyes for anyone but the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world, and therefore his words had point and power in them. And note that Johns eyes were upon Christ not only when Christ was coming to him, but as He walked by him! Well may the preacher have his Master before him when his Master is cheering him with His fellowship and honoring him with His Presence. But on this occasion Jesus was walking alone, as though in meditation, with His eyes probably bent upon the ground. It was not meet that He should always be coming to JohnHe had done that once and so had put an honor upon His servant.

But this time He came not to him lest men should think that He had a dependence upon JohnHe walked in quiet musing as though His thoughts were otherwise occupied. Nevertheless the Baptist had not forgotten his Lord, but again pointed Him out. If the Lord denies to the preacher His comfortable Presence; if no light of fellowship shines forth from the brow of the Crucified, it is still ours whenever and wherever we preach to let the eye of faith realize Christ as present and still to cry to others with a heart that palpitates in union with our words, Behold the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world.

Even when I preach in chains I would labor to honor Jesus, looking to Him as the End and Object of every word I utter! It is mine to preach a Savior in whom I believe, whom having not seen, I love. I am looking to Him now for everything, even as I would have you do. I see in Him superlative beauties which I wish you to see and I worship a Divinity in Him which I desire you to worship. I preach not to you an unknown God or an untried Savior! There is something notable in our text as to the hearers. This was a brief but weighty sermon, worthy to be preached a thousand times. Nobody needs a new sermon when, Behold the Lamb of God, is the old one!

John had delivered this same discourse before an assembled crowd, but now he had only two hearers and those two were not unconverted personsthey were his own disciplesand they were at least very near to the kingdom if not already in it. Yet to the solitary two and those already discipled he had only the same message to deliver, Behold the Lamb of God. He was a man of rich mind and ready utterance yet he kept to this one point in all companies. It is thought that if we go into the theater to preach to the mob, we must be sure to preach Christlet me ask you what subject would be fitter for an assembly of saints? I pray you tell me!

It has been said that he who preaches in the street ought to confine himself to the simple Gospelmy Brothers, in what place would that subject be inappropriate or unprofitable? Paul knew nothing among the Corinthians save Jesus Christ and Him crucifiedthe resolve is a safe one for all companies. In this respect some preachers know too much and the sooner they join the holy know-nothings the better. Christ is appropriate as a subject for two disciples as well as for a thousand scoffers, for while He is the Resurrection to those who are dead, He is also the Life of those who have been already quickened.

No subject is more sweet, more refreshing, more inspiriting, more sanctifying to the saint than the Cross of our dying Lord! The sinner needs it if he would be saved, but the saint requires it that he may persevere, advance, conquer and attain perfection. Give me that harp and let my fingers never leave its stringsthe harp whose strings resound the love of Christ alone! To harp upon the name of Jesus is the blessed monotony of a true ministrya monotony more full of variety than all other subjects besides. When Jesus is the first, the midst, and the last, yes, All in All, then do we make full proof of our ministry. We do well when we are able to say, of the things which we have spoken, this is the sum, we have such an High Priest who is set on the right hand of the Throne of the Majesty in the heavens. May Christ be All in All in all our ministries, for so shall we prove that God has called us to testify concerning His Son Jesus!

This may serve as an introduction to our subject. Now let us take the text itself. John says, Behold the Lamb of God. And first let us behold Jesus and know Him to be the Lamb of God. It will be well to be fully assured upon that point and heartily to accept the witness of God concerning His Son. When we have done so, let us secondly behold Himthat is contemplate Him and humbly and attentively view Him as the great Propitiation, the true Sacrifice for sin. Then thirdly, beholding Him again, let us gather instruction from the Redeemers appearance as the Lamb of God. And fourthly, let us behold Him, that is, reverently adore Him in His blessed capacity as the Lamb slain.

I. First, then, let us behold our Lord and LEARN THAT HE IS THE LAMB OF GOD. What does the term, the Lamb of God, mean? The Hebrews are accustomed that a thing is of God when they mean that it is the greatest, the noblest, the chief of the kind. For instance, they call the cedars, trees of God, and the thunder is the voice of God. Therefore we may understand, in the first place, by the expression, the Lamb of God, that Jesus is the chief of all sacrifices, the first of all offerings by which atonement is made to God for sin.

And truly He is so. He stands above all others because He contains all others. All other sacrifices of Gods ordaining were but pictures, representations, symbols and shadows of Himself. There is only one Sacrifice for sinthere never was another and there never can be. All those offerings under the Aaronic priesthood which were presented because of sin were only representations of the one Sacrificethey were that and nothing more. Jesus far excels them all. Beloved, if you need to see the Lamb that Abel offered on the altar, the lamb because of which God accepted his faith and had respect unto him, you must see Jesus Christ, for we are accepted only in the Beloved.

God has respect unto any man who brings this Sacrificebut unto any who bring a bloodless sacrifice, such as the priests of Rome foolishly do when they offer the unbloody sacrifice of the mass, unto them God has no respect and never can have. The blood of Jesus once presented has forever put away sin and no further sin-offering can be brought. Whoever rests in Jesus as the true and only Sacrifice is accepted in his faith. If you desire to see the Lamb which Noah offered when he came out of the ark, together with other sacrifices of which it is said that, The Lord smelled a sweet savor of rest, you must look to Jesus Christfor the bullocks, rams and lambs of Noah all pointed to the one sweet savor offering of Christ Jesus offered upon the Cross, where God and the souls of all Believers meet in blessed union and find sweetest rest.

This, Beloved, is the Lamb of which Abraham spoke when he said to Isaac, My son, God will provide Himself a Lamb. And today if you would understand the paschal supper, first of all, spread on that dread night when the destroying angel went through Egypt and smote the first born of all her landif you would know who it is whose blood is the true Passover when it is sprinkled upon the conscience and whose flesh is meat, indeed, when it is fed upon by the children of Godyou must look to Jesus, for He is the Lamb of Gods Passover.

And if, pursuing your studies, your thoughts should turn into the tabernacle of old, or into Solomons Temple and you should see each morning a lamb slaughtered and its blood poured out, and each evening the same sacrifice repeatedif you desire to know what was intended by the morning and evening lambs you will find that they were but lambs of men, lambs presented by men, but they pointed to the Lamb of God in whom their teaching is all summed up. He is the Substance of that of which they were but the shadow. Jesus is the Lamb of the morning slain from before the foundation of the world and He is the Lamb of the evening offered up in these last days for His people.

Thus might we speak of all other sacrifices and show that in Jesus they are all fulfilled. Atonement for sin is truly and in very deed to be found in the Son of God. In Him, alone, is there remission, for in His blood, alone, is there efficacy to satisfy the Law of God. Stern as the Truth of God is, we ought never to flinch from repeating itthat sin cannot be put away under the moral government of God without punishment. This is a rule from which there is no variation and there should be none, for if justice is left unsatisfied, the foundations of society are out of course.

Infinite Wisdom has found for us a door of escape by the way of a vicarious Sacrifice, but that way does not violate justice. Seeing that we originally fell by the sin of another, namely, our representative Adam, God has seen fit that we should rise through the righteousness and sufferings of another, namely, Jesus, the second Adam. Because Jesus was one with His people, and their federal Head, it was just to allow Him to suffer in their place and He has so done. Apart from this, every man must bear his own burden of sin and punishment. The only possible way by which a man can be forgiven his sin is by that sin being punished in his legal Representativethe Lord Jesus.

Jesus has borne, Himself, what every believing sinner ought to have borne, or an equivalent for it, sufficient to recompense the injury done to eternal justice. No other person could be a Substitute for our sin, for no other is our Head and Representative before God, and yet Himself innocent. There is none other name given under Heaven by which we may be saved. The Lord Jesus is of God appointed and provided to be the one vicarious Sufferer, the true bearer away of the sin of the world by enduring its penalty in His own Person so that whoever believes in Him is redeemed from the punishment of sin. That is the Gospel!

I would sooner state it in the most simple language than have the power to deliver an impromptu poem, though it should excel the productions of Homer or Milton. There is more of precious truth and priceless learning in that faithful saying that, Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners than in the most profound discourse, or the most stately epic. Be thankful that you have heard it! Be thankful that there is forgiveness with God because Jesus Christ has become the Savior of men. O fellow Sinner, you may approach your God without being plunged into suffering yourself, or needing to bring a victim with you, for Jesus Christ has been brought as a lamb to the slaughter and His soul has been made an offering for sin! Tremble not, but receive the reconciliation effected by the Lamb of God! Come boldly, for the way is open and man is invited to approach his God.

Moreover, our Savior is called the Lamb of God, not only, par excellence, because He is, beyond all others such, but, secondly, because He is the Lamb of Gods appointing. God from all eternity appointed the Lord Jesus! He was chosen and ordained to be the great Sacrifice for Sin. So was it decreed and written of Him in the volume of the Book, that oldest of books, I delight to do Your will O God. In the fullness of time Jesus came to do the Fathers will and therefore it is plain that there was such a will to do, such a decree to fulfill. Jesus is elect, precious!

Peter tells us that the Lord Jesus is a Lamb without blemish and without spot, who verily was foreordained from before the foundation of the world. Jesus is the choice of the Father. Our hearts rejoice that it is so, for when we rely upon Jesus Christ to save us, we trust in One whom God has appointed to save His people. If, as a poor guilty sinner, I leave my sin upon Christ, the Lamb of God, I leave it where God has bid me cast it, namely, on the appointed Scapegoat. I rest in a Sacrifice which God, Himself, ordained of old to be the Sacrifice for sin. O Soul, there can be no question that if you come to the Father in the way in which He, Himself, appoints, you come acceptably!

For if you were not accepted, you might well say, O God, You have set forth Christ as a Savior and yet You do not save men through Him. You have bid Him say, Him that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out, yet I have come and You have cast me out! This is far from You, Lord. Such an event shall never happen. No human lips shall utter such a complaint. Gods appointment is the guarantee of the acceptance of everyone that believes in Jesus.

Thirdly, Christ is called the Lamb of God because He is of Gods providing. The Father not only appointed His Son to be the Sacrifice for sin, but He gave Him freely to be such. Out of the bosom of God came Jesus Christ as loves richest blessing. He is the Fathers only begotten, Gods dear Son, and to us, His unspeakable gift. He spared not His own Son, but freely delivered Him up for us all. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the Propitiation of our sins.

Men were bid to provide the sacrifice under the Law, but the one Sacrifice of the Gospel is the gift of God. This is the record that God has given to us, eternal life, and that life is in His Son. It endears Jesus to us to know that He is the dearest pledge of Jehovahs love to His chosen. And then, fourthly, He is not only of Gods appointing and Gods giving, but He is of Gods offering. Let us never forget that Jesus Christ was not presented to God by a human priestthere might, then, have been some mistake in the sacrifice. It was not left to the sons of Aaron to offer up this true sacrifice to God. We may be quite sure that the Offering was presented in fit order and in an acceptable wayit is written, It pleased the Father to bruise Him, He has put Him to grief. The Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

God Himself had a hand in the sufferings of His Son! What does that cry mean, My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? but that God, Himself, had turned away from Him and so had brought His soul into the extremity of woe? What do the Scriptures say? Is it not the Fathers voice which says, Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd, and against the Man that is My Fellow? Oh, Beloved, when I think of this, that God chose His Son to be the Atonement, that He gave His Sonand then, Himself, did, as it were, like another Abraham, offer up His own IsaacI feel that the Sacrifice must be acceptable and all sufficient, so that he who rests in it need not have a shadow of a doubt but that his soul is saved!

One other reflection herethis Sacrifice is also of Gods setting forth to the sons of men. Remember the text, Whom God has set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God. When we, as Gods ambassadors, tell you of Jesus Christ, we do not so in our name but we do our Lords bidding and God Himself, by us, is setting Christ forth, showing Him, revealing Him, exhibiting Him and bidding you come to Him. Behold, says God I have given Him for a Covenant to the people, a Leader and Commander to the people.

This is Gods will, that Christ should be made known to the ends of the earth! Everywhere Jesus is to be preached, whether men will bow before Him or not. We are quite sure we are doing Gods will when we are setting forth Christ, for we are bid to go into all the world and preach Him to every creature. Assuredly, what the Lord thus sets forth He intends to give to those who seek it. There are no mockeries with God! He does not exhibit bread and refuse it to the hungry, or set garments before the naked and refuse it to them. Happy are the men who see Jesus set forth manifestly crucified among them, for they have good ground to hope in Him!

Now then, Sinner, look at this. You want to be rid of your sin. You are conscious of it this morning, and you do confess it with shame. Well then, Gods way of pardoning you is that your sin be laid on Jesus. As far as you are concerned, you can obtain all the merit of the great Atonement of Calvary by a simple act of faith. As of old the Jew laid his hands upon the victim and then the victim was his substitute, so if you do but lay your trembling hands upon Christ, He suffered for you! He was an Atonement for you, and what a blessed Atonement! Let us rehearse that point again He is the Chief of all sacrifices, the Sacrifice of Gods ordaining, of Gods bestowing, of Gods presenting, and now of Gods setting forth to you!

What more would you have? In order that all things might be of God in this matter, from first to last, Jesus is the Lamb of Godis not this well? Jesus is Gods own chosen Saviorwhat can be better? On what surer ground would you wish to rest? O that you were led to receive Him now to be yours forever! Jesus is my All, and I am a man as you are! Why should He not be your All, also? I feel as if I could tarry here just a minute and pass round among all this audience this one solemn question for each one to answerwill you accept Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God, to be unto your soul the Lamb of God which takes away your sin? Come, what do you say?

It is ours to point to Him and to bear our witnesswill you accept our testimony? Truly He is a great God and a Savior! We have trusted in Him and we are not confused. Oh, if the Spirit of God sweetly leads you, now, to say from your heart

*My faith does lay her hand   
On that dear head of Yours   
While like a penitent I stand,   
And there confess my sin*

it is indeed well with you both for time and eternity . Be of good cheer your sins, which are many, are forgiven you! Go your way, you are accepted in the Beloved! Your iniquities are blotted out like a cloudnot one of them shall be mentioned against you any more forever! O blessed Spirit of God, out of Your great mercy grant that many and many a heart may lay hold upon the Lord Jesus at this hour!

II. But now we most pass on to a second point. Behold the Lamb of God, that is, let us CONTEMPLATE JESUS UNDER THAT CHARACTER. Let us meditate upon Him for a few minutes and then let us constantly fix our thoughts upon Him. Jesus Christ, as the atoning Sacrifice, ought to be the principal Object of every Believers thoughts. There are other subjects in the world which we must think of, for we are yet in the bodybut this one Subject ought to engross our souls, and, as the birds fly to their nests so ought we, whenever our minds are let looseto fly back to Jesus Christ.

He should be the main Topic of each days consideration and of each nights reflection. We might, with truthfulness, transfer the words of the first Psalm, and say, Blessed is the man whose delight is in the Christ of God and who meditates in Him both day and night; for he shall be as a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither, and whatever he does shall prosper.

To meditate much upon the Lamb of God is to occupy your minds with the grandest Subject of thought in the universe! All others are flat compared with Him! What are the sciences but human ignorance set forth in order? What are the classics but the choicest of Babels jargon when compared with His teachings? What are the poets but dreamers, and philosophers but fools in His Presence? Jesus alone is wisdom, beauty, eloquence and power! No theme for contemplation can at all equal this noblest of all topicsGod allied to human nature! Just thinkGod the Infinite Incarnate among sons of men! Marvel at God in union with humanity taking human sin--out of stupendous love condescending to be numbered with the transgressors and to suffer for sin that was not his own!

O Wonder and Romance, if men desire you, they may find you here! O Love, if men seek you, here alone, they may behold you! O Wisdom, if men dig for you, here shall they discover your purest ore! O Happiness, if men pine for you, you dwell with the Christ of God and they enjoy you who live in Him. O Lord Jesus, You are all we need!

*Such as find You find such sweetness   
Deep, mysterious and unknown;   
Far above all worldly pleasures,   
If they were to meet in one.*

You may search the heavens above and the earth beneath. You may penetrate the secret mysteries to find out the callow principles and the beginnings of things, but you shall find more in the Man of Nazareth, the equal with God, than in all else besides!

He is the Sum and Substance of all truth, the Essence of all creation, the Soul of life! He is the Light of light, the Heaven of heavens, and yet He is greater, far, than all this, or all else that I could utter! There is no subject in the world so vast, so sublime, so pure, so elevating, so Divine! Give me to behold the Lord Jesus and my eyes see every precious thing! Brothers and Sisters, no subject so well balances the soul as Jesus, the Lamb of God! Other themes disturb the mental equilibrium and overload one faculty at the expense of others.

I have noticed in theology that certain Brethren meditate almost exclusively upon doctrine, and I think it is not severely critical to say that they have a tendency to become hard, rigid, and far too militant. It is to be feared that some doctrinalists miss the spirit of Christ in fighting for the words of Christ. God forbid I should speak against earnestly contending for the true faith, but still, without fellowship with the living Savior we may, through controversy, become ill-developed and one-sided.

I think I have noticed that Brethren who give all their thoughts to experience are also somewhat out of square. Some of them dwell upon the experience of human corruption until they acquire a melancholy temperament and are at the same time apt to censure those who enjoy the liberty of the children. Other Brethren turn all their attention to the brighter side of experience and these are not always free from the spirit of carnal security which leads them to look down upon trembling and anxious hearts as though they could not possess true faith in God. I think, also, that I have noticed that those who pay all their homage at the shrine of practical theology have a tendency to become legal and to exchange the privileges of Believers for the bondage of servants. This also is a grievous fault.

But when a man takes Christ Jesus crucified to be his minds main thought he has all things in onedoctrine, experience and practice combined! As Canaan contained Carmel, and Sharon, and Eshcol, and Hermon, so Jesus comprehends all good things. If the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world is the object of our thoughts we have wine and milk, butter and honey, the fat of the kidneys, wheat and oil out of the rock, all in one. A bundle of myrrh is my beloved unto me, a cluster of camphor in the vineyards of Engedi.

*All human beauties, all Divine*

*In my Beloved meet and shine.*   
Beloved, this, indeed, is the most necessary Subject of contemplation that can be brought before you! You may forget many other things without serious damage, and even upon important matters you may somewhat err and yet be safebut you must live upon Christ, your souls must meditate on Himor else you have left the bread from the feast and missed the water from the well! The crucified Savior is as necessary for our meditation as the air is for our breathing. The blood of Jesus is the life-blood of true religiona bloodless faith is a lifeless faith.

I stood yesterday by the little open grave of one of our orphans and it said far more to me than I could say to those who mourned around it, for it reminded me that there is nothing worth living for beneath the sky, since all things are as a dream. Then I thought within myself, as I looked on the poor orphan lads around meyes, there is something to live forto help the poor and train the young, and to make men holier and happier. But then I remembered that they, too, like myself, were dying creatures and therefore even the benefit received by them would also pass away. To live, then, for men is, as far as eternity is concerned, an unsatisfactory thing unless there is some higher light in which to view it.

But when the heart lives for Jesus it is not less philanthropic, for it loves men for His sake, but its object melts into the Divine, for we love God when we love Jesus since He is very God of very God. Beloved, this leads me to the very marrow of the matterto believe in Jesus as Divine is essential to real Christianityand one of the distinguishing subjects of faith which separate Christians from other men. Individuals are to be found who possess great admiration for the Prophet of Nazareth but they know Him not as the Son of God, or as the Lamb of God. They deny His Divinity and reject His Atonement.

With fair words and oily speeches they compliment His Character and bedaub His name with their worthless praises. Yet they are not Christians and the name is dishonored when they wear it! Of late we have heard deniers of our Lords Divinity spoken of as Christian Brethren. Now my common sense does not enable me to see how a man can be called a Christian who rejects Christ! Charity by all manner of means, but not falsehood! Union certainly, but not union in deadly error! Confederacy with those who do not believe Jesus Christ to be God and deny His atoning Sacrifice? It is treason to the Lord of Glory!

Such persons may be excellent Muslims, or Jews, or pure Theists, but they are not Christians! And if they wrongly assume that title we ought not to concede it to them. In this matter he that is not with our Lord is against Him, and he that gathers not with Him scatters abroad. Without a distinct and hearty recognition of our Lords Deity and Atonement, how can a man be a partaker of Christ at all? True Christians have no questions about these Truths of GodJesus is to them the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world, and the Son of God whom the world shall yet adore!

III. Now let us pass on to a third run of thought, but indulge in it very briefly. Let us behold the Lamb of God, that is, GATHER INSTRUCTION FROM JESUS UNDER THAT ASPECT. I beg you to gather some doctrinal instruction. If the Sacrifice provided by God for human sin must be none other than the Son of God Himself, then sin is a gigantic evil, and necessarily the punishment of sin is stupendous, too.

I observe with pain the attempt that is made to lower the meaning of Scripture upon the subject of the penalty due to sin. It has been usually believed to be everlasting, but this is now denieddenied in the teeth of express Scriptures! Now the moment we begin to mitigate our thought of Hells terrors, we also lower our idea of sins eviland with it we also decrease our estimate of the Savior. All things in the temple of Truth are to scale. If you take the inch scale which now seems to be getting popular you diminish the dimensions throughout! A little Hell involves a little Atonement. But, to be consistent, grant a Divine Savior an infinite Sacrifice and you grant the infinite demerit of sin and then the eternity of future punishment is seen to be consistent.

All these Truths in Scripture lean the one upon the other and your judgment upon every other will be affected by your opinion of any one. Do not err, I pray you. Uplift the Christ of God and believe in the Lamb of God as none other than very God of very God and have Him in high reverence whatever that reverence may involve. What though your inmost soul is awed with the deepest dread and made to tremble at the fate of those who reject the Savior and perish in their sins, yet seek not to save your feelings at your Saviors cost.

Moreover, what a conception of the love of God the gift of the Lord Jesus for our salvation gives us. Despite the terrible wrath of God against sin, He loved the sinner so much that He gave His only son to die for his redemption! Here is love! Let us infer from that gift His willingness to answer prayer. He that spared not His own Son but freely delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things. Let us also see here sure proof of the security of the saints, for if Christ is the Lamb of God and no less than Divine, how shall they perish for whom such a Sacrifice was offered? If it is the blood of the Son of God which has bought us, we must be most effectually redeemed beyond all fear of perishing. So far you get doctrinal Truth from beholding the Lamb of God.

Now, if you desire experimental aid look to the Lamb of God, also. Is there a heart here troubled with sin? Do not meditate upon your

sin hoping to find comfort from any consideration connected with itas well look for Heaven in Hell! Do not look to your own resources for consolationas well search the Arctic ocean for tropical heat! Behold the Lamb of God! Sin vanishes when the Savior appears. Are you tormented with the power of sin? Beloved, if you long to conquer sin within you, behold the Lamb of God! Crucified, your sin shall be upon that Cross where Jesus died. Contemplations of the Savior are the death of sinno other weapon will destroy them.

If you suffer today from personal affliction and need fresh strength to bear it, Behold the Lamb of God! His way was much rougher and darker than yourspluck up courage, He will bear you through it! He is familiar with all your griefs, His pitying eyes behold your sorrows. And oh, if you are getting weary in the battle of life and tired of serving God, Behold the Lamb of God! wrestling unto blood, and your courage will return! Reaper in the summers heat, see Him as He grasps with that pierced hand the sickle! What strides He makes! How untiringly He labors till His bloody sweat falls on the ground. Up and do your reaping, too, working at His side!

Builder in the House of God, if you dont see the temple rising as you desire, do not lay down your trowel or the mallet, but see the MasterBuilder standing there with indefatigable perseverance following out His glorious design! Let not self-denial or self-sacrifice be difficult when the Lamb of God is before you. Let not perseverance be difficult, or shame, or scorn be hard to endureor defeat, or death itself be impossible to triumph inwhen the Lamb of God is before them! He conquered upon Golgotha, perhaps you will conquer there. Only keep your eye upon the Lamb of God and this will make you strong to do and to endure!

I might thus continue urging children of God to their profit to look to the Lamb of God, but I shall only add this, that if at any time we grow discouraged about Gods work and are afraid that it will not succeed and so on, the very best encouragement for us is to Behold the Lamb of God! You are afraid that sin will conquer in your soulhow can it, when Jesus died for you? Sin seemed to win the day when Christ was dead, but He rose again and so shall you rise, and you shall be more than a conqueror!

And in this world is it not a very weary business to be a minister of Christ today? If I might have my choice I would sooner follow any avocation, so far as the comfort of it is concerned, than this of ministering to the sons of men! For we beat the air and this deaf generation will not hear us! What is this perverse generation the better for after years and years and years of preaching? This land is going back to the foul doctrines which its fathers would not bearthose who know better are in concert and continue in fellowship with the priests of Rome! The world is not worth preaching towe have piped unto it and it has not danced! We have mourned unto it, but it has not lamented! It needs an Elijah, a man of fire and thunder to deal with such an age as this!

But for all that, there is no room for discouragement, for the Truth of God will win the day! It is in the hands of One who cannot fail or falter. He shall not fail or be discouraged till He has set judgment in the earth and the isles wait for His Law. The fight may seem to hang in the scales today, but the conquest is sure to come unto Him whose right it is. He shall gather all the scepters of kings beneath His arm in one mighty sheaf and take their diadems from off their brows, and be Himself crowned with many crowns, for God has said it, and Heaven and earth shall pass away but every promise of His must and shall be fulfilled!

Push on, then, through hosts of enemies, you warriors of the Cross! Fight up the hill, you soldiers of Christ, through the smoke and through the dust! You may not see your banner just now, neither do you hear the trumpet that rings out the note of victory, but the mist shall clear away and you shall gain the summit of the hilland your foes shall fly before you, and the King Himself shall come and you shall be rewarded who have continued steadfast in His service.

IV. Now the last thought was to be this. Behold the Lamb of God WITH REVERENCE. I will not dwell upon it for I have not time. Lift up your eyes and worship Him now. He exists, He is as truly there in Heaven as He was here on earth. Behold Him! Worship Him! Trust Him! Love Him, for be this remembered, He will come before long and that which we shall have to dread if we are unbelievers will be the wrath of the Lamb!

Read through the book of Revelation and you shall find there, I think, more than 20 times the Lord described as a Lamb. The song is the song of Moses and of the Lamb. Worship is given unto the Lamb, for He is worthy. He it is that takes the book and looses the seven seals, and it is the Lamb that shall come to judge the quick and the dead. Therefore kiss the Son lest He be angry and you perish from the way while His wrath is kindled but a little. Worship Him at this hour for He comes before long! As the Lord lives before whom I stand, He will summon every one of you to His bar. Take heed that He is not an object of terror to you as He will be if you continue in unbelief, but turn unto Him that He may be your joy and gladness in the day of His appearing! Amen.

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THE FIRST FIVE DISCIPLES   
NO. 570

**DELIVERED ON SUNDAY MORNING, MAY 15, 1864, BY THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**And the two disciples heard him speak and they followed Jesus. Then Jesus turned and saw them following and said unto them, What do you seek? They said unto Him, Rabbi, (which is to say,**

**being interpreted, Master), where do You dwell? He said unto them, Come and see. They came and saw where He dwelt and abode with Him that day for it was about the tenth hour. One of the two which heard John speak and followed Him was Andrew, Simon Peters brother. He first found his own brother, Simon, and said unto him, We have found the Messiah, (which is, being interpreted, the Christ). And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, He said, You are Simon the son of Jona: you shall be called Cephas, (which is by interpretation, A Stone). The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee and find Philip and say unto him, Follow Me. Now Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael and said unto him, We have found Him, of whom Moses in the Law and the Prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip said unto him, Come and see. Jesus saw Nathanael coming to Him and said of him, Behold an Israelite, indeed, in whom is no guile. Nathanael said unto Him, Why do You   
know me? Jesus answered and said unto him,   
Before that Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you. Nathanael answered and said unto Him, Rabbi, You are the Son of God, You are the King of Israel. Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said unto you, I saw you under the fig tree, do you believe? You shall see greater things than these, And He said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you,   
Hereafter you shall see Heaven open and   
the angels of God ascending and descending   
upon the Son of Man.   
John 1:37-51.**

IF it is true that Order is Heavens first law, I think it must be equally true that variety is the second law of Heaven. The line of beauty is not a straight line but always the curve. The way of Gods procedure is not uniform but diversified. You see this with a glance, when you look at the creation around us. God has not made all creatures of one species but He has created beasts, birds, fishes, insects, reptiles. All flesh truly is not the same flesh, neither are all bodies of the same order. The dull dead earth, itself, is full of variety. Gems sparkle not all with the same ray. The grosser and less precious rocks are marked and veined. Each one according to its own fashion. In the vegetable world what a variety of plants, shrubs, herbs, flowers and trees we have about us! In any one of the kingdoms of Nature, whether it is the animal, vegetable, or mineral, you shall find so many subdivisions that it would need a long schooling to

classify them and a lifetime would not suffice to understand them all.

Consider the winged creatures which flit through the airwhat a diversity there is between the tiny humming bird, which seems to be but a living mass of gems, and the eagle which, with soaring wings ascends to the sky and sports with the lighting! The whole world is full of marvels and no two marvels alike. You shall never be able to find God repeating Himself. This great Master may often paint two pictures which seem alike, but investigated with the microscope, what differences at once are revealed!

Even those stars which seem to shine with rays of the same brilliance are discovered by the aid of the telescope to be of different colors, forms and orbits. No, even the very clouds are piled in varied forms and the masses of nebulae which make up the Milky Way are distinguishable from each other. God, in no instance that we can ever find, has used the same mold a second time. He is so affluent of designs, so abundant in the wisdom that devises, so prolific in plans that even when He would accomplish the same end He chooses to take another road to it. And that new road is quite as direct as those by which He has formerly reached His purpose.

Certainly this observation holds good in Providence. What strange diversity there has been in the dealings of God with His Church! When He has chastened His people He has scarcely ever made use of the same rod twice. At one time Midianites shall come up and devour the land of Israel. Another day the Philistines with their giants shall invade the country. Then shall come the Babylonians and the Assyrians. Later the Roman power shall tread Judea under foot. And as the rods of His chastisement have been always different on the great scale, so

you have found it on the little scale.

God has seldom chastened you twice in the same way. You could trace diversities either in the manner of the blow or the instrument you were struck with, or in the part of your mind which seemed to be the most affected by His chastisements. In deliverers, again, how great a varietyyou scarce find two alike! God raises up a Gideon, but Jephthah is not like Gideon and Samson is not like Jephthah, nor is David to be compared to Samson or Gideon. They are all diverse. And their weapons are varied, too. One man has to use an ass jawbone, another must use a sling and a stoneone shall be content with the ox goad, while another must draw the dagger.

Different methods God ordains as well as different forms of man. And He delivers His people just according to His own will, but ever in a different form. Well may Providence be so diverse when you consider that men themselves whom God uses to be His principal instruments are so unlike each other. There are not merely the great differences of race and of nationality, nor even the differences of birth and education, but we are all different in constitutionno two minds being alike. There is an individuality about every one of us which will prevent our ever being mistaken for anyone else.

We might by accident be undistinguished, but let us be known and very soon important differences will be discovered. God is ever the God of variety and He will be so to the end of the chapter. He will do new things before He rolls up the book of historywe shall see new acts of the LordHe will fight His battles after fresh methods, raise up deliverers different from any who have come before and will exalt and glorify His name upon new instruments of music. Let us expect it. He is the God of variety, both in Nature and in Providence.

My text is a very clear illustration that the same law applies in the work of Grace. There is ever the same kind of operation and yet ever a difference in the manner of operation. There is always the same Worker in the conversion of the soul and yet different methods for breaking the heart and binding it up again are continually employed. Every sinner must be quickened by the same life, made obedient to the same Gospel, washed in the same blood, clothed in the same righteousness, filled with the same Divine energy and eventually taken up to the same Heaven. And yet in the conversion of no two sinners will you find matters precisely the same.

From the first dawn of the Divine life to the day when it is consummated in the noontide of perfect sanctification in Heaven, you shall find that God works this way in that one, and that way in the other, and by another method in the thirdfor God still will be the God of variety. Let His order stand fast as it may, still will He ever be manifesting the variety, the many-sidedness of His thoughts and mind. If, then, you look at this narrativesomewhat long, but I think very full of instructionyou may notice four different methods of conversion. And these occur in the conversion of the first five who formed the nucleus of the college of Apostles the first five who came to Christ and were numbered among His disciples!

It is very remarkable that there should be among five individuals four different ways of conversion! Were you, however, to examine any five persons, I suppose you would find similar disparity. Pick out five Christians indiscriminately and begin to question them how they were brought to know the Lord. You will find methods other than those you have here. And probably quite as many as four out of the five would be distinct from the rest.

I. The first case we have in the text is THE CONVERSION OF THE TWO DISCIPLES. One was probably John. We cannot speak with absolute certainty, but it was very probably John. We know it to have been the habit of this Evangelist to omit his own name whenever he could. Sometimes he speaks of that other disciple, when he means himself. And now and then he puts it, that disciple whom Jesus loved.

His love nurtured in him a kindly esteem of others, but an humble estimate of himself. While, therefore, he never omits to record the need of praise others obtained from the lips of Christ, as often as he can he omits his own name. It is supposed thenand I think rightlythat one was John. The other was Andrew, Simon Peters brother. The first two disciples are the fruits of preaching.

May we not expect to find that the major part of our conversions are the result of the public ministry? The two disciples heard him speak and they followed Jesus. Let us offer a few words concerning this first matter. We expect, Beloved, to see a great number of souls brought to God by the preaching of the Truth of God. The preaching of the Cross may be and it actually is to those who perish, foolishness. But unto us who are saved, it is the power of God and the wisdom of God. Wherever there is the most Gospel preaching, you will find the most conversions.

Many of our societies for carrying the Gospel to the heathen forget their main work. And while setting up colleges, translating Bibles and publishing tracts, they neglect to use this great hammer of God, this mighty bat

tering ram which is to dash down strongholds. The preaching of the Cross, the crying of, Behold the Lamb of God!this is Gods appointed agency. Other labors are to be entered into, but this is the main and chief agency for the conversion of souls.

Observe in the case before us, the preacher. He was a man Divinely illuminated. Jesus Christ came to Johns Baptism, but at first the Baptist did not know Him. After awhile, however, when the descending Spirit marked out the Messiah, John then knew to a certainty that this was He of whom Moses in the Law and the Prophets did write. Ever afterwards Johns testimony was clear and bold. Though he ended his ministry with the loss of his head, he never lost the honesty of his purpose or the lucidness of his testimony. He continued faithfully to declare that the Messiah had come.

Brethren, it is of importance in the work of the ministry that the preacher be a God-illuminated man. Not that education is to be despisedon the contrary, we cannot expect the Spirit of God in these days to give to men the knowledge of languages if they can acquire that knowledge by a little perseverance. It is never the Divine rule to work a superfluous miracle. With the faculties and powers we possess, we must yield up our members unto God as instruments of righteousness. So far, then, as the education of the man is concerned, we believe God leaves that with us, for if we can do it there is no need that any miracle should be worked.

But let the man be educated ever so well, he is then but as the lump of clayGod must breathe into his nostrils the breath of spiritual life as a preacher, or else he will be of no servicejust a dead weight upon the Church of God. What shall we say, then, of those men who enter into a pulpit because the family living is vacant, or because, indeed, being too great fools for either the army or the law, they must needs be put where their livelihood can be more easily obtainedin the Church? How crying is this sin in our times, that men should have Episcopal hands laid upon them, declaring that they are moved to the ministry by the Holy Spirit, when they know not whether there is a Holy Spirit, so far as any experimental knowledge of His power upon their own hearts is concerned!

The day, I hope, is passing away when men shall be more skilled at hunting the fox than at fishing for souls. And on the whole, God is raising up in this land a spirit of decision upon this pointthat the Christian minister must be a man who knows experimentally in his own soul the Truths of God which he professes to preach. God may convert souls, it is true, by a bad preacher. Why, if the devil preached, I should not wonder at souls being convertedif only the devil preached the Truth. It is the Truth and not the preacher. Ravens, unclean birds though they are, brought Elijah his bread and his meatand unclean ministers may sometimes bring Gods servants their spiritual food. But for all that, unto the wicked, God says, What have you to do to declare My statutes? The minister must be a God-taught man whose eyes have been opened by the Holy Spirit. This, at least, is the standing rulewhatever exceptions may be pleaded.

Then, mark you, granted that this is the case we must not expect his ministry to be alike successful at all times, for in the present instance, on one occasion the Baptist gave a very clear testimony for Christ, but none of his disciples left him to follow Jesus. The next time he preached he was successful, for two of his disciples joined the Master, though on the former occasion we read not that one of his hearers was led to declare himself on the Lords side.

My Brethren, God suffers His ministers to cast the net sometimes on the wrong side of the ship. Even a whole night they may toil and take nothing. They may sow upon the barren ground, upon the highway and among the thorns. They may cast their bread upon the waters, and as yet they may not find it, for the promise speaks of many days. Still the minister must persevere. If souls are not saved today, they may be tomorrow. I was wondering, as I read this passage, whether there were some who heard last Sunday in vain, who perhaps would hear to profit today. I was lifting up my heart in prayer to God that these words, the next day after, might come true to some here.

Whereas, the other day, I cried, Behold the Lamb! and you did not see Him or trust Him, I will repeat the cry, Behold the Lamb! again today. O that you may be led to follow Jesus! When you have well considered the preacher and his success, I would have you observe his Subject. How short the sermon!a rebuke to our prolixity. How plain it wasno difficult phrasesno high-flown elocutionary embellishmentsno feats of oratory here! It is just, Behold the Lamb! But observe the SubjectJohn preaches of Jesus Christ, of nothing else but Christ. And of Christ, too, in that position and in that form in which He was most needed but least palatable.

The Jews accepted Christ the Lion. They looked for the mighty Hero of the Tribe of Judah who should break their bonds. Such Jesus was. But John did not preach Him as such. He preached Him as Christ the Lamb the Lamb of God, the suffering, despised, meek, and patient Sacrifice. The Baptist held Him up to the sons of men on this occasion as the great Sin Bearer. He seems to have brought out most prominently in his own thoughts and before the minds of the people the picture of the paschal lamb and of the scapegoat. He dwelt upon this, that Jesus was the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

If there are to be many conversions worked in any place, the preacher must be a man taught of God and he must persevere, even though he has been unsuccessful. But he must see to it that this is the staple of all his sermons, the raw material out of which he makes every discourseJesus and Jesus the Lamb! Jesus the Sin Bearer. He must ever be crying, You Sinners, see your sins laid on Him! You guilty, look to Him! Trust Him! There is life in a look at Him. He has taken your sins and carried your sorrowslook to Him! Let the preacher stammer here and he is undone. Let him be unsound on the Atonement. Let him speak in feeble strains, as though he apologized for so old-fashioned a doctrine and you shall hear of no conversions from January to December.

But let him hold this to be the first and most important Truththat Jesus Christ came into the world to be a Sin Bearer for sinners, even the chief, and there must be conversions! God were not true to His promise, the Truth were no longer the potent thing it has proved itself to be in the olden times if souls were not quickened and turned to God by such a ministry as this! O you who preach the Gospel, keep close to this, Behold the Lamb of God! You young men who stand up in the streets, make this your topic! And you who minister to the Church of God, give them all the

doctrines of the Gospel, but still always come back to this as the needle comes to its poleBehold the Lamb of God which takes away the sin of the world!

In these two conversions by public ministry it is interesting to observe the process. Carefully notice the narrative. A spirit of enquiry was stirred up in Andrew and his companion and they began to follow Christ, not exactly as disciples as yet, but as searchers. If I may say so, they followed Christs back. They had not come to see His face yet, or to sit at His feet. They followed His back as some do who, being impressed under the Word, have a desire after Christ and intend to set about an honest investigation of His claims to their faith. While they are following behind Christ, He turns round and faces them.

Oh, what a blessed turning for them! It was a blessed turning for Peter when the Lord turned and looked upon him! And in this case while they are, as it were, following His back, He turns and He looks upon them. I cannot tell you how much love there was in His eyes. The love of a mother to her first child may perhaps picture the love of Jesus Christ to these, His first disciples. He was God, He was Man, He was Gods own Son. But He had never been a Master of disciples till that moment. Now He springs to a rank which He had not obtained before. Now He has some who will call Him Rabbi, and will be willing to be guided by His teaching. He looks round upon them. Even so, when enquiry is excited by the ministry, and men begin to search, Jesus Christ looks upon them. With an eye of earnest affection He regards them and assists them in their search.

Jesus put to them the question, What do you seek?a very modest question. Notice it. It is the first word of Christs ministry. It is the first word I find Christ speaking at all in publicWhat do you seek? And was not it a very comprehensive question? What is that you seek? If there are any honest enquirers here after salvation, He puts the same question to you this morningWhat do you seek? Are you seeking pardon? You shall find it in Me. Are you seeking peace? I will give you rest. Are you seeking purity? I will take away your sin. A new heart will I give you and a right spirit will I put within you. What are you seeking? Some solid resting place for your soul upon earth and a glorious hope for yourself in Heaven? Whatever you seek, it is here.

What a text this might be for a missionary when first consulted by some of the awakened heathen, when he should say, You are on the search after Truth. Now what is it you really want? What do you seek? What is it? Because whatever it is that the human heart in its right state can possibly seek afterall that is to be found in Christ. Christ meets the man who is in an enquiring frame of mind by suggesting to him further enquiry. He stirs up the heart. While the souls fire is burning He puts fuel to the flame.

They say, Master, where do you dwell? And His answer to them is, Come and see. This is just how the process of conversion is worked in mens hearts. They want to know more of Christ and He says to them, Come and see. You would have peacecome and see whether I can give it to you. I tell you that if you trust Me, your peace shall be like a river and your righteousness like the waves of the sea. Come and see. You say you want purityjust try now the effect of the obedience of faith. See if it does not change your heart and renew your spirit. Come and see. O you who are seeking and asking questions about Christ and about His Gospel and His Person and His pedigree, Come and see.

The best way to be convinced of the potency of our holy Gospel is to try it for yourselves. If you are honest seekers, if the Grace of God has made you so, then come and test and try! Blessed is every man that trusts in Him. This is our witness and our testimony. But if you want to be sure of it for yourselves, Come and see. They took Christ at His word. They came and they saw. We are not told what they saw, but we are told what was the resultthey stopped with Him that night and they remained with Him all His days and became His faithful disciples.

O my dear Friend, if you would but come and see Christ! If by humble earnest prayer you would give your heart up to Him and then trust in Him implicitly to be your Guide, you would never lament the decision! If Jesus proves a liar to you, then desert Him! If His promises are not true, then stand no longer numbered with His disciples. But give Him a trial

*O make but trial of His love!   
Experience will decide how blest are they and only they, Who in His Truth confide.*

You see, then, the way in which Gods Grace works through the Wordit excites a spirit of enquiry, then a still further enquiry, then the test of experienceand afterwards leads to the giving up of the heart to Christ.

II. The next case is a very different one. The third of Christs disciples, one Simon Peter, was brought in by PRIVATE INSTRUMENTALITY and not by the public preaching of the Word. Observe the forty-first verse, Andrew first finds his own brother Simon, and says unto him, We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. This case is but the pattern of all cases where spiritual life is vigorous. As soon as ever a man is found by Christ, he begins to find others.

The word first implies that he did not give it up afterwardshe first found his own brother Simon! How many he found afterwards I cannot tell, but I will be bound to say that Andrew continued to be a fisher of men till he was taken up to the third Heaven. He found very many after he had found Peter. The first instinct of the new-born life is to desire the good of others. I will not believe that you have tasted of the honey of the Gospel if you can eat it all yourself. True Grace puts an end to all spiritual monopoly.

I know there are some who think there is no Grace beyond their own Chapel. They believe that God never works beyond the walls of their own tabernacle. Beyond the range of the voice of their minister everything is unsound, unorthodox, pretensions perhaps, but still fatally delusive. They hold that all others are out of the bond of the Covenant and, not unlike those ancient wranglers in the land of Uz, they say, We are the men and wisdom will die with us. Surely Gods people never talk in that fashion, or if they do, they are then speaking the language of Ashdod and not the speech of the child of Israel, for the Israelites tongue drops with love and his speech is full of the anxious desire that others may be brought in!

Look at our Apostle Paul. You shall never find stronger predestinarianism than you read in the ninth chapter of Romans, and yet what does he say? His hearts desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved. He had heaviness of heart, he says, for his Brethren, his kinsmen according to the flesh. There was no man more anxious to convert souls

than Paul, though there was no man more sound in the doctrine of the election of God. He knew it was not of him that wills, nor of him that runs, but yet he could say as Samuel did, God forbid that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you.

See, then, that the first desire of a Christian man is to endeavor to bring others to the Savior. Relationship has a very stern demand upon our first individual efforts. Andrew, you did well to begin with Simon. I do not know, my Brethren, whether there are not some Christians giving away tracts at other peoples houses who would do well to give away a tract at their own. I wonder whether there are not some going out to the villages preaching who had better remain at home teaching their own childrenor whether even in the Sunday school there may not be those who come before God to perform one duty, while their hands are stained blood-red with the murder of another duty. Your first business is at home. You may have a call to teach other peoples childrenthat may bebut certainly you have an imperative call to teach your own. You may or you may not be called to look after the people of a neighboring town or village, but certainly you are called to see after your own servants, your own kinsfolk and acquaintances. Let your religion begin at home.

We have heard of some people who export their best commodities many traders doI do not think the Christian should imitate them in that. At least let the Christian have all his conversation everywhere of the best savor, but let him have a care to put forth the sweetest fruit of spiritual life and testimony at home and in the circle of his own kinsfolk and acquaintances. Andrew, you did well, first, to find your brother Simon. When he went to find him he may not have thought of what Simon would become. Why, Simon was worth ten Andrews, as far as we can gather from the Evangelists! Peter was a very prince among the Apostles! And with that ready tongue of his and that bold, dashing, daring spiritwith that confident, resolute soulthere were none of them a match for Peter!

John might excel in love, but still Peter was verily a leader among the Apostles, and Andrew would but little compare with him. You may be yourself but very deficient in talent and yet you may be the means of bringing a great man to Christ. Ah, dear Friend, you little know the possibilities which are in you! You may but speak a word to a child and in that child there may be slumbering now a great heart which shall stir the Christian Church in years to come. Andrew has only two talents, but then finds Peter. Andrews testimony to Peter is worthy of remark. There was great modesty in it and that, I dare say, commended it to Peter.

He did not say, I have found the Messiahhe says, We. Whoever was the other disciple, he gives him his share of the discovery. Our speech never loses force by losing pride but generally increases its power in proportion to its modesty, though that modesty must never interfere with boldness. His testimony was very plain and very positive. He did not beat around the bush or hesitate, but it is just thisWe have found the Messiah. Plain and unadorned was the statement, very positive. He did not say, I think we have, or, I trust we have, but, we have. And this was just the thing for Simon Peter.

Peter wanted positive and plain dealing and he was a man who wanted it pushed home by a brothers friendly voice, or else it had little availed him to speak of Christ at all. When he was brought to Jesus, observe the process of conversion. Jesus describes to him his present state. He said, You are Simon, son of Jona. Some interpret this, You are Simon, the son of the timid dove. He explains to him what he wasshows that He knew himthat He understood both his boldness and his cowardice both his rashness and his constancy. And then, when He had told him what he was, Jesus gave him a new name indicative of the nature which His Grace would giveYou shall be called Cephas, a stone.

Now this is the general plan of conversion. It is the plan in every case, really, though not apparently. Nature is discovered and Grace is imparted. The old name we are taught to read with sorrow and a new name is given to us and we rejoice in it. There may be some here who have not been converted to God under the ministry but under the words of a Sunday school teacher, or a sister, or a friend. Thank God and take courage. It does not matter how you are converted, so long as you are resting upon Jesus only!

If you have not been a searcher of the Word, if Christ has never seemed to say to you, Come and see, yet if your nature has been changed and you have received a new nameif there is a radical change in the rest you are a child of God. That you are brought into the fellowship of the saints is an illustration of the unity of Gods purpose. That there should be distinctive marks in your conversion is quite in harmony with the diversity of His operations.

III. The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee and find Philip and say unto him, Follow Me. The fourth disciple is called without either the public Word or private instructionhe is called directly BY THE VOICE OF JESUS. Now in truth all men are so called, for the voice of John or the voice of Andrew is really the voice of Jesus Christ speaking through their instrumentality. But in some cases no apparent instrumentality is used. We have known some who on a sudden have felt impressions, from where they came or where they tended they did not know.

In the midst of business we have known the workman suddenly check his planea great thought has entered into his brainwhere it came from he could not tell. We have known a man wake up at midnighthe could not tell why, but a holy calm was upon him and as the moon was shining through the window there seemed to be a holy light shining into his soul and he began to think. We have known such things to occursurprising caseswhen men have been planning deeds of vice.

Was it not so with Colonel Gardnerthat very night about to perpetrate a crime and yet stopped by Sovereign Grace upon the very brink of it, without any apparent instrumentality? We can not tell, Brethren, when God may regenerate His elect, for though we are to use means and cry to God to send forth laborers into the vineyard, yet the Sovereign Lord of All will frequently work without them. The Word which has been heard in years gone by. The Scripture which was known in childhood may, by the direct power of the Holy Spirit, without any immediate apparent means, turn the man from darkness to Light. Jesus Christ spoke but two words, but those words were enoughFollow Meand Philip at once obeyed. What preparation of heart there had been before, I cannot tell. What still small voice had been speaking before this in Philips ear, we do not know. Certainly the only outward means was this voice of Christ, Follow Me.

And there may be in this House some who will be converted this morning. You do not know why you are here. You cannot tell why you strayed in. But yet it may beGod knowsChrist would have you come here because He would come here Himself. Is not there something which invites a pause in that word, would, as we read it in this verse?The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee. Is not there something of the Divine necessity which we have often noticed in another place?He must needs go through Samaria. Did not He feel instinctively that there was a soul there which He must meet with and He must go after it and speak the all-commanding, sin-subduing Word?

Perhaps this morning Jesus would come to the Tabernacle! Jesus would come here because He knows that Philip is come here, too. Philip, where are you? You may have lived in sin and despised Christ, but if He says, Follow Me, I beseech you obey His word and follow Him! To follow Christ is the picture of Christian discipleship in every form. Follow Christ in your doctrinesbelieve what He teaches! Follow Christ in your faith trust Him implicitly with your soul! Follow Him in your actionslet Him be your example and Guide! Follow Him in ordinancesin Baptism follow Him and at His Table follow Him!

To every deed of daring, to every place of spiritual communion, to the mountain of secret prayer, or to the crowd in open ministry, follow Him! According to your measure tread in the footsteps of your Lord and Master. And this, I say, may be directed to one who has had no other instrumentality used upon him, but just the mysterious voice of Christ Follow Me. It was so with the third case. Perhaps of the three this experience is the highest. The first two were told, Come and see, and they came to understand the value of Christ. But this one is made to followhe carries out practically that which the others did but see.

The second conversion before us attains a higher degree than the first. But this is the highest of all when the change of nature, as in the case of Peter, now leads to a change of action, as in the case of Philip, who arises and follows Christ.

IV. I hope I have not wearied you, for there is yet the fourth case of the fifth disciple, which differs from them allNathanael. What shall we say of Nathanael? Was he converted by ministry? It does not appear so. Was he converted by PRIVATE INSTRUMENTALITY? He was partly so. Philip finds Nathanael, but Philips finding of Nathanael was not quite so effectual as Christs finding of Philip. When Christ found Philip, Philip believed. But when Philip found Nathanael, Nathanael would not believe. He said, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?

Philip is partly the instrument, but there is something more. Jesus Christ Himself shows His own power BY TELLING TO NATHANAEL THE SECRETS OF HIS HEART. But still, Nathanaels conversion to Christ seems to me to be PARTLY OWING TO THE STATE IN WHICH HE THEN WAS. He was already in some sense a saved manhe was a devout Israelite. He was a true seeker of the Messiah beneath the fig tree. Well, then, there were these things put togetherthere was a preparation of heart which was doubtless worked of God.

But this preparation did not bring him to Christ, though it made him ready for Christ. It brought him to God in prayer, but it did not bring him yet to the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. Then came Philips instrumentality and then came Christs Divine Word which convinced Nathanael and led him to put his trust in the Messiah. This is a sort of composite case and doubtless there are many in the Church of God, who, if you should ask them, How were you converted? would be somewhat puzzled to give the answer.

We find in our Church Meetings a very large proportion of people who say, Well, I cannot trace my conversion to any one sermonmany sermons have impressed meindeed, most do. I cannot say, Sir, that I was converted when I was a child, but I sometimes think I was, for even at that time I was the subject of many impressions and I certainly did offer prayer. Yet there was a time, they will tell you, there was a time when I seemed to come out more distinctly into the Light. And when I could say of Christ, You are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel, but I cannot say exactly when the sun rose.

Now this, I think, was Nathaniels case. Perhaps trained and brought up by godly parents, he had been in the habit of prayerthat prayer was somewhat ignorantbut it was very sincere. He sought the solitude of his shady garden and under the fig tree poured out his heart unto the Lord. That man is not saved. No! But there is a great part of the work done. Do not tell me that that man in his prayer has nothing in him more than the blasphemer. I tell you that he needs as much as the blasphemer does to have an effectual Word from Christ, but still there is a preparatory work in this man which there is not even in Philip, or in Simon Peter. There is a something,

not meritorious, but still preparatory to the reception of the Gospel of Christ.

And when you labor for the conversion of such a man as thisand I do hope there may be some in this crowdthen it does not matter whether it is the ministry, or whether it is private instrumentalitythere is sure to be good result because there is good ground to begin with. God has already furrowed and plowed the soil and so when the seed is scattered, there may be a little objection at first, but ultimately it will take root. Be looking out then, dear Friends, you who know how to talk to others about their souls! And wherever you see anything like devotion, even if it is mistaken and ignorant, look at that case! Be especially hopeful about it and try, if you can, to inform that person, We have found Him of whom Moses in the Law and the Prophets did write.

Introduce Christ, talk of Jesus, bring these Nathanaels to Jesusthese who are like the honest and good ground, these men without guile or cunningbring them to Jesus! Still, mark you, their prayers and your instrumentality will not be enough unless Christ shall meet them with some startling, soul-discovering Word and shall say, Before that Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you. Ah, you seeking Soul, Christ sees you! Before you came here this morning Jesus saw you! Before you hear the challenge, Look to Christ, Christ has looked upon you. If you are truly seeking in the loneliness of that upper room, or in that field behind the hedge, Jesus sees you!

When you are by the wayside and your heart is going up, Lord, save me, or I perish, Jesus sees you! One of you has been writing to me this morning, and you say, Pray for me that I may be saved, for I want to be saved. Ah, my Friend, if you want to be saved, Jesus wants to save you and so you are both agreed on that point! You, like Nathanael, are seeking Him. And I come this morning, like Philip and I long to bring you to Jesus, my Master. Oh, how I pray Him to speak to you and if so, He will tell you that He knew you when you were dead in sin and loved you, notwithstanding all!

And therefore He brought you to this House to hear His Word. Mark you, Nathanaels is the best case of the whole! He was favored above many. Who was the first man that ever had a promise from Christ? It was Nathanael! What was that? Why, that promise seems to me to be the sum of the Gospelor rather the token-promise of the Gospelwhich every Christian should carry in his hand. Jesus said, Because I said unto you, I saw you under the fig tree, believe you? You shall see greater things than these. Nathanael was the first man who ever received a promise from the lips of the Lord Jesus when He was here on earth!

O you seeking Nathanaels, I think this is a promise for youYou shall see greater things than theseyou shall see yourself pardoned! You shall see your prayers ascending Jacobs ladder and blessings coming down from God to rest upon your soul! I had hoped to have brought out many more points, but indeed, the chapter is too full for any to handle in so brief a time. You will observe, however, that I have given you just a glance at the surface of it which will suffice to show that the means of conversion and the general tenor of conversion will be found to differ in each case. Perhaps Nathanaels is the highest of allhe receives Christ in a fuller way than any of the others and he enjoys greater promises than they do.

But still they are all genuine, though they are not one of them like the other, except that John and Andrew may be put together. Judge not, therefore, your conversion by its means or by its particular form, but judge it by its fruit. Does it bring you to Jesus? Are you depending upon Him now? If so, go your wayyour sins, which are many, are forgiven you! Eat the fat and drink the sweet, for God accepts youtherefore rejoice! But and if you have had a thousand conversions, if you are not resting on Jesus this morning, tremble, for your refuge is a refuge of lies! Your hope is a spiders webGod deliver you from it and bring you now to rest upon the finished work and the perfect Sacrifice of the Lord Jesus! And then, with Andrew and Peter and John, and Philip and Nathanael you shall meet before the Throne to praise Him who is the Son of God and the King of Israel! The Lord bless you, for Christs sake. Amen.

Adapted from The C.H. Spurgeon Collection, Version 1.0, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307 Sermon #855 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

EVERYDAY USEFULNESS   
NO. 855

**DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, FEBRUARY 14, 1869, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**And he brought him to Jesus.   
John 1:42.**

WE have a most intense desire for the revival of religion in our own midst and throughout all the Churches of our Lord Jesus. We see that error is making great advances and we would gladly lift up a banner for the cause of the Truth of God. We pity the mighty populations among whom we dwell for they are still godless and Christless and the things of their peace are hidden from their eyes. Therefore we would gladly behold the Lord performing miracles of Divine Grace. Our hope is that the set time to favor Zion is come and we intend to be importunate in prayer that God will reveal His arm and do great things in these latter days.

Our eager desire, of which our special services will be the expression, is a right one. Challenge it who will, it is ours to cultivate and prove by our zeal for God that the desire is not insincere or superficial. But, my Brothers and Sisters, it is very possible that in addition to cultivating a vehement desire for the revival of religion, we may have been daydreaming and forecasting in our minds a conception of the form which the Divine visitation shall take. Remembering what we have heard of former times of refreshing, you expect a repetition of the same outward signs and look for the Lord to work as He did with Livingstone at the Kirk of Shotts, or with Jonathan Edwards in New England, or Whitefield in our own land.

Perhaps you have planned in your mind that God will raise up an extraordinary preacher whose ministry will attract the multitude, and while he is preaching, God the Holy Spirit will attend the Word so that hundreds will be converted under every sermon and other evangelists will be raised up of a like spirit and from end to end this island shall hear the Truth and feel its power. Now it may be that God will so visit us. It may be that such signs and wonders as have frequently attended revivals may be again witnessedthe Lord may rend the heavens and come out and make the mountains to fall down at His feet!

But it is just possible that He may select quite another method. His Holy Spirit may reveal Himself like a mighty river swollen with floods and sweeping all before its majestic current. But if He so wills, He may rather unveil His power as the gentle dew which, without observation, refreshes all the earth! It may happen unto us as unto Elijah when the fire and the wind passed before him, but the Lord was not in either of those mighty agenciesHe preferred to commune with His servant in a still, small voice. Perhaps that still, small voice is to be language of Divine Grace in this congregation. It will be useless, then, for us to be mapping out the way of the eternal God! It will be idle for us to be rejecting all the good which He may be pleased to give us because it does not happen to come in the shape which we have settled in our own minds to be the proper one.

Idle, did I say? Such prejudice would be wicked to the extreme! It has very frequently happened that while men have been sketching out imaginary designs they have missed actual opportunities! They would not build because they could not erect a palacethey therefore shiver in the winters cold. They would not be clothed in homespun, for they looked for scarlet and fine linenand before long they were not content to do a little and therefore did nothing! I want, therefore, to say, this morning, to every Believer here, it is vain for us to be praying for an extensive revival of religion and comforting each other in the hope of it, if, meanwhile, we allow our zeal to effervesce and sparkleand then to be dissipated.

Our proper plan is, with the highest expectations and with the greatest longings, to imitate the woman of whom it is written, She has done what she could, by laboring diligently in such holy works as may be within our reach, according to Solomons precept, Whatever your hands find to do, do it with all your might. While Believers are zealously doing what God enables them to do, they are in the high road to abundant success. But if they stand all the day idle, grasping after wonders, their spiritual need shall come upon them as an armed man. I have selected the text before us in order that I may speak upon matters which are practical and efforts within the reach of all. We shall not speak of the universal triumph of the Gospel, but of its victory in single hearts. Nor shall we deal with the efforts of an entire Church, but with the pious fervor of individual disciples.

If the Christian Church were in a proper and healthy state, the members would be studious of the Word of God and would themselves have so much of the Spirit of Christ that the only thing they would need in the great assemblies, over and above worship, would be a short encouraging and animating word of direction addressed to them, as to well-drilled and enthusiastic soldiers who need but the word of command and the deed of valor is straightway performed. So would I speak and so would I have you hear at this hour.

Coming then, to the subject. Andrew was converted by Christ to become His disciple. Immediately he sets to work to recruit the little army by discipling others. He finds his brother, Peter, and he brings him to Jesus.

I. First, I shall call your attention, this morning, to THE MISSIONARY DISCIPLE. Andrew is the picture of what all disciples of Christ should be! To begin, then. This first successful Christian missionary

was himself a sincere follower of Jesus. Is it necessary to make that observation? No, rather, will it ever be needless while so many make a profession of a faith which they do not possess? While so many will wantonly thrust themselves into the offices of Christs Church, having no concern for the Glory of His kingdom and no part or lot in it, it will always be necessary to repeat that warning, Unto the wicked, God says, What have you to do to declare My statutes?

Men who have never seen the beauties of Emmanuel are not fit persons to describe them to others. An experimental acquaintance with vital godliness is the first necessity for a useful worker for Jesus. That preacher is accursed who knows not Christ for himself! God may, in infinite sovereignty, make him the means of blessing to others, but every moment that he tarries in the pulpit he is an impostor! Every time he preaches he is a mocker of God and woe unto him when his Master calls him to his dread account! You unconverted young people who enter upon the work of Sunday school instruction and so undertake to teach others what you do not know yourselves, place yourselves in a position of unusual solemnity and of extraordinary peril! I say, of extraordinary peril, because you do, by the fact of being a teacher, profess to know and will be judged by your professionand, I fear, condemned out of your own mouths!

You know only the theory of religion and of what use is that while you are strangers to its power? How can you lead others along a way which you yourself refuse to tread? Besides, I have noticed that persons who become active in Church work before they have first believed in Christ are very apt to remain without faith, resting content with the general repute which they have gained. O dear Friends, beware of this! In this day hypocrisy is so common and self-deceit is so easy that I would not have you place yourselves where those vices become almost inevitable. If a man voluntarily puts himself where it is taken for granted that he is godly, his next step will be to mimic godliness and by-and-by he will flatter himself into the belief that he really possesses that which he so successfully imitates.

Beware, dear Hearers, of a religion which is not trueit is worse than none! Beware of a form of godliness which is not supported by the fervor of your heart and soul. This age of shams presents but few instances to self-examination, therefore am I the more earnest that every one of us, before he shall seek to bring others to Christ, should deliberately ask himself, Am I a follower of Christ myself? Am I washed in His blood? Am I renewed by His Spirit? If not, my first business is not in the pulpit, but on my knees in prayer! My first occupation should not be in the Sunday school class, but in my closet, confessing my sin and seeking pardon through the atoning Sacrifice!

Andrew was earnest for the souls of others, though he was but a young convert. So far as I can gather, he appears to have beheld Jesus as the Lamb of God one day and to have sought after his brother, Peter, the next. Far be it from us to forbid you who but yesterday found joy and peace, to exert your new-born zeal and youthful ardor! No, my Brothers and Sisters, delay not, but make haste to spread abroad the Good News which is now so fresh and so full of joy to you! It is right that the advanced and the experienced should be left to deal with the captious and the skeptical, but you, even you, young as you are, may find some with whom you can copesome brother like Simon Peter, some sister dear to you who will listen to your unvarnished tale and believe in your simple testimony. Though you are but young in Divine Grace and but little instructed, begin the work of soul-winning, and

*Tell to sinners round   
What a dear Savior you have found!*

If the religion of Jesus Christ consisted in abstruse doctrines, hard to be understood. If the saving Truths of Christianity were metaphysical points, difficult to handlethen a matured judgment would be needed in every worker for God and it would be prudent to say to the young convert, Hold back till you are instructed. But, since that which saves souls is as simple as A, B, C. Since it is nothing but this, He that believes and is baptized, shall be saved, he that trusts the merits of Christ shall be saved! You who have trusted Him know that He saved you and you know that He will save others! And I charge you before God, tell it, tell it right and left, but especially tell it to your own kinsfolk and acquaintances that they, also, may find eternal life!

Andrew was a disciple, a new disciple and I may add, a commonplace disciple, a man of average capacity. He was not at all the brilliant character that Simon Peter, his brother, turned out to be. Throughout the life of Jesus Christ Andrews name occurs, but no notable incident is connected with it. Though in later life he, no doubt, became a most useful Apostle, and according to tradition, sealed his lifes ministry by death upon a cross, yet at the first Andrew was, as to talent, an ordinary Believerone of that common standard and nothing remarkable. Yet Andrew became a useful minister and thus it is clear that servants of Jesus Christ are not to excuse themselves from endeavoring to extend the boundaries of His kingdom by saying, I have no remarkable talent, or singular ability.

I very much disagree with those who decry ministers of slender gifts, sneering at them, as though they ought not to occupy the pulpit at all. Are we, after all, Brethren, as servants of God, to be measured by mere oratorical ability? Is this after the fashion of Paul, when he renounced the wisdom of words lest the faith of the disciples should stand in the wisdom of man and not in the power of God? If you could blot out from the Christian Church all the minor stars and leave nothing but those of the first magnitude, the darkness of this poor world would be increased sevenfold! How often the eminent preachers, which are the Churchs delight, are brought into the Church by those of less degree, even as Simon Peter was converted by Andrew!

Who shall tell what might have become of Simon Peter if it had not been for Andrew? Who shall say that the Church would ever have possessed a Peter if she had closed the mouth of Andrew? And who shall put their finger upon the brother or sister of inferior talent and say, These must hold their peace? No, Brother, if you have but one talent, the more zealously use it! God will require it of youlet not your Brethren hold you back from putting it out to interest. If you are but as a glowworms, lamp, hide not your light, for there is an eye predestinated to see by your light, a heart ordained to find comfort by your faint gleam. Shine, and may the Lord accept you!

I am saying all this in this way that I may come to the conclusion that every single professor of the faith of Christ is bound to do something for the extension of the Redeemers kingdom. I would that all the members of this Church, whatever their talents were, would be like Andrew in promptness. He is no sooner a convert than he is a missionary! He is no sooner taught than he begins to teach! I would have them like Andrew, persevering, as well as prompt. He first finds Peterthat is his first successbut how many afterwards he found, who shall tell? Throughout a long life of usefulness it is probable that Andrew brought many stray sheep to the Redeemers fold, yet certainly that first one would be among the dearest to his heart.

He first finds Peterhe was the spiritual father of many sons, but he rejoiced most that he was the father of his own brother Peterhis brother in the flesh, but his son in Christ Jesus! Could it be possible for me to come to every one of you personally and grasp you by the hand, I would with most affectionate earnestnessyes, even with tearspray that you, by Him to whom you owe your souls, would awake and render personal service to the Lover of your souls! Make no excuse, for no excuse can be valid from those who are bought with so great a price! Your business, you will tell me, requires so much of your thoughtsI know it doesthen use your business in such a way as to serve God in it.

Still there must be some scraps of time which you could devote to holy service. There must be some opportunities for directly aiming at conversions. I charge you to avail yourselves of such occasions lest they be laid to your door. To some of you the excuse of business would not apply, for you have seasons of leisure. Oh, I beseech you, let not that leisure be driveled away in frivolities, in mere talk, in sleep and self-indulgence! Let not time slip away in vain persuasions that you can do nothing, but now, like Andrew, hasten at once to serve Jesus! If you can reach but one individual, let him not remain unsought. Time is hastening and men are perishing! The world is growing old in sin! Superstition and idolatry root themselves into the very soil of human nature!

When, when will the Church become intent upon putting down her Masters foes? Possessing such little strength, we cannot afford to waste a jot of it. With such awful demands upon us we cannot afford to trifle. O that I had the power to stir the heart and soul of all my fellow Christians by a description of this huge city wallowing in iniquityby a picture of the graveyards and cemeteries fattening on innumerable corpsesby a portrayal of that lake of fire to which multitudes yearly descend! Surely sin, the grave, and Hell are themes which might create a tingling even in the dull cold ear of Death! O that I could set before you the Redeemer upon the Cross dying to ransom souls! O that I could depict the Heaven which sinners lose and their remorse when they shall find themselves excluded!

I wish I could even set before you in vivid light the cases of your own sons and daughters, the spiritual condition of your own brothers and sisters without Christ and therefore without hope! Unrenewed and therefore heirs of wrath even as others! Then might I expect to move each Believer here to an immediate effort to pluck men as brands from the burning.

II. Having described the missionary disciple, we shall now speak briefly in the second place upon a GREAT OBJECT. The great object of Andrew seems to have been to bring Peter to Jesus. This, too, should be the aim of every renewed heartto bring our friends to Jesusnot to convert them to a party. There are certain unbrotherly sectarians, called Brethren, who compass sea and trod land to make proselytes from other Christian Churches. These are not merchants seeking goodly pearls in a legitimate fashion, but pirates who live by plunder. They must not excite our wrath so much as our pity, though it is difficult not to mingle with it something of disgust.

While this world remains as wicked as it is, we need not be spending our strength as Christian denominations in attacking one anotherit will be better for us to go and fight with the Canaanites than with rival tribes which should be one united Israel! I should reckon it to be a burning disgrace if it could be said, The large Church under that mans pastoral care is composed of members whom he has stolen away from other Christian Churches. No, but I value beyond all price the godless, the careless who are brought out from the world into communion with Christ! These are true prizesnot stealthily removed from friendly shoresbut captured at the edge of the sword from an enemys dominions!

We welcome Brethren from other Churches if, in the Providence of God they are drifted to our shores, but we would never hang out the wreckers beacon to dash other Churches in pieces in order to enrich ourselves with the wreck! Far rather would we be looking after perishing souls than cajoling unstable ones from their present place of worship. To recruit one regiment from another is no real strengthening of the armyto bring in fresh men should be the aim of all. Furthermore, the object of the soul-winner is not to bring men to a merely outward religiousness. Little will you have done for a man if you merely make the Sabbath-breaker into a Sabbathkeeper and leave him a self-righteous Pharisee. Little will you have done for him if you persuade him, having been prayerless, to be a mere user of

a   
form of prayer, his heart not being in it.

You do but change the form of sin in which the man livesyou prevent him being drowned in the salt water, but you throw him into the fresh. You take one poison from him, but you expose him to another. The fact is, if you would do real service to Christ, your prayer and your zeal must follow the person who has become the object of your attention till you bring him absolutely to close with Divine Grace and lay hold on Jesus Christ and accept eternal life as it is found in the atoning Sacrifice! Anything short of this may have its usefulness for this world, but must be useless for the world to come. To bring men to JesusO, be this your aim and desire!not to bring them to Baptism, nor to the Meeting House, nor to adopt our form of worship, but to bring them to His dear feet who alone can say, Go in peace. Your sins which are many are all forgiven you.

Brothers and Sisters, as we believe Jesus to be the very center of the Christian religion, he who gets not to Christ gets not to true godliness at all. Some are quite satisfied if they get to the priest and obtain his absolution. They are fine if they get the sacraments and eat bread in the churchif they get to prayers and pass through a religious routinebut we know that all this is less than nothing and vanity unless the heart draws near to Jesus. Unless the soul accepts Jesus as Gods appointed Sin-Offering and rests alone in Him, it walks in a vain show and disquiets itself in vain. Come then, Brethren, nerve yourselves to this point, that from this day forth let your one ambition be in dealing with your fellow men, to bring them to Jesus Christ Himself! Be it determined in your spirit that you will never cease to labor for them till you have reason to believe that they are trusting in Jesus, loving Jesus, serving Jesus and united to Jesus in the hope that they shall be conformed to the image of Jesus and dwell with Him, world without end.

But some will say, We can very clearly understand how Andrew brought Peter to the Lord, because Jesus was here among men and they could walk together till they found Him. Yes, but Jesus is not dead and it is a mistake to suppose that He is not readily to be reached. Prayer is a messenger that can find Jesus at any hour. Jesus is gone up on high as to His body, but His spiritual Presence remains with us. And the Holy Spirit, as the Head of this dispensation, is always near at hand to every Believer. Intercede, then, for your friends! Plead with Christ on their account! Mention their names in your constant prayers! Set apart special times in which you plead with God for them. Let your dear sisters case ring in the ears of the Mediator. Let your dear childs name be repeated again and again in your intercessions.

As Abraham pleaded for Ishmael, so let your cry come up for those who are round about you, that the Lord would be pleased to visit them in His mercy. Intercession is a true bringing of souls to Christ and this means will prevail when you are shut out from employing any other. If your dear ones are in Australia, in some settlers hut where even a letter cannot reach them, prayer can find them out! No ocean can be too wide for prayer to span, no distance too great for prayer to travel. Far off as they are, you can take them up in the arms of believing prayer and bear them to Jesus and say, Master, have mercy upon them. Here is a valuable weapon for those who cannot preach or teachthey can wield the sword of all-prayer. When hearts are too hard for sermons and good advice is rejected, it still remains to love to be allowed to plead with God for its wayward one. Tears and weeping are prevalent at the Mercy Seat and if we prevail there, the Lord will be sure to manifest His prevailing Grace in obdurate spirits.

To bring men to Jesus you can adopt the next means, with most of them, namely, that of instructing them, or putting them in the way of being informed concerning the Gospel. It is a very wonderful thing that while, to us, the light of the Gospel is so abundant, it should be so very partially distributed in this country. When I have expounded my own hope in Christ to two or three in a railway carriage, I have found myself telling my listeners perfect novelties! I have seen the look of astonishment upon the face of many an intelligent Englishman when I have explained the doctrine of the substitutionary Sacrifice of Christ. I have even met with persons who have attended their parish Church from their youth up who were totally ignorant of the simple truth of justification by faith!

Yes, and I have known some who have been to dissenting places of worship who do not seem to have laid hold of the fundamental Truth of God that no man is saved by his own doings, but that salvation is procured by faith in the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ. This nation is steeped up to the throat in self-righteous doctrine, and the Protestantism of Martin Luther is very generally unknown. The Truth is held by as many as Gods Grace has called, but the great outlying world still talk of doing your best and then hoping in Gods mercyof legal self-confidence, and I know not what besidewhile the master doctrine that he who believes in Jesus is saved by Jesus finished work, is sneered at as enthusiasm, or attacked as leading to licentiousness.

Proclaim it, then! Proclaim it on all sides! Take care that none under your influence shall be left in ignorance of it! I can bear personal witness that the statement of the Gospel has often proved, in Gods hand, enough to lead a soul into immediate peace. Not many months ago I met with a lady holding sentiments of almost undiluted popery and in conversing with her I was delighted to see how interesting and attractive a thing the Gospel was to her. She complained that she enjoyed no peace of mind as the result of her religion and never seemed to have done enough. She had a high idea of priestly absolution, but it had evidently been quite unable to yield repose to her spirit. Death was feared. God was terribleeven Christ an object of awe rather than love.

When I told her that whoever believes on Jesus is perfectly forgiven and that I knew I was forgiventhat I was as sure of it as of my own existencethat I feared neither to live nor to die, for it would be the same to me, because God had given me eternal life in His SonI saw that a new set of thoughts were astonishing her mind! She said, If I could believe that, I should be the happiest person in the world. I did not deny the inference, but claimed to have proved its truth and I have reason to believe that the little simple talk we had has not been forgotten. You cannot tell how many may be in bondage for lack of the simplest possible instruction upon the plainest Truths of the Gospel of Jesus Christ!

Many, too, may be brought to Christ through your example. Believe me, there is no preaching in this world like the preaching of a holy life! It shames me, sometimes, and weakens me in my testimony for my Master, when I stand here and recollect that some professors of religion are a disgrace not only to their religion, but even to common morality. It makes me feel as though I must speak with bated breath and trembling knees when I remember the damnable hypocrisy of those who thrust themselves into the Church of God and by their abominable sins bring disgrace upon the cause of God and eternal destruction upon themselves!

In proportion as a Church is holy, in that proportion will its testimony for Christ be powerful. Oh, were the saints immaculate, our testimony would be like fire among the stubble! Like the flaming firebrand in the midst of the sheaves of corn! Were the saints of God less like the world, more disinterested, more prayerful, more godlike, the tramp of the armies of Zion would shake the nations and the day of the victory of Christ would surely dawn! Freely might the Church barter her most golden-mouthed preacher if she received in exchange men of Apostolic life! I would be content that the pulpit should be empty if all the members of the Church would preach Jesus by their patience in suffering, by their endurance in temptation, by exhibiting in the household those Graces which adorn the Gospel of Jesus Christ!

Oh, so live, I pray you, in Gods fear and by the Spirits power, that they who see you may ask, From where has this man this holiness? and may follow you till they are led by you to Jesus Christ to learn the secret by which men live unto God! You can bring men to Jesus by your example, then. And once again, let me say, before I close this point, our object should be to bring men to Jesushaving tried intercession and instruction and exampleby occasionally, as time and opportunity may serve us, giving a word of importunate entreaty. Half-a-dozen words from a tender mother to a boy who is just leaving home for an apprenticeship, may drop like gentle dew from Heaven upon you. A few sentences from a kind and prudent father given to the daughter, still unconverted, as she enters upon her married life, and to her husband, kindly and affectionately put, may make that household forever a house for God.

A kind word dropped by a brother to a sister. A little letter written from a sister to her brother, though it should be only a line or two, may be Gods arrow of Divine Grace. I have known even such little things as a tear or an anxious glance work wonders. You perhaps may have heard the story of Mr. Whitefield, who made it his wish wherever he stayed to talk to the members of the household about their soulswith each one personally. But stopping at a certain house of a Colonel, who was all that could be wished except a Christian, he was so pleased with the hospitality he received and so charmed with the general character of the good Colonel and his wife and daughters, that he did not like to speak to them about a decision as he would have done if they had been less amiable characters.

He had stopped with them for a week and during the last night, the Spirit of God visited him so that he could not sleep. These people, he said, have been very kind to me and I have not been faithful to them. I must do it before I go. I must tell them that whatever good thing they have, if they do not believe in Jesus they are lost. He arose and prayed. After praying he still felt contention in his spirit. His old nature said, I cannot do it, but the Holy Spirit seemed to say, Leave them not without warning. At last he thought of a device and prayed God to accept it. He wrote upon a diamond-shaped pane of glass in the window with his ring these words:One thing you lack.

He could not bring himself to speak to them, but went his way with many a prayer for their conversion. He had no sooner gone than the good woman of the house, who was a great admirer of his, said, I will go up to his roomI want to look at the very place where the man of God has been. She went up and noticed on the window pane those words, One thing you lack. It struck her with conviction in a moment. Ah, she said, I thought he did not care much about us, for I knew he always pleaded with those with whom he stopped and when I found that he did not do so with us, I thought we had vexed him, but I see how it washe was too tender in mind to speak to us.

She called her daughters up. Look there, girls, she said, see what Mr. Whitefield has written on the window, One thing you lack. Call up your father. And the father came up and read that, too, One thing you lack, and around the bed where the man of God had slept they all knelt down and sought that God would give them the one thing they lacked. And before they left that chamber they had found that one thing and the whole household rejoiced in Jesus! It is not long ago that I met with a friend, one of whose Church members preserves that very pane of glass in her family as an heirloom.

Now, if you cannot admonish and warn in one way, do it in another! But take care to clear your soul of the blood of your relatives and friends, so that it may never crimson your garments and accuse you before Gods bar. So live and so speak and teach, by some means or other, that you shall have been faithful to God and faithful to the souls of men.

III. I must now take you to a third point. We have had the missionary disciple and his great object. We have now, thirdly, HIS WISE METHODS. I have touched upon this subject already, but I could not help it. Andrew, being zealous, was wise. Earnestness often gives prudence and puts a man in the possession of tact, if not of talent. Andrew used what ability he had. If he had been as some young men are of my acquaintance, he would have said, I would like to serve God. How I would like to preach! And I would require a large congregation.

Well, there is a pulpit on every street in Londonthere is a most wide and effectual door for preaching in this great city of ours beneath Gods blue sky. But this young zealot would rather prefer an easier berth than the open air, and, because he is not invited to the largest pulpits, does nothing. How much better it would be if, like Andrew, he began to use the ability he had among those who are accessible to him, and from there stepped to something else and from that to something else, advancing year by year!

Sirs, if Andrew had not been the means of converting his brother, the probabilities are that he never would have been an Apostle. Christ had some reason in the choice of His Apostles to their office and perhaps the ground of His choice of Andrew as an Apostle was thisHe is an earnest man, he brought me Simon Peter. He is always speaking privately to individuals. I will make an Apostle of him. Now, you young men, if you become diligent in tract distribution, diligent in the Sunday school, you are likely men to be made into ministers. But if you stop and do nothing until you can do everything, you will remain uselessan impediment to the Church instead of being a help to her!

Dear Sisters in Jesus Christ, you must, none of you, dream that you are in a position in which you can do nothing at all. That is such a mistake in Providence as God cannot commit. You must have some talent entrusted to you and something given you to do which no one else can do. Out of this whole structure of the human body, every little muscle, every single cell has its own secretion and its own work. And though some physicians have said this and that organ might be spared, I believe that there is not a single thread in the whole embroidery of human nature that could well be sparedthe whole of the fabric is required.

So in the mystical body, the Church, the least member is necessary. The most uncomely member of the Christian Church is necessary for its growth. Find out, then, what your sphere is and occupy it! Ask God to tell you what is your niche and stand in it, occupying the place till Jesus Christ shall come and give you your reward! Use what ability you have and use it at once! Andrew proved his wisdom in that he set great store by a single soul. He bent all his efforts at first upon one man. Afterwards, Andrew, through the Holy Spirit, was made useful to scores, but he began with one. What a task for the mathematician, to value one soul! One soul sets all Heavens bells ringing by its repentance. One sinner that repents makes angels rejoice! What if you spend a whole life pleading and laboring for the conversion of that one child? If you win that pearl it shall pay you your lifes worth. Be not, therefore, dull and discouraged because your class declines in numbers, or because the mass of those with whom you labor reject your testimony.

If a man could earn but one in a day he might be satisfied. One what? asks one. I meant not one penny, but 1,000 pounds. Ah, you say, that would be an immense reward. So if you earn but one soul you must reckon what that one isit is one for numeration, but for value it exceeds all that earth could show. What would it profit a man if he gained the whole world and lost his soul? And what loss would it be to you, dear Brother, if you did lose all the world and gained your soul and God made you useful in the gaining of the souls of others? Be content and labor in your sphere, even if it is small, and you will be wise.

You may imitate Andrew in not going far afield to do good. Many Christians do all the good they can five miles off from their own house, when the time they take to go there and back might be well spent in the vineyard at home. I do not think it would be a wise regulation of the parochial authorities if they required the inhabitants of St. Mary, Newington, to remove the snow from the pavement of St. Pancras and the inhabitants of St. Pancras to keep the pavement of St. Mary, Newington, clean. It is best and most convenient that each householder should sweep before his own doorand so it is our duty, as Believers, to do all the good we can in the place where God has been pleased to locate us and especially in our own households.

If every man has a claim upon me, much more my own offspring. If every woman has some demand upon me as to her soul, so far as my ability goes, much more such as are of my own flesh and blood. Piety must begin at home as well as charity. Conversion should begin with those who are nearest to us in ties of relationship. Brothers and Sisters, during this month I stir you upnot to be attempting missionary labors for India, not to be casting eyes of pity across to Africa, not to be occupied so much with tears for popish and heathen landsas for your own children, your own flesh and blood, your own neighbors, your own acquaintances. Lift up your cry to Heaven for them and then afterwards you shall preach among the nations!

Andrew goes to Cappadocia in his later life, but he begins with his brother. And you shall labor where you please in years to come, but first of all your own household! First of all those who are under your own shadow must receive your guardian care. Be wise in this thing. Use the ability you have and use it among those who are near at hand. Perhaps somebody will be saying, How did Andrew persuade Simon Peter to come to Christ? Two or three minutes may be spent in answering that enquiry. He did so, first, by narrating his own personal experience. He said, We have found the Messiah.

What you have experienced of Christ tell to others. He did so next by intelligently explaining to him what it was he had found. He did not say he had found someone who had impressed him, but he knew not who He was. He told him he had found Messiah, that is, Christ. Be clear in your knowledge of the Gospel and your experience of it and then tell the Good News to those whose soul you seek. Andrew had power over Peter because of his own decided conviction. He did not say, I hope I have found Christ, but, I have found Him. He was sure of that! Get full assurance of your own salvation. There is no weapon like it. He that speaks doubtingly of what he would convince another, asks that other to doubt his testimony. Be positive in your experience and your assurance, for this will help you.

Andrew had power over Peter because he put the good news before him in an earnest fashion. He did not say to him, as though it were a commonplace fact, The Messiah has come, but no, he communicated it to him as the most weighty of all messages with becoming tones and gestures, I doubt not, We have found the Messiah, which is called Christ!

Now then, Brothers and Sisters, to your own kinsfolk tell your belief, your enjoyments, and your assurance! Tell all judiciously, with assurance of the truth of it, and who can tell whether God may not bless your work?

IV. My time is past. I meant to have spoken of THE SWEET REWARD Andrew had. His reward being that he won a soulwon his brothers soulwon such a treasure! He won no other than that Simon who at the first cast of the Gospel net, when Christ had made him a soul-fisherman, caught 3,000 souls at a single haul! Peter, a very prince in the Christian Church! One of the mightiest of the servants of the Lord, in all his later usefulness, would be a comfort to Andrew. I should not wonder but what Andrew would say in days of doubt and fear, Blessed be God that He has made Peter so useful! Blessed be God that ever I spoke to Peter! What I cannot do, Peter will help to do. And while I sit down in my helplessness, I can feel thankful that my dear brother, Peter, is honored in bringing souls to Christ.

In this house today there may sit an unconverted Whitefield! In your class this afternoon there may be an unsaved John Wesley, a Calvin, and a Luthermute and ingloriousyet who is to be called, by Gods Grace, through you. Your fingers may yet wake to ecstasy the living heart that up till now has not been tuned to the praise of Christ! You may kindle the fire which shall light up a sacred sacrifice of a consecrated life to Christ! Only be up and doing for the Lord Jesus! Be importunate and prayerful! Be zealous and self-sacrificing. Unite with us, during this month, in your daily prayers!

Constantly, while in business, let your hearts go up for the blessing, and I make no doubt of it, that, when we have proved our God by prayer, He will pour us down such a blessing that we shall not have room to receive it! The Lord make it so, for His names sake. Amen.

*PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMONJohn 1:19-51.*  
Adapted from The C.H. Spurgeon Collection, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307.  
Sermon #2375 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

FOUND BY JESUSAND FINDING JESUS   
NO. 2375

**A SERMON INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS DAY, AUGUST 26, 1894. DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, JUNE 24 ,1888.

**The day following, Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and He found Philip, and said to him, Follow Me. Now Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael, and said to him, We have found Him, of whom Moses in the Law, and the Prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. John 1:43-45.**

FOR a soul to come to Jesus is the grandest event in its history! It is spiritually dead till that day, but it then begins to liveand a saved man may reckon his age from the time in which he first knew the Lord. That day of first knowing Christ is important in the highest degree because it affects all the mans past life. It sheds another light on all the years that have gone by. If he has lived in sin, as no doubt he has, the transaction of that day blots out all the sin. The day in which a man comes to Christthat very dayhis transgressions and iniquities are blotted out, even as the thick clouds are driven from the sky when Gods strong wind chases them away! Is not that a grand day, in which our sins are cast into the depths of the sea so that from then on it can be said of them, They may be sought for, but they shall not be found; yes, they shall not be, says the Lord?

I say that the day in which a soul comes into contact with Christ is the greatest day of its history because all the past is changed by it! And, as for the present, what a different life does a man begin to live on the day in which he finds the Lord! He commences to live in the Light of God instead of being dead in the darkness! He begins to enjoy the privileges of liberty, instead of suffering the horrors of slavery! He is started on the way to Heaven, instead of continuing on the road to Hell! He is such a new creature that he cannot tell how changed he is. One said to me, Sir, the change in me is of this kindeither the whole world is altered, or else I am. So is it when we are brought to know Christit is a real, total, radical change.

With many, it is a most joyous alteration. They feel like the man who had been lame, and who, when Peter spoke to him in the name of Jesus, and lifted him up so that his feet and ankle bones received strength, was not satisfied with walking, for we read, He, leaping up, stood and walked, and entered with them into the Temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God. He was walking, leaping and praising God! Do you wonder at it? If you had lost the use of your legs for a while, you would feel like leaping and praising God when you had them all right, again! And thus is it with a soul when it first finds the Savior. Oh, happy, happy day when the miraculous hand of Christ takes away the infirmities of the soul and makes the lame man to leap as a hart, and causes the tongue of the dumb to sing!

The day in which a man comes to Christ is also a wonderful day in its effect upon all his future. It is as when the helm of a ship is put right aboutthe man now sails in a totally different direction. His future will never be what his past was. There may be faults. There may be infirmities and shortcomings, but there will never be the old love of sin any more. Sin shall not have dominion over you. This is Gods own promise to us, given through His servant, Paul. When Christ comes to our soul, He so breaks the neck of sin, that though it lives a struggling, dying life and often makes a deal of howling in the heart, yet it is doomed to die. The Cross of Christ has broken its back and broken its neck, too, and die it must! Henceforth the man is bound for holiness and bound for Heaven!

Now, dear Friends, have any of you come to Christ? I know that you have, the great mass of you, and I bless God, and so do you, that it is so with you. But if there are any of you who have never come to the Savior, I wish that this might be the night when you should find Him. I am but a poor lame preacheryou are not often troubled with the sight of one sitting down and preachingyet I think that if I had lost my legs and had always to lie on my back, I would like, even then, to preach Christ Crucified, and to

*Tell to sinners round,*

*What a dear Savior I have found.*   
I do pray that some of you, tonight, made to think all the more by the infirmity of the preacher, may be led to seek and to find the Savior. And then it shall be a happy day, indeed, for you, as it has been for so many more.

I am going to talk to you about Philips conversion and first, I ask you to notice, in our text, the converts description of it Philip found Nathanael and said to him, We have found Him, of whom Moses in the Law, and the Prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. That is Philips description of itWe have found Jesus. It was a true description, but it was not all the truth, so, in the second place, we will notice the Holy Spirits description of itThe day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and He found Philip. Philips account of the incident is that he found Christ, but the Holy Spirits record of it is that Christ found Philip. They are both true, however, although the latter is the fuller. We will talk a little about both descriptions of Philips conversion.

I. First then, THE CONVERTS DESCRIPTION OF HIS COMING TO CHRIST is given in these words, We have found...Jesus, and what he says is perfectly true.

If any of you is saved, it will be by finding Christby your personally making a discovery of Him, as that man did who found the treasure that was hid in the field. There must be a search for Christ, but if there is a search for Him, we may be certain of this one thingthere will first be a consciousness of needing Him.

Philip had sought Christ, or else he would never have said that he had found Him, but, before that, Philip knew that there was need of a Messiah. When he looked round about on the world and on the Church, he said to himself, Oh, that the promised Messiah would come! There is great need of Him. The people need Him, the Church needs Him, the world needs Him. When Philip looked into his own heart, he said, Oh, for the coming of the Messiah! I feel that I need Him! I have urgent need of Him.

Dear Hearer, do you feel that you need a Savior? You never will seek Him until you feel your need of Him. You must recognize that there is sin in you, sin for which you cannot make Atonement, sin that you cannot overcome. You must realize that you need another and a stronger arm than your own, that you need Divine help, that you need One who can be your Brother to sympathize with you, and be patient with you, and yet who can be the Mighty God to conquer all your sin for you! You need a Saviorthat is the first thing that will prompt you to search for Him.

Needing a Messiah, Philip read the Scriptures concerning Him. He speaks about Moses and the Prophets and of what they had written concerning the promised Deliverer. O my dear Hearers, if you need to find Christ, you must search the Scriptures, for they testify of Him! Oh, that you did search the Scriptures, more, with the definite objective of finding the Savior! Probably the great majority of unconverted people never read their Bibles at all, or they read only just enough to satisfy their curiosity, or their conscience. Perhaps they read the Bible as a part of literature which cannot be quite ignored, but they do not take down the Holy Book and read it carefully and prayerfully, saying, Oh, that I might find holiness, here! Oh, that I might find Christ, here! If they did, it would not be long before they found Jesus. Well does Dr. Watts sing

*Laden with guilt and full of fears,   
I fly to You, my Lord,   
And not a glimpse of hope appears   
But in Your written Word!   
The volume of my Fathers Grace   
Does all my griefs assuage,   
Here I behold my Saviors face   
Almost on every page.*

He who reads the Bible with the view of finding Christ will not be long before some passage of Scripture will seem to leap up to attract his attention, as though it were set on fireand then it will speak to him of Jesus, whispering to him of the great Sacrifice on Calvary and speaking to his heart of Divine Love and Mercy. Philip was a searcher after Christ in the place where Christ loves to bein the pages of Scriptureand you must be the same if you desire to find Jesus!

But then Philip also gave himself to prayer. We are not told so, but we feel sure of it. He asked the Lord to reveal Christ to him, to guide him to where the Christ would be, to let him know the Christ. Oh, if you want to be saved, be much in prayer! I do not mean merely saying prayerswhat is the good of that? I do not mean simply saying fine words of your own, merely for the sake of uttering them. Prayer is communing with God! It is asking the Lord for what you really feel that you need. What wagon loads of sham prayers are shot down at Gods door, as if they were so much rubbish thrown away! Let it not be so with your prayers, but speak to the Lord out of your very soul when you come to the Throne of Grace. I cannot give you a better prayer than the one we have been singing

*Gracious Lord, incline Your ear,   
My requests vouchsafe to hear!   
Hear my never ceasing cry   
Give me Christ, or else I die!   
Lord, deny me what You will,   
Only ease me of my guilt.   
Suppliant at Your feet I lie,   
Give me Christ, or else I die!   
You freely save the lost.   
Only in Your Grace I trust:   
With my earnest suit comply   
Give me Christ, or else I die!   
You have promised to forgive   
All who in Your Son believe   
Lord, I know You cannot lie   
Give me Christ, or else I die!*

With the open Bible before you to guide your understanding, kneel down and say, O God, graciously reveal Christ to me by Your Holy Spirit. Bring me to know Him! Bring me, this day, to find Him as my own Savior!

It is certain, also, that Philip realized that he might claim the Messiah for himself. One of the things that every man, who would find the Savior must do is to make sure of his right to come and take the Savior. The question that puzzles many is, May I have the Savior? My dear Friends, every sinner in the world is permitted to come and trust the Savior, if he wills to do so. Whoever will, let him take the water of life freely. But, asks some troubled soul, will Christ have me? That is not the questionthe question is, Will you have Christ? He says, Him that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out. It is you who cast out the Savior, not the Savior who casts you out! The bolt to the door is on the insideit is you who have bolted it and it is you who must undo the bolt and invite the Savior to enter your heart. He is willing enough to come inwherever there is a soul that wants Him, He comes at once! Therefore, do not raise any quibbling questions about whether a sinner may come to Christ, or may not come! Is he not commanded to come? We are told to preach the Gospel to every creature, and He who gave us our great commission also added, He that believes and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believes not shall be damned.

Philip accepted Christ as the Messiah. Do you ask, What am I to do that I may find the Savior? Well, what you have to do is, practically, thisaccept Him! If you were sick and the doctor stood before you with the medicine ready prepared, you would not say, What am I to do with this medicine, Sir? Am I to rub my hand on the outside of the bottle? You know very well that there are certain directions as to how much is to be taken and how often. What you have to do with the medicine is to take it! But I cannot make that medicine work for my restoration. Who said you could? All you have to do is to take it. It is just this that you have to do with Christtake Him, accept Him, receive Him. Remember the 12th verse of this chapter out of which our text is takenAs many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name.

That is it, you see, receive Him, believe on His name. But surely I am to do some good works. Certainly, you will do good works after you have received Christ. But for your souls salvation, you are to do no good works, but simply to receive Christ. Oh, but I must lead a holy life! Yes, and you will lead a holy life after you have received Christ. But in order to the leading of a holy life you must have a new heartand to get a new heartyou have to receive Christ! He will change you, He will renew you, He will make you a new creature in Himself! What you have to do is to receive Him and to believe on His name. O my dear Hearers, I trust that I am speaking to some, this evening, who will understand what I am saying! I fear that I am addressing many who will not believe, though I may put the Truth of God as plainly as it can be preached. You know that you may hold a candle right against a blind mans eyes and yet he will not see, even then. The Holy Spirit must open your eyes to see what is meant by this receiving Christ, or else you will not understand what you are to do. You are not to give anything to Christyou are to take all from Him! You are not to bring anything to Christyou are to come to Him just as you areand He will bring to you everything that you need. Then, when you have accepted Him by the simple act of faith, you will say with Philip, We have found Jesus! That is the converts description and a very good one, tooWe have found Jesus.

II. But now, secondly, what is THE HOLY SPIRITS DESCRIPTION? I will read to you the very words again. Here they areThe day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and He found Philip. Jesus finds Philip before Philip finds Jesus. Philip finds Jesus because Jesus has found Philip.

Now, notice, that this is the previous work. It came before Philips own finding. Jesus would go forth into Galilee to find Philip. Dear Friends, I remember very well that after I had found the Lord, I did not, at first, fully understand the Doctrines of Grace. I had heard them preached, but I had not comprehended them. I think at the time I would have been very much puzzled with the Doctrine of Election if anybody had spoken to me about it. But I was sitting down, one day, gratefully reflecting on what God had done for me. I knew that my sins were pardoned, I knew that I was accepted in Christ Jesus and I knew that I was renewed in heart and in one moment the revelation came to meAll this is the work of God! The instant I saw that Truth of God, I said to myself, Yes, that is the fact, and God be glorified for it! But why has this great work been worked in me?

I knew that there was no merit in me before the Lord had dealt in mercy with my soul, so I said to myself, This is the effect of Sovereign, Distinguishing Grace. Then I understood in a moment how it is that God begins with us and that it is Gods will and Gods eternal purpose, which, after all, lie deeper down than our will or our purposeand Gods will and Gods eternal purpose must have the Glory! What a revelation it was to me! I saw the Doctrines of Grace immediately and I think that anybody who has been brought to find the Savior and who, prayerfully studies the reasons for his salvation, can see the same Truths of God that the Lord revealed to me.

Because, first of all, you began to be thoughtful, did you not? Who made you thoughtful? You would never have found the Savior if you had not become thoughtful instead of careless and indifferent. Who made you think of Divine things? What influence was it which worked upon you and caused you to feel that you must think about eternity, and Heaven, and Hell? Surely it was God the Holy Spirit going forth, in the name of Jesus Christ, and dealing with you in mercy!

Then you had a sense of your need and of your sinfulness. There was a time when you had no such sense. Who gave it to you? Where do you think that repentance, that sorrow for sin, that desire after Christ came from? Did all that grow in your own fallen human nature? Ah, believe me, that dunghill never brought forth such fair flowers as these! No, it was Christ who sowed the good Seed in your soulit was He who made you feel your need of Him!

Next, when you read the Bible, you understood it. You perceived that Jesus was the only Savior of sinners. You saw His fitness to meet your case and you understood the plan of salvation. Who made you understand it? I know that it is plain enough for a child to comprehend, but no one ever understands spiritual things except by the operation of the Spirit of God! It was the Holy Spirit who gave you the spiritual power by which you were able to grasp the simple Truth concerning the way of salvation.

Then you began to pray. I have already spoken of that matter. But who taught you to pray? You had not been accustomed to real prayeryou had often had great mouthfuls of wordsthat was all. But now you began to cry, God be merciful to me, a sinner! Oh, the groaning of your spirit and the anguish of your heart as you cried to God! Who gave you that anguish? Who broke you all to pieces and made every broken bone cry out for mercy? Who, indeed, but Christ who worked mightily in your soul by the power of the Holy Spirit?

And when you yielded yourself up to Christ, when you believed in Jesus and found salvation, where did that faith come from? Is it not always the work of the Spirit of God? Is not faith the gift of God and do you not confess that it is so in your case? Once, when I was a little child, I thought I saw a needle moving across the table and I would have been wondering who made the needle march as it did, but I was old enough to understand that somebody was moving a magnet underneath the table and the needle was following the magnet which I could not see. Thus the Lord, with His mighty magnet of Grace, is often at work upon the hearts of men, and we think that their desire after God and their faith in Christ are of themselves. In a sense, the desire and the faith are their own, but there is a Divine Force that is at work upon them, producing these results! It is Jesus finding Philip, though Philip does not know it. Philip thinks that he is finding Jesus, but behind the veil it is Jesus finding Philip! This was the previous work.

And, dear Friends, this was very delightful work for the Lord Jesus Christ. Notice how it is putThe day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and He found Philip. O my blessed Lord, how He will go forth to find a soul! A journey is never too long for Him and He never wastes a day. The day following Jesus would go forth, and He found Philip. Oh, may my Lord delight to come forth and find some of you! You are, tonight, in a place where He has found a good many. I pray that He may find some of you. Perhaps you do not know how it was that you came here. You did not mean to come out, tonight, but here you are in this crowd, in the thick of this great throng. My Lord has found many a precious jewel hereto itself it seemed nothing but a poor pebble, but to Him it was a diamond of the first water! O my Master, find some more of Your jewels tonight! Lord Jesus, come and find Philip, and find Mary, and then let Philip and Mary declare that they have found You!

When our dear Master goes forth to find a soul, it is very effectual work. He said to Philip, Follow Me, and Philip at once followed Him. Christ did not need to preach a long sermon. His discourse contained only two words, Follow Me. I will gladly end my sermon here if my Master will preach to some of you His two-worded sermon, Follow Me, Follow Me, Follow Me! Come, poor Soul, you do not know the way! Follow Me. You need someone to go before you, to be your leader, Follow Me. You need someone to be your shelter, your companion, your all, Follow Me. That is what you have to do, good woman. You have been worrying about what you have heard from different preachers. Christ says to you, Follow Me. That is what you have to do, young man! You have been reading those modern thought books till you do not know whether you are on your head or on your heels. Burn them! Jesus says, Follow Me. I know that some of you have been distracted with all sorts of silly talklet that go to the dogs. Jesus says, Follow Me. The crucified Savior says, Follow Me. Take Him for your Atonement! The risen Savior says, Follow Me. Take Him for your life! The Savior on the Throne of God says, Follow Me. Take Him for your joy! The Savior coming in Glory hereafter says, Follow Me. Take Him to be your hope! Follow Me. Follow Methat is the text for tonightand that is the sermon, too! Jesus said to Philip, Follow Me, and Philip followed Him, directly. And he not only followed Christ, but he immediately began to try to get others to follow Him!

Please notice, also, that Philip was found by Christ in a very different way from the other disciples. Two of them had been found through the teaching of John the Baptist, but Philip had apparently had no teaching. Another of the little company had been found through the private call of his brother. Philip may not have had any relative or friend to speak to him, but the Savior just said to him, Follow Me, and he followed Him! Dear Friends, do not begin comparing your conversion with somebody elses. If the Lord Jesus Christ calls you and says to you, Follow Me, and you follow Him, if there never was another soul converted in exactly the same way, it does not matter at all! If you have come to Him, if you have trusted in Him, you are saved.

The pith of all that I have to say is this. Do not get to worrying yourselves, as some of you do, about Gods eternal purpose and about the secret working of the Holy Spiritand about how this can be consistent with your following Christ when He bids you. They are perfectly consistent! Some persons have asked me, at times, to reconcile these two things, and I have said to them, Very well, tell me the difficulties, and I will reconcile them. It would be quite as easy to state them as to meet them, for, in fact, there are none! Oh, but, says one, you tell me to believe in Christ and yet you constantly preach that faith is the work of the Spirit of God! I know that I do. You say that God has a chosen people. Yes, I do. And yet you say that men are to choose Christ? I do. Well, how do you reconcile those two things? Show me that there is any difficulty about the two things and then I will reconcile them. You imagine the difficulty, for there is none in reality! There does not exist any in practical life!

I believe that God has predestinated whether I am going down to the Lords Supper at the close of this service, but I shall go down as well as my legs can carry me. Oh, you say, you make it out to be a matter of your own free will? Yes, I do. And yet you believe it to be Gods eternal purpose? Yes, I do. Well, then, reconcile the two things. Again I say that there is no difficulty in the case! There is nothing to be reconciled, for both statements are true! You might as well ask me to reconcile the land and the water, or to reconcile the dog-star, Sirius, and a farthing rushlight. There is no quarrel between them and I have no time to waste on needless argument. Come to Christ! And if you do, it will be because the Holy Spirit draws you! If you find the Savior, it will be because the Savior first found you! Perhaps, in Heaven, you may see some difficulties and get them explained. Down here you need not see them and you need not ask to have them explained. Salvation is all of Gods Grace, from first to lastyet is it true that the Grace of God leads men to do what Moses did, according to our subject this morning [See Sermon #2030, Volume 34MosesHis Faith and DecisionRead/download entire sermon at http://www.spurgeongems.org .] to make a choice and to choose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. God grant that you may make an equally wise choice!

I have done when I have said this one thing more. Philip, Peter and Andrew were all of BethsaidaNow Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. These three good men, these three Apostles, were all of Bethsaida. That ought to be some comfort to many of you, my dear Hearers, because there are numbers of you who are here, tonight, who are of Bethsaida. Sitting all round me, I see people who, I believe, are of Bethsaida. Oh, you say, we were never there in all our lives! Listen. Bethsaida was one of the places in which Christ had done many of His mighty works and you remember that when the people repented not, Jesus uttered over them that sad lamentation, Woe unto you, Chorazin! Woe unto you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the Day of Judgment than for you. And you, Capernaum, which are exalted unto Heaven, shall be brought down to Hell: for if the mighty works which have been done in you, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the Day of Judgment, than for you.

Now, there are some of you here who have heard the Gospel for many years and have seen the power of the Grace of God in your familiesand it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon, and for Sodom and Gomorrah in the Day of Judgement, than it will be for you, inasmuch as you have rejected the Savior! But, as there were these three menPhilip and Peter and Andrew who were of Bethsaidaand I should think that the home of James and John was not very far off from the same placewhy should you not come to Christ? Why should you not become members of His Church and, if it is the Lords will, preachers of His Word? God grant that it may be so!

Oh, how I long in my soul for the salvation of every one of you! Many of you who have come here, tonight, are strangers to me. I trust that you will not be strangers to my Master! Tonight, I pray you, here in the very heat of midsummer, before the harvest shall be past and the summer shall be ended, Seek you the Lord while He may be found! Call you upon Him while He is near! Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon. Receive Christ! Trust in Him! God grant that you may do so, for Jesus sake! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **John 1:29-51**

Verse 29. The next dayThis chapter is a record of the events that occurred on different days. Sometimes God does great things in a single dayone extraordinary day may have more in it than a hundred ordinary years! It is well for us to try to live by the day and not to let any day pass without some good action having been done in it. Let us never have to cry, I have lost a day.

29. John saw Jesus coming unto him, and said, Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world. We ought never to be slow in delivering such a message as that which John the Baptist uttered! I do not wonder that as soon as John knew that Jesus was the Messiah, he told the good news to others! Have you found Jesus? Tell your brother, tonight, or, if not tonight, go as soon as you can, and bid him, Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.

30-34. This is He of whom I said, After me comes a Man who is preferred before me: for He was before me. And I knew Him not: but that He should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water. And John bore record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from Heaven like a dove, and it abode upon Him. And I knew Him not: but He that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom you shall see the Spirit descending and remaining on Him, the same is He which baptizes with the Holy Spirit. And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God. John was acquainted with Jesus, for they were related to one another, and were brought up together, but he did not officially know Him as the Messiah until He saw the Holy Spirit descending and remaining on Him, for that was the Lords token by which he was to recognize Him. He refused, therefore, to follow any knowledge or judgment of his own. He would not know Jesus as the Christ until he saw the private sign for which the Lord had told him to look. As soon as he saw that, then John said that he knew Him, and as soon as he thus knew Him, he began to preach Him! Has the Lord given you in your soul a token that Christ is your Savior? Do you know Him by the witness of the Holy Spirit? Then go and speak of Him to others and, like John, say, Behold the Lamb of God! Let this be your one business between here and Heaven.

35, 36. Again the next day after John stood, and two of his disciples; and looking upon Jesus as He walked, he said, Behold the Lamb of God! Again the next day. See how the Evangelist goes by days in his record. John preached the same sermon two days runningand if you proclaim Christ and Him crucifiedyou may preach Him 200 days running, but you will never preach Him too often! If you preach Christ as the Lamb of God, the great Sin-Bearer, you may be always at that blessed work. There are some who very seldom preach Christ as bearing the sin of men, so that others of us must do it all the more often to make up for their shortcomings. As for me, I can say with Charles Wesley

*His only righteousness I show,   
His saving Truth proclaim;   
Tis all my business here below,   
To cry, Behold the Lamb!*

37. And the two disciples heard Him speak and they followed Jesus. It is hard preaching when you preach away your congregation, but John did this deliberately. He wished these two no longer to be his disciples, but to become the disciples of Jesus. He had mastered the meaning of his own words, He must increase, but I must decrease, and he was quite willing that it should be soThe two disciples heard Him speak and they followed Jesus.

38, 39. Then Jesus turned and saw them following, and said unto them, What do you seek? They said unto Him, Rabbi, (which is to say, being interpreted, Master,) where do You dwell? He said to them, Come and see. He gave them a full invitation to come to the place where He tarried and see for themselves. That is what Jesus still says, Come and see. If any of you want to know Him, Come and see. You are perfectly welcome to Come and see all that Jesus has to show you!

39. They came and saw where He dwelt and abode with Him that day: for it was about the tenth hour. The best part of that day was the portion which they spent with Jesusit was the best day they had ever enjoyed, for they lived with Jesus! It was also the beginning of better days for these two disciples, for, having once lived with Jesus, they learned never to live without Him. Oh, that we, also, may abide with Him!

40, 41. One of the two which heard John speak, and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peters brother. He first found his own brother, Simon, and said to him, We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. Where should missionary work begin? A brother should begin with his brother. It is all very well to have a desire to go to the heathen in Africa, but you had better begin work as a missionary in England, and then go to Africa. He who cannot win his brother is not likely to win anybody else. He first found his own brother, Simon. This Andrew, who was afterwards to bring so many to Christ, must begin at home and succeed there. If we are not faithful with one or two relatives, how can God trust us with a pulpit and a congregation?

42. And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, He said, You are Simon the son of Jonas. Simon, son of a dove, your name may point you out as being timidmind where you wing your flight.

42. You shall be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, a stone. Something more solid than the son of a pigeon! Something more stable than the son of a dove! Christ changes mens names and changes their natures, too. He can make the most fickle of us to become firm and steadfast. Oh, that He would thus work by His Grace upon us!

43, 44. The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and found Philip, and said to him, Follow Me. Now Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. The day following. See, Friends, what a wonderful chapter this is! There is a book called, The Book of Days. I call this chapter, the Chapter of Days. Every day seems memorable for some great event. Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter, was a poor, miserable village, but God greatly honored it. Great works often begin in little places. The best of beings came out of the despised town of Nazareth! And three of the best of menPhilip, Andrew and Petercame out of Bethsaida.

45. Philip found Nathanael, and said to him, We have found Him, of whom Moses in the Law, and the Prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. True faith may make blunders. Jesus was not the son of Joseph, except by reputation, and He was Jesus of Bethlehem quite as much as He was Jesus of Nazarethbut true faith is accepted of God even though it makes some mistakes. It believes Gods Word and it believes Gods Son and, therefore, it shall be accepted.

46. And Nathanael said unto him, Can there be any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip said to him, Come and see. Christ had said, Come and see. Now Philip used the same words, Come and see. It is always right to follow the example that the Lord Jesus has set for us!

47, 48. Jesus saw Nathanael coming to Him and said of him, Behold an Israelite, indeed, in whom is no guile! Nathanael said to Him, When did

You know me? You may remember that, a short time ago, I preached a sermon upon Nathanael. [See Volume 34, No. 2021, NathanaelOr, the Ready Believer and His Reward.Read/download entire sermon at http://www.spurgeongems.org .] He was a kind of Jewish John Blunt, a man who always spoke his mind. He had a mind and he had a mind to speak itand he spoke his mind! So, the moment that Christ spoke of him, he asked, When did You know me? He was conscious that Christ knew him and, being a man who was altogether free from cunning and craftiness, he pointedly asked how Christ came to know him.

48. Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you. What was he doing under the fig tree? Jesus knew and Nathanael knew, but nobody else knew and, perhaps, nobody else ever will know. That was a secret between Christ and Nathanael. He was doing something there that he regarded as quite privateand the Saviors allusion to his being under the fig tree was the most plain proof he could have of Christs Divinity. Oh, he thought, He who can remind me of that secret transaction must be God.

49, 50. Nathanael answered and said to Him: Rabbi, You are the Son of God; You are the King of Israel. Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said unto you, I saw you under the fig tree, do you believe? You shall see greater things than these. You who are honest in heart. You who can be convinced by a single argumentand, mark you, one good argument is as convincing as 20 good arguments, and a great deal better than a 100 bad onesyou who are willing to be led by a single thread shall be led! If you are willing to believe on what is clear evidence, you shall have more evidenceyou shall see greater things than these. God will show much to that man who has eyes with which to see. He who will not see and does not wish to see, shall grow more and more blindand the darkness shall thicken about him.

51. And He said to him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter you shall see Heaven open and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man. He could see actually what Jacob saw only in a dream when he beheld that wonderful stairway of Light which leads from earth to Heaven, even the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by His Manhood and His Godhead bridges the distance between us and God!

HYMNS FROM OUR OWN HYMN BOOK605, 576, 606.  
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FINDING AND FOLLOWING CHRIST   
NO. 3225

A SERMON   
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 24H, 1910.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, AUGUST 21, 1870.

*We have found Him.   
John 1:45.*

[Another Sermon by Mr. Spurgeon on verses 43 to 45 is #2375, Volume 40 FOUND BY JESUSAND FINDING JESUS   
Read/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.]

I HOPE there are many here who are seeking Christ, but I feel sure that there are with us many more who can truthfully say, We have passed beyond that stage, for we have found Him. Others may declare that there never was such a Person as Jesus of Nazareth, but we know there was and still is, for, we have found Him, and we are living in happy daily fellowship with Him! We bear our glad testimony to what the Grace of God has done for us and we say with Philip, We have found Him, of whom Moses in the Law and the Prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph, whom we also worship as the Son of God.

Notice how positively Philip speaks. He had, himself, only just been found by Christ, yet he does not say, We think we have found the Messiah, or, We

hope we have found the promised Deliverer. No, without the slightest hesitation he says, We have found Him. This is a matter about which it is possible for us to be quite as positive as Philip was. There are abundant reasons why we may have a well-grounded assurance that Christ is our Savior if we have truly trusted in Him. Some have thought and said that it is not possible for us to know we are saved. Thank God that is not true and many can adopt the Inspired Language of the Apostle John and say, We know that the Son of God has come and has given us an understanding, that we may know Him that is true, and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son, Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life. Such positiveness as this is attainable, by Gods Grace, by every true Believer in Jesus Christ!

Let me remind you, first, that it ought to be so. Whether we are saved or not is a matter of the greatest importance to us. We cannot afford to let it rest upon a, perhaps, or a, maybe. If I have really found Christ, my sins are forgiven me for His sakeand this is a fact of which I ought to be quite certain. If I have found the Lord Jesus Christ, I am reconciled to God by the death of His Son, I have been adopted into the family of God, I may confidently look to God for the supply of all my needs, both for this life and for that which is to comeand I may expect to be taken at the right time to dwell with Him forever. Such glorious blessings as these ought not to be mere matters of speculation with us! Our possession of them ought to be the result of clean, unmistakable evidence. If I have not found Christ, I am in danger of death every day and of the Hell that is the everlasting prison of all unbelievers. If I have not found Christ, I am still without hope and without God in the worldcondemned alreadybecause I have not believed in the name of the only-begotten Son of God! Surely I ought not to go to bed tonight with that all-important question unsettled. I can understand a man being in doubt upon this matter, but I cannot understand his resting comfortably while it is a matter of doubt! If you are content to be in doubt as to whether you are entitled to your estates, or as to whether you are mortally diseased or not, well, those are only minor matters compared with the salvation of your souls! God forbid that you should be willing to let the far greater matter remain in suspense! Seek the aid of the Holy Spirit and never rest satisfied until you know assuredly that you have found the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior!

A poor woman, some nights ago, wrapping around herself her poor thin shawl, was walking along the street because she had nowhere else to go. And as she was passing a certain building, she saw written over the door, For the homeless. That is the place for me, she said, and in she went. Now, my Friend, are you a sinner? Then I have to tell you that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. Are you lost? Then I have to tell you that He came to seek and to save the lost. It would have done that poor woman no good at all to sit down on a rich mans doorstep and consider how poor she wasshe got what she needed by going to the Home for the Homelessand Jesus Christ is a Home for Homeless souls, so away with you, poor homeless soul, and find in Him the shelter that you need! May Gods Grace enable you to flee straight away to Christ, for if you do, He will not refuse to receive you!

Remember, also, that no real spiritual comfort can come to us until we know that we have found Christ. Perhapses and maybes are like thorns in our pillowthey prevent us from resting. Or they are like stones in a pilgrims shoesthey make walking very uncomfortable for him. To be able to say with Paul, I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day, is to have a fountain of consolation springing up within your heart! But to have to cry

*Tis a point I long to know,   
Oft it causes anxious thought   
Do I love the Lord, or no?   
Am I His, or am I not?*

is to be in continual unhappiness! The man who is in such a state as that may be safe, but he cannot have joy and peace. He must be weak, trembling and tossed to and fro, like the waves of the troubled sea when it cannot rest. It is only when we can say with David, My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed: I will sing and give praise, that there is the music of deep and lasting joy in the songs that we send up to Heaven!

Let me add that you may confidently hope to attain this assurance of knowledge because so many others have already done so. I have reminded you of Philip, John and Paul, but such knowledge as this was not confined to the Apostolic ageit is at this moment the priceless privilege of tens of thousands of Believers in the Lord Jesus Christ! If I were now to say, Let all those Brothers and Sisters who know that Christ is theirs stand up and testify to this fact, I believe that the bulk of this congregation would at once rise! And I pray that you weaker ones, you timid and trembling souls may seek Him who can work this great Grace in you, also, so that you, too, may be able to say as positively as Philip did, We have found Him.

I. Now I am going, with the Holy Spirits help, to suggest a few reflections for those to bear in mind who can say, We have found Him. And the first is thisIF WE HAVE FOUND CHRIST, HE MUST HAVE FIRST FOUND US.

Two verses (v 43) before our text, we read that this very man who had found Christ, had himself been found by Christ. It is probably true, my dear Brother or Sister in Christ, that you were brought to know the Lord through some human instrumentality. A godly father or mother, a faithful minister of the Gospel, a loving Sunday school teacher or other Christian friend. Or the reading of the Word under the guidance of the Holy Spirit may have been the means of your conversion. There is a very precious link between the instrument of your salvation and yourself which you ought never to forget. Surely we can never cease to thank God for the man or the woman whom He used to lead us out of darkness into His marvelous Light! Yet that holy man did not convert us. That gracious woman could never have given us a new heart and a right spirit. We must trace our new birth to its superhuman originit was the Lord, and the Lord alone who worked that wondrous miracle of regeneration! You has HE quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins. If the Lord has not turned you from the error of your ways, you are still in the broad road that leads to destruction! If He has not found you as the shepherd finds his lost sheep, you are still wandering on the dark mountains of sin and woe! And, as the sheep would never find its shepherd unless he first found it, so you, if you have found Christ, must first have been found by Christ!

I want you to go still further back and to remember that, inasmuch as you never imagined that it was wrong for Christ to save you, although He has not saved all other sinners and although some in your own family have not yet found Him and although some who attend the same place of worship as you do have not found Him, while you have found Him and been found by Himyou have never thought that it was wrong for Christ to make this difference between you and others. I want you to also remember that whatever Christ has done, He must have always meant to doit must have been His eternal purpose to do it! Unless you are a careless blunderer, you do not do anything without having made up your mind to do it. And certainly, the Lord Jesus Christ has not acted in this great matter of the salvation of souls without thought and deliberation! Do you not see that this brings us to the Doctrine of Election? Many people do not like that Doctrine, but all Christian people, though they may not believe it as we do, must believe that which is the very essence of itfor if there is a difference between ourselves and others, it must have been Christ who made it by His Grace! And as He made it, then it must have been right for Him to make it, and it could not have been wrong for Him to purpose to make that difference! We do not believe that Christ does anything without a plan and a purpose. And it makes no difference whether the purpose was in His mind a year ago or from all eternity! I mean that there would be the same difficulty with regard to the Doctrine, though I see no difficulty in it at all. Well then, the Lord Jesus Christ purposed from all eternity to work His good work in you by His Holy Spiritto bring you to repent of your sin and to trust in His atoning Sacrificeand, therefore, it is a part of His promise to bring you home to Heaven to dwell with Him forever! Yet there have been and still are many in this world who have not found Himmore eminent than you are, people of greater ability and loftier station. There are wise men who have never become wise unto salvation and rich men who do not possess this heavenly treasure. There are mighty kings who lord it over mighty hosts of men, who know not the Lord of Hosts and yield not homage to the Lord Jesus Christ! When you think of all this, do you not marvel that you should have been found by Christ and that you should have found Christ? Do you not wonder that God should have chosen you, that Christ should have redeemed you, that the Holy Spirit should have regenerated you? And will you not bless and praise the Lord to all eternity for making you the simple subject of His Grace while such multitudes and so many far more mighty ones have been passed by?

This teaching, which seems to me to be so simple and plain, lies at the root of the most profound Doctrines of Holy Writ and it is, at the same time, one of the most practical Truths of God in the whole of the Divine Revelation! Nothing makes us love Christ more than knowing that He has loved us with an everlasting Love and, therefore, with loving kindness has drawn us unto Himself. Nothing makes us crave for likeness to Him so much as the knowledge that He has chosen us and ordained us, that we should go and bring forth fruit and that our fruit should remain even, fruit unto holiness, and the end, everlasting life. I wish that this Truth was understood and believed by all Christians, for it is Gods Truth, and a very precious Truth. I feel sure that it is believed by many who have not recognized it or fully understood it. I remember preaching in the open air to a great crowd of miners, most of them Methodists. And as I preached, they shouted, Glory! Hallelujah! Praise the Lord, and so on. Just as they were in full cry in that fashion, I paused a moment and then said, This brings me to the Doctrine of Election. I could almost feel the cold shiver of disappointment that seemed to pass through the crowd. And it appeared likely that there would be no more Hallelujahs during that discourse. But I said to them, In your hearts you really believe that Doctrine, though you imagine you do not. And before I have finished my sermon, I will prove it to you, and many of you will shout, Praise the Lord, for it even more loudly than you were doing just now. I saw the look of incredulity upon their faces, but I went on. Here is a man who was once a drunk, a swearer, a Sabbath-breaker, a thief, a liar and everything that was bad. But a great change has somehow come over him and he is quite a new man compared with what he used to be. There is no such alteration in many of his old companions and friendswho can have made him so different from what he once was? Here is a glorious golden crown and whoever has made this man to be such a contrast to what he was before ought to have this crown placed upon his head! Then I said, Shall I put the crown on the mans own head? Did he make this change in himself? No, no came the answer from all parts of the crowd. Well then, I asked, On whose head shall I put the crown? Who is to have the glory of this mans conversion? At once they cried, The Lord, the Lord alone! Put the crown on His head. So far we were all agreed and I, therefore, asked next, Was it wrong for God to make this difference? No one dared to say that it was, so I advanced to my next question, As it was right for God to make this difference, was it not also right for God to plan beforehand that He would do so? The Lord did not act without a set purpose and, therefore, as He is to be crowned for the action, is He not also to be crowned for the purpose to do it? Yes, that He is! cried the crowd. Bless His name, hallelujah! So I won the hallelujahs, by His Grace, of my Methodist friends for the Doctrine of Election as I said I would!

We do not preach, we have never preached and we shall never preach that God has created any man for the purpose of destroying him! But we do preach and shall preach as long as we live, that salvation is of the Lord and all of Grace from first to last! And, therefore, that all the glory of it must be given to the Divine hand that worked the work, to the eternal mind that planned the work and to the great heart of love that was the Fountain and Source from which the gracious purpose sprang! The only explanation of the whole matter is the one we have so often sung

*What was there in you that could merit esteem, Or give the Creator delight?   
Twas even so, Father, you always must sing, Because it seemed good in Your sight.   
Then give all the glory to His holy name, To Him all the glory belongs,   
Be yours the high joy to still sound forth His fame, And crown Him in each of your songs.*

II. My second observation isIF WE HAVE FOUND CHRIST, LET US FOLLOW HIM. Philip found Him and followed Him all his days.   
Christ was given to be the Leader and Commander of His people, so His people should all follow Him. You have followed Him, Beloved, but can you not follow Him yet more closely? You are His disciples, but can you not learn more of Him than you have yet learned? Let us follow our Jesus promptly. I want to be in such a state of heart and mind that the moment I know what Christs will concerning me is, I do it! I would like to be a leaf borne along by the blessed current of His Divine Purpose having no will or wish to resist the sacred influences of His unerring mind and loving heartto obey His commands promptly and cheerfully and, not only to obey cheerfully, but also to suffer cheerfully if He so pleases! It is a blessed condition to be in to take anything and everything from Christ, whether it is a kiss or a blowto do anything for Christ, whether it is pleasing to the flesh or notto yield up everything for Christ, to be, indeed, a divine sacrifice for Him, which is, after all, only the reasonable service which He is fully entitled to claim from us! We read in the Revelation concerning some, These are they which follow the Lamb wherever He goes. And happy are they who imitate them, even while here on earth! Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ, I entreat you to leave no path untrodden where you can see the footprints of your Lord and Master! Jesus went to Jordans stream and was baptized there by Johnhave you followed Him in this blessed ordinance? Jesus, even while living and laboring among sinners, was separate from themare you living the separated life? What He did, let us do as far as it is in our power! What He was, let us be as far as that is possible! He was reviled, despised and rejected of menso let us count it an honor to receive similar treatment for His sake. He was content to walk on the bleak side of the hilllet us not seek the sunny side by craving the worlds esteem. Is this your hearts desire, Beloved? Do you sing  
*Through floods and flames, if Jesus leads, Ill follow where He goes?*   
Then mind that you not only sing those lines, but make them true in your life! Are any of you following Christ afar off, as Peter did? Then beware lest you fall as Peter did! Are you following Christ in your business, or do you forget Him when you are in the office or in the market? Do you follow Christ in your home, or do you forget Him when you are there? Some of you used to follow Jesus very closely and to be very warm friends of Hishave you been growing cold towards Him? Oh, let this no longer be the case! If you have found Him, follow Him and follow Him wherever He goes.   
III. Now, thirdly, IF WE HAVE FOUND CHRIST, LET US PRIZE HIM. It is no trifle that we find when we find Him, for He is the priceless pearl whose worth no man fully knows!   
If I have found Him, how shall I prove that I prize Him? First, let me be willing to lose all that I have for Him. Does my present position in life involve me in sin? Then let me leave it rather than grieve my Lord. Is my business an evil one? Then let me renounce it at once, for if I do not, I shall have to renounce Him! Have I any companions who are the enemies of Christ? Then I dare not call them my friends. Is there some dear one with whom I have entered into such close association that it will draw me away from Christ? Then, while I can, let me break the connection, for I must give up all for the Christ who gave up all for me! The captain of a vessel, when his ship is in danger of sinking, will throw the most valuable cargo into the sea if, thereby, he may save the ship and the lives of all on board. And I must be willing to part with my joys, my pleasures, my money, my friends and all that I have rather than give up my Lord and Savior, for I must have Christ at any cost!  
Further, if you have found Christ and want to prove that you can prize Him, study to find out all that you can about Him. Jesus Christ is a great mine of untold wealth and no man has ever yet perfectly explored that mine. Read the Scripture to learn all you can about Christ. Listen to any preacher or teacher who can tell you anything about Christand be sure to meditate as much as you can upon Christ. He is the chief among ten thousandyes, He is altogether lovely. At our first sight of Him, we fall in love with Him, but His choicest beauties are the hidden ones which we only find by diligent search and much fellowship with Him. As you get to know more of Him in His Person, in His work, in His office, in His promises, in His power, in His loveyou will prize Him all the more until you would not set even Heaven, itself, in comparison with Himfor what would Heaven be if He were not there?   
Further, Beloved, if you prize Christ as you ought, you will make all the use you can of Him. And He loves to be of use to His people. Is there any sin upon your conscience? Run to Him to remove it from you! Is there any trouble on your mind? Go and tell Jesus! Is there anything that is a burden to you? Cast your burdens upon Him and He will relieve you of them, or give you the Grace and strength to carry them! Remember that Jesus Christ is an everyday Savior, an all-the- year-round Savior, a whole-of-life Savior, a Savior for the body as well as for the soul! Whatever there may be lacking in you, there is nothing lacking in Him and He can supply all that you lack! He is the Bread of Life, so feed upon Him! He is the Light of the World, so see everything in the light that comes from Him! He is your All-in-All, so look for all in Him!   
Show, too, that you prize Christ as you should by letting others see how you value Him. A bride who has many precious jewels will wear them where they can be seen and admired by others. And we, too, are to put on the Lord Jesus Christ who is more precious than all the gems in the universe! Some professing Christians are apt to blush at any allusion to their Christianitybut if it is the blush of shame, they have cause to be ashamed of such blushing! I never hear of any man blushing because he is a peer of the realm, though there have been many of the so-called nobility who might well cause their fellow peers to blush. But to blush because one is a Christian, oh, this must never be! As well might we blush at being likened to an angel! Suppose the ungodly point the finger of scorn at youthat is the only way in which such people can really honor you. Will you strike your colors because the enemy attacks you? No, no! Nail the flag to the mast and fight so bravely for Christ that the enemy has to strike his colors! It is the act of a pirate to sail under another flag, so whatever ship you meet on lifes wide sea, fly the flag of your King and defy the devil and all his legions to do their worst! At home and abroad, in the House of God or in the street, in the market or wherever you may be, let friend and foe, alike, know that you belong to Christ! I would that all of us who are members of this Tabernacle might love the Lord with a far deeper and more fervent love than we have ever yet experienced. I know that there are some eminently gracious souls among us and I pray that their number may be greatly increased, but I am anxious lest, as a Church, we should fall to the low level of so many of the professing Christians of this age! Our Lord Jesus Christ deserves the very best that we can bring to Him, so let us give Him our hearts, our minds, our time, our talents and all we have, to show how greatly we prize Him whom we have found!   
IV. Fourthly, and briefly, IF WE HAVE FOUND CHRIST, LET US NEVER PART WITH HIM. Philip became one of Christs disciples, then one of His Apostlesand now he is with Christ forever!   
Tomorrow you will go, young man, into the workshop or to the counter and your companions will laugh at you if you say you are a Christian. But do not part with Christ because of the laughter of fools! Some of you will be going to the Stock Exchange or to the various markets of this great citybut part not company with Christ by doing what is wrong. Hold Him fast and keep to that which is right, honest and true, for he is a traitor to Christ who gets even a penny by an unrighteous action! Tomorrow some of you may hear that which is blasphemous or foul rebuke it in your Lords name, for he who is silent when he ought to speak is tacitly denying his Lord and Master. Again I say to you, hold Him fast however much men may scoff at you for doing so, for such a treasure as Christ is well worth holding! Let no man separate you from your Lord. If you are truly His, I am persuaded that no one and nothing shall be able to part you. Though the devil himself should try to tear Christ away from you, he cannot do it, for Christ is stronger than Satan and He holds you with a Divine grip which the devil and all his hosts cannot relax!   
I especially urge you not to let Jesus slip away from private prayer, or the reading of the Scriptures, or your intimate personal communion with Him. Make your prayers more fervent, your study of the Word more intense and real, and your daily walk with Christ more close and tender. Abide in Him! Never give Him or anyone else cause to think that you have left Him. The good soldier of Jesus Christ never has a furloughhe is like the knights of old who slept in their armor and were ready for the fray at any moment. A Christian is to always be a Christian and in every place! He may not do wrong once a year, nor once in a lifetime. What would you say to a man who told you he was only going to poison himself once? What would you think of a wife who said she was going to cease loving her husband just once? We, too, are married to Christ, so we are His and wholly Hisand only His! Hold us fast, O blessed Lover of our souls, for only so can we continue to hold You fast!

V. My last injunction is thisIF YOU HAVE FOUND CHRIST, TELL OTHERS ABOUT HIM, even as Philip said to Nathanael, We have found Him.   
I have sometimes feared that some professing Christians fancy that they are to keep Christ all to themselves. They seem to have an idea that Heaven is just   
*A little spot enclosed by Grace*   
where only they and a small select company of like-minded persons will gain admittance! I cannot congratulate them upon harboring such a notion and I very strongly urge them to imitate the example of a man who found that he had a forged bank-note in his possessionhe threw it over a hedge and ran away as fast as he could for fear anybody should think it belonged to him! Such a spirit as that seems to me to be quite contrary to the mind of Him who wept over Jerusalem and who said, How often would I have gathered the children together, even as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you would not!   
Have you found this great hive of honey and is it very sweet to your taste? Then tell others of it, for there is abundance for them and you, too. You are not like the poor people in a besieged city who feel that every mouthful that someone else eats leaves so much the less for them. Oh, no! There is bread enough and to spare in the great Fathers house, so no prodigal son need perish with hunger! At the Gospel banquet you may eat as much as you want, but there will be just as much left for others. We have to deal with the God who is Infinite and Omnipotent, whose supply is inexhaustible and who will be glad and gratified as we spread far and wide the invitations to the great feast in honor of His Son! My Brothers and Sisters in Christ, as you love Him, follow His blessed example by going after the lost sheep until you find them! If you had only common humanity, it ought to make you earnest in seeking to deliver others from going down to the Pit, by telling them of Him who has paid the ransom price for all who put their trust in Him! A battlefield must present a terrible sight to all who gaze upon it. I wish all those who are so eager for war could see the horrors of which we can scarcely bear to read. Yet this great London presents a still more terrible sight to those whose eyes have been opened to see sinners as they really are in the sight of God! Our streets swarm with the unregenerate! Many of you live next door to them when they are at home. Some of you live in the same house with them. Some even sleep in the same room with them. Plead for your husbands or wives, your brothers and sisters, your parents or childrenand plead with them as well as for them! God forbid that you should be eternally separated from those who are so near and dear to you! Pray for them night and day! You who are the Lords remembrancers, take no rest and give Him no rest, and give them no rest until they are saved! Next to your own relatives, plead with and for your employees, your employer, your neighbors and all with whom you come in contact! And then widen your sympathies and supplications until they shall embrace all of woman born! Remember Richard Krills question, Brethren, the heathen are perishing, will you let them perish? Do not neglect the heathen abroad or the heathen at home! An earnest minister said to his people one Sabbath, I am going, this week on a mission to the heathen. The deacons looked at one another, for the pastor had not mentioned the matter to them. And the members thought, We are about to lose our dear minister, but whatever has made him think of going as a missionary to the heathen? While these thoughts were passing through their minds, he quietly added, But I am not going out of this town in order to be a missionary.   
And there is no need for anybody to go out of town in order to be a missionary to the heathen! There they are, Brothers and Sisters, all around you! And you are the missionaries. There is your workgo and do itand may God bless you in itand so may many precious immortal souls through you be led to find Jesus and to trust in Him for salvation, for His name and mercys sake! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **ACTS 2:1-21.**   
[The following Exposition is the earlier portion of the one published with Sermon #3224, Volume 56REPENTANCE AND REMISSION   
Read/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.]   
Verses 1-8. And when the day of Pentecost [See Sermons #511, Volume 9  
PENTECOST and #1783, Volume 30, also named PENTECOSTRead/download both sermons, free of

charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.] was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from Heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. And there were dwelling at Jerusalem, Jews, devout men out of every nation under Heaven. Now when this was told abroad, the multitude came together and were confounded because every man heard them speak in his own language. And they were all amazed and marveled, saying, one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak, Galileans? And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born? These men, so far from being able to speak many languages, could not, by themselves, speak even one correctly! The Galileans dialect was a base degradation of the true Jewish tongue, so that the Galileans were always the subject of sneers and scoffing on account of their mispronunciation. There are several stories in the old Rabbinical writings, all intended to ridicule the Galileansyet these men had now been taught to speak their own language perfectly and, what was still more marvelouslanguages that they had never heard now came pouring forth from their lips with the greatest fluency! How wide the range of those foreign tongues was, we learn from the following verses

9-11. Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judaea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts in Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God. Babels curse was now removednot by a reversing of Gods curse, for Gods curses and blessings are both like the laws of the Medes and Persians which never can be altered. Men still spoke the tongues of confusion, but the Apostles were able to speak to them all after receiving that miraculous gift of tongues. Thus was fulfilled that promise of Jesus, He that believes on Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do because I go unto My Father. Christ never spoke with many tongues, nor did He enable His disciples to do so during His life on earth! But when He had gone back to Heaven to His Father and had received gifts for men, they were enabled to do greater works than He had accomplished by His personal ministry here below.

12,13. And they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, What means this? Others mocking, said, These men are full of new wine. That is to say, if a Libyan, for instance, had been listening to one who was preaching in the language of Cappadocia, he might think that the man was merely babbling strange sounds without any meaning in them. To others, the Inspired Speech of the Apostles was only like the incoherent utterance of drunken men!

14-20. But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said to them, You men of Judaea, and all you that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words: for these are not drunk as you suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day. But this is that which was spoken by the Prophet Joel; and it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, I will pour out of My Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see

visions [See Sermon #806, Volume 14A YOUNG MANS VISIONRead/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.] and your old men shall dream

dreams: and on My servants and on My handmaidens I will pour out in those days of My Spirit; and they shall prophesy: and I will show wonders in Heaven above and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke: the sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord comes. Doubtless this refers first to the siege of Jerusalem, when those strange portents were seen in the heavens, and afterwards to that far greater and more notable day of the Lord, the Day of Judgment, when the moon shall become as blood and the sun shall become black as sackcloth of hair.

21. And it shall come to pass, that whoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved. What a glorious Gospel verse this is! This is one of the great lifeboat-texts of the Bible. He who can get into this boat shall certainly sail to Glory in safety! Whoeverthere is no exception of character, whatever his past life may have been! Whoever shall call on the name of the Lordhere are no hard conditionsprayer, trust, confession of that trustall these make up calling upon the name of the Lord. And whoever shall do this, not only may be but, shall be saved. There is no perhaps, no maybe about itWhoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

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PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #921 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

NATHANAEL AND THE FIG TREE   
NO. 921

**DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, MARCH 20, 1870, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**Philip found Nathanael and said to him, We have found Him of whom Moses in the Law, and also the Prophets, wrote; Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. And Nathanael said to him, Can anything good come out of Nazareth?**

**Philip said to him, Come and see. Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward Him, and said of him, Behold, an Israelite, indeed, in whom is no deceit! Nathanael said to Him, How do You know me? Jesus answered and said to him, Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you. Nathanael answered and said to Him, Rabbi, You are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel! Jesus answered and said to him, Because I said to you, I saw you under the fig tree, do you believe? You will see greater things than these. And He said to him, Most assuredly, I say to you, hereafter you shall see Heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man. John 1:45-51.**

VERY often we address the Gospel to the chief of sinners. We believe it to be our duty to do this with the greatest frequency. For did not our Lord, when bidding His disciples to preach the Good News in every place, use the words, beginning at Jerusalem? Where the chief of sinners lived, there was the Gospel first to be preached. But at the same time it would show great lack of observation if we regarded all mankind as being equally gross, open offenders against God. It would not only show a want of wisdom, but it would involve a want of truthfulness.

For though all have sinned, and deserve the wrath of God, yet all unconverted men are not precisely in the same condition of mind in reference to the Gospel. In the parable of the sower we are taught that before the good seed fell upon the field at all, there was a difference in the various soils. Some of it was stony ground, another part was thorny, a third was trodden hard like a highway, while another plot is described by our Lord as honest and good ground. Although in every case the carnal mind is enmity against God, yet are there influences at work which in many cases have mitigated, if not subdued, that enmity.

While many took up stones to kill our Lord, there were others who heard Him gladly. While to this day thousands reject the Gospel, there are others who receive the Word with joy. These differences we ascribe to Gods prevenient Grace. We believe, however, that the subject of these differences is not aware that Grace is at work upon himneither is it precisely Grace in the same form as saving Gracefor the soul under its power has not yet learned its own need of Christ, or the excellency of His salvation.

There is such a thing as a preparatory work of mercy on the soul, making it ready for the yet higher work of Grace, even as the plowing comes before the sowing. We read in the narrative of the creation that before the

Divine voice said, Let there be light, darkness was upon the face of the deep, yet it is added, The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. Even so in the darkness of human nature, whereas yet no ray of living light has shone, the Spirit of God may be moving with secret energy, making the soul ready for the hour when the true light shall shine.

I believe that in our congregations there are many persons who have been mercifully restrained from the grosser vices. They exhibit everything that is pure and excellent in moral characterthey are persons who are not maliciously opposed to the Gospel and are ready enough to receive it if they did but understand it. They are even anxious to be saved by Jesus Christ, and have a reverence for His name, though as yet it is an ignorant reverence. They know so little of the Redeemer that they are not able to find rest in Him. This slenderness of knowledge is the only thing that holds them back from faith in Him.

They are willing enough to obey if they understood the command. If they had but a clear apprehension of our Lords Person and work, they would cheerfully accept Him as their Lord and Savior. I have great hopes that the Lord of Love may guide the Word which is now to be spoken so that it may find out such persons, and may make manifest the Lords secretly chosen onesthose prisoners of hope who pine for libertybut know not that the Son can make them free.

O captive Soul, abhorring the chains of sin, your day of liberty is come! The Lord, the Liberator who looses the prisoners, is come at this very hour to snap your bonds!

I. In dwelling on this narrative, I shall first say a few words concerning NATHANAEL HIMSELF. We are told that he was a guileless man, an Israelite, indeed, in whom is no guile. That is to say, like Jacob, he was a plain man, and not like Esau, a cunning hunter. Some minds are naturally serpentine, tortuous, slippery. They cannot think except in curves their motives are involved and intricate, and they are of a double heart. These are the men who look one way and row the other. They worship the god Janus with two faces, and are of the same practice, if not of the same persuasion as the Jesuits. They cannot speak a thing plainly or look you in the face while they talk, for they are full of mental reservations and prudential cautions. They guard their speech. They dare not send abroad their own thoughts till they have mailed them up to the throat with double meanings.

Nathanael was just the very opposite of all this. He was no hypocrite and no crafty deceiver. He wore his heart upon his sleeve. If he spoke, you might know that he said what he meant and that he meant what he said. He was a childlike, simple-hearted man, transparent as glass. He was not one of those fools who believe everything. But on the other hand, he was not of that other sort of fools so much admired in these days who will believe nothing, but who find it necessary to doubt the most self-evident Truth in order to maintain their credit for profound philosophy. These thinkers of this enlightened age are great at quibbles, mighty in feigning or feeling mistrust concerning matters which common sense has no doubts about.

They will profess to doubt whether there is a God, though that is as plain as the sun at noonday. No, Nathanael was neither credulous nor mistrustful. He was honestly ready to yield to the force of Truth. He was willing to receive testimony and to be swayed by evidence. He was not suspicious, because he was not a man who, himself, would be suspected. He was true-hearted and straightforwarda plain dealer and plain speaker. Cana had not within her gates a more thoroughly honest man. Philip seems to have known this, for he went to him directly, as to a man who was likely to be convinced and worth winning to the good cause.

In addition to being thus a simple-hearted man, Nathanael was an earnest seeker. Philip went to him because he felt that the good news would interest him. We have found the Messiah, would be no gladsome news to anyone who had not looked for the Messiah. Nathanael had been expecting the Christ, and perhaps had so well understood Moses and the Prophets that he had been led to look for His speedy coming. The time when Messiah would suddenly come in His temple had certainly arrived, and he was day and night with prayer, like all the faithful of the ten tribes, watching and waiting for the appearing of their salvation. He had not as yet heard that the Glory of Israel had, indeed, come, but he was on the very edge of expectation.

What a hopeful state of heart is yours, my dear Hearer, if you are now honestly desirous to know the Truth, and intensely anxious to be saved by it! It is well, indeed, for you if your soul is ready, like the photographers sensitive plate, to receive the impression of the Divine Lightif you are anxiously desiring to be informed if there is, indeed, a Saviorif there is a Gospel, if there is hope for you, if there is such a thing as purity and a way to reach it. It is well, I say, if you are anxiously and earnestly desiring to know how and when, and whereand determinately resolved, by Gods Grace, that no exertion shall be spared on your part to run in the way that shall be marked out, and to submit yourself unto the will of God. This was the state of Nathanael, an honest-hearted lover of plain truth, seeking to find the Christ.

It is also true that he was ignorant up to a certain point. He was not ignorant of Moses and the Prophets, these he had well considered. But he knew not that Christ as yet had come. There was some little distance between Nazareth and Cana, and the news of the Messiahs coming had not traveled there. If it had been bad news, it would have flown on eagles wings, but being good news its flight was slower, for few persons are so anxious to tell out the good as the evil. He had not, therefore, heard of Jesus of Nazareth till Philip came to him. And how many there are even in this country who do not know yet what the Gospel means, but are anxious to know it, and if they did but know it would receive it?

What? you say, where there are so many places of worship and so many ministers? Yes, just that. Yes, and in the very heart of our congregations and in the midst of our godly families, ignorance has its strongholds. These uninstructed ones may be Bible readers, they may be Gospel hearers, but as yet they may not have been able to grasp the great Truth that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself. They may never have seen what it is for Christ to stand in the sinners place, and for that sinner, by an act of trust, to obtain the blessings which spring out of

a substitutionary sacrifice. Yes, and here in this house where I have tried and labored to put the Gospel in short Saxon words and sentences that cannot be misunderstood, there may be some who are still saying, What is this all about? I hear much of believing, but what is it? Who is this Christ, the Son of God, and what is it to be saved from sin, to be regenerated, to be sanctified? What are all these things?

Well, dear Friend, I am sorry you should be in the dark, yet am I glad at heart, that though you do not know what I would have you know, yet you are simple-hearted, truth-loving, and sincere in your seeking. I am persuaded that light will not be denied you, you shall yet know Jesus and be known of Him.

In addition to this, however, Nathanael was prejudicedwe must modify that expressionhe was somewhat prejudiced. As soon as Philip told him that he had found Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph, Nathanael said, Can any good thing come out of Nazareth? Here let us remark that his prejudice is exceedingly excusable, for it arose out of the faulty testimony of Philip. Philip was a young convert. He had only found Jesus the day before, and the natural instinct of every truly gracious soul is to try and tell out the blessed things of Christ. So away went Philip to tell his friend, Nathanael. But what a many blunders he made in the telling out of the Gospel! I bless God, blundering as it was, it was enough to bring Nathanael to Christ.

But it was full of mistakes. Dear Souls, if you know only a little about Christ, and if you would make a great many mistakes in telling out that little, yet do not hold it inGod will overlook the errors and bless the Truth. Now observe what Philip said. He said, We have found Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph, which was our Lords popular name, but was in no way correct. He was not Jesus of Nazareth at all. He was not a native of Nazarethour Lord was of Bethlehem. He had dwelt at Nazareth, certainly, but He was no more entitled to be called of Nazareth than of Jerusalem.

Then Philip said, Son of Joseph, but He was only the reputed son of Joseph, He was in truth, the Son of the Highest. Philip gave to our Lord the common and erroneous titles which the unthinking many passed from hand to hand. He did not say, We have found the Son of God, or the Son of David, but yet he uttered all he knewand that is all God expects of you or me. Oh, what a mercy it is that the imperfections of our ministry do not prevent Gods saving souls by us! If it were not so, how little good would be done in the world!

Mr. John Wesley preached most earnestly one view of the Gospel, and William Huntingdon preached quite another view of it. The two men would have had a holy horror of each other and censured each other most conscientiously. Yet no rational man dares say that souls were not saved under John Wesley, or under William Huntingdon either, for God blessed them both. Both ministers were faulty, but both were sincereand both made useful. So is it with all our testimonies. They are all imperfect, full of exaggerations of one Truth, and misapprehensions of another. But as long as we witness to the true Christ foretold by Moses and the Prophets our mistakes shall be forgiven, and God will bless our ministry, despite every flaw.

So He did with Nathanaelbut Nathanaels prejudice rose out of Philips blundering way of talking. If Philip had not said, of Nazareth, then Nathanael would not have said, Can any good thing come out of Nazareth? If Philip had said that Jesus was of Bethlehem, and of the tribe of Judah, and that God was His Father, then this prejudice would never have beclouded the mind of Nathanael, and it would have been easier for him to have acknowledged Jesus as the Messiah. We must, therefore, try to avoid mistakes, lest we cause needless prejudice. We should so state the Gospel that if men are offended by it, it shall be the Gospel which offends them, and not our way of putting it.

It may be that you, my Friend, are a little prejudiced against Christs holy Gospel because of the imperfect character of a religious acquaintance, or the rough manners of a certain minister. But I trust you will not allow such things to bias you. I hope that, being candid and honest, you will come and see Jesus for yourself. Revise the report of the disciple by a personal inspection of the Master. Philip made up for his faults when he added, Come and see. And I would try to prevent mine from injuring you by using the same exhortation

*Come and see Jesus and His Gospel for yourself.*

One other mark of Nathanael I would mention. He was in all respects a godly, sincere man, up to the measure of his light. He was not yet a Believer in Jesus, but still he was an Israelite, indeed. He was a man of secret prayer, he did not mock God as the Pharisees did by mere outward worship. He was a worshipper of God in his heart. His soul had private dealings with the God of Heaven when no eye saw him. So it is, I trust, with you, dear Hearer. You may not yet have found peace, but you do pray, you are desirous of being saved. You do not wish to be a hypocrite. You dread, above all things, falling into formality. You pray that if ever you become a Christian you may be a Christian, indeed. Such is the character I am endeavoring to find out, and if it is your character, may you get the blessing that Nathanael did.

II. Now secondly, we have seen Nathanael, let us for a moment consider NATHANAELS SIGHT OF JESUS. Philip says unto him, Come and see. And so Nathanael came to see the Savior, which implies that although he was somewhat prejudiced against this new Messiah, yet he was candid enough to investigate His claims. Beloved Friend to whom I have already spoken, if you have any prejudice against the true Gospel of Jesus Christ, whether it is occasioned by your birth and education, or previous profession of some other faith, be honest enough to give the Gospel of Jesus Christ a fair hearing. You may hear it in this House of Prayer. You may read it in these pages. Do not dismiss it until you have thoroughly examined it. All that we would ask of you is nowknowing you to be honest, knowing you to be earnestseriously sit down and weigh the Doctrines of Grace as you shall find them in the Scripture. And especially the life of Christ and the blessings which He brings to those who believe in Him.

Look these things over carefully. They will commend themselves to your conscience, for God has already prepared your conscience to judge righteously. And as you judge you will perceive a peculiar beauty and a charm about the Truths of the Gospel which will surely win your heart. Latimer

had preached a sermon against the doctrines of the Gospel, and among his hearers there was a holy man who afterwards became a martyr. He thought, as he listened to Latimer, that he perceived something in his tone which showed him to be an honest opponent. Therefore he hoped that if light were brought to him he would be willing to see by it.

He sought him out, obtained an interview with him, and his explanations entirely won honest Hugh to the Reformed opinionsand you know what a valiant and popular minister of the New Covenant Latimer became. So, my honest Friend, give to the Gospel of salvation by faith in the precious blood of Jesus a fair hearing, and we are not afraid of the result.

Nathanael came to Christ, again, with great activity of heart. As soon as he was told to, come and see, he did come and see. He did not sit still and say, Well, if there is any light in this new doctrine, it will come to me. No, he went to it. Do not believe in any teaching which bids men sit down and find peace in the idea that they need not strive to enter in at the strait gate of Truth. No, Brethren, if Grace has ever come to you, it will arouse you from lethargy and lead you to go to Christ. And by His Grace you will be most earnest, with all the activity of your spirit, to search for Him as for hidden treasure. It is a delightful thing to see a soul on the wing.

The majority of our population are, as regards religion, down on the ground and unwilling to rise. They are indifferent to spiritual Truth. You cannot get them to give earnest heed to eternal matters. But once get a mind on the wing with a holy earnestness and solemn thoughtfulness, and we do believe, with Gods Grace, that it will, before long, be brought to a saving faith in Christ. Come and see, said Philip, and come and see Nathanael did. He does not appear to have expected to be converted to Christ by what he saw with his natural eyeshis judgment was formed from a mental view of Him.

It is true he saw the Person of the Messiah, but he did not expect to see in the human form any lineaments that might guide his judgment. He waited until the lips of the Messiah had spoken, and then, when he had seen the Omniscience of that mysterious Person, and how He could read his thoughts and spy out his secret actions, then he believed. Now I fear some of you live in darkness because you are expecting some kind of physical manifestation. You hope for a vivid dream, or some strange feeling in your flesh, or some very remarkable occurrence in your family. Except you see signs and wonders you will not believe.

But a saving sight of Christ is another matter! Truth must impress your mental faculties, enlighten your understanding, and win your affections. The Presence of Christ on earth is a spiritual one, and you will come to see Him not with these mortal optics just now, but with the eyes of your soul. You will perceive the beauty of His Character, the majesty of His Person, the all-sufficiency of His Atonement. And as you see these things the Holy Spirit will lead you to believe in Him and live. I pray God that such a sight as this may be vouchsafed to every honest seeker who may hear or read these words.

III. A far greater matter now demands our attentionCHRISTS SIGHT OF NATHANAEL. As soon as Jesus saw the man, He said, Behold an Israelite, indeed, which shows us that Christ Jesus read Nathanaels heart. I do not suppose that our Lord had ever seen Nathanael with His own human eyes. But yet He understood Nathanaels characternot because He was a great judge of physiognomy and could perceive at once that He had a simple-hearted man before Him. But because He was Nathanaels Creator, being the searcher of hearts and the trier of the reins, He could read Nathanael as readily as a man reads a book which is open before his eyes.

He saw at once all that was within the enquirer, and pronounced a verdict upon him that he was free from falsehood. And then to prove to Nathanael still further how clearly He knew all about him, He mentioned a little incident which I cannot explain, nor can you, nor do I suppose anybody could have explained it except Nathanael and Jesusa special secret known only to them both. He said to him, Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you. What he was doing under the fig tree we may guess, but we cannot know to a certainty. Perhaps it would be true of all to believe that the fig tree was to Nathanael what the Hermonites and the hill Mizar had been to David.

David says, I will remember You from the land of Jordan, and of the Hermonites, and from the hill Mizar. What were those sacred recollections he does not tell us, and although we can form a shrewd guess, David and his God, alone, knew the full mystery. So between Christ and Nathanael there was a common knowledge connected with that fig tree which we cannot hope to discover. And the moment our Lord mentioned that hallowed spot, its remembrances were to Nathanael so secret and so sacred that he felt that the Omniscient One was before him. Here was evidence which he could not doubt for an instant, for one of the most private and special secrets of his life, which he had never whispered into any human ear, had been brought up as by a talismanic sign. A red-letter day in his private diary had been revived by the mention of the fig tree, and He who could touch so hidden a spring in his soul must be the Son of God.

But what was Nathanael doing under the fig tree, according to our best surmise? Well, as devout Easterns are accustomed to have a special place for prayer, this may have been a shadowy fig tree under which Nathanael was accustomed to offer his devotions. And perhaps just before Philip came to him, he may have been engaged in personal and solitary confession of sin. He had looked round the garden and fastened the gate that none might come inand he had poured into the ear of his God some very tender confession under the fig tree shade. When Christ said to him, When you were under the fig tree, it brought to his recollection how he poured out his broken and his contrite spirit, and confessed sins unknown to all but God. That confession, it may be, the very look of Christ brought back to his remembrance and the words and look together seemed to say, I know your secret burden, and the peace you found in rolling it upon the Lord. He felt, therefore, that Jesus must be Israels God.

It is very possible that in addition to his confession, he had under the fig tree made a deliberate investigation of his own heart. Good men generally mingle with their confessions self-examination. There it may be that this man who was free from guile had looked into the tendencies of his nature and had been enabled with holy surprise to see the fountains of the great deep of his natural depravity. He may have been taken, like Ezekiel, from chamber to chamber to see the idols in his heart, beholding greater abominations than he suspected to be thereand there humbled before the Lord. Beneath that fig tree he may have cried with Job, I abhor myself in dust and ashes. This, also, Jesus had seen.

Or under the fig tree he may have been engaged in very earnest prayer. Was that fig tree to Nathanael what Peniel was to Jacob, a spot where he had wrestled till the break of day, pleading with God to fulfill His ancient promise, to send the Promised One who should be a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of His people, Israel? Was it so? We think it probable. That fig tree had been to him a Bethel, no other than the House of God and the very gate of Heaven.

And what if we should suggest that, perhaps in addition to his prayer, Nathanael had vowed some solemn vow under the fig treeif the Lord would but appear and give to him some sign and token for good, then he would be the Lords and spend and be spent for Him? If the Lord would but send the Messiah, he would be among His first followers. If he would but speak to him by an angel or otherwise, he would obey the voice. Jesus now tells him that he shall see angels ascending and descending. And reveals Himself as the Messiah to Whom he had solemnly pledged himself. It may he so.

Once more, it may be that under that fig tree he had enjoyed the sweetest communion with his God. Beloved Friends, do you not remember well, certain hallowed spots? I have one or two in my own life too sacred to mention. If my memory should forget all the world besides, yet those spots will evermore be green in my memorythe truly holy place where Jesus, my Lord, has met with me and showed me His love. One time it was the King has brought me into His chambers. Another time I got me to the mountain of myrrh and to the hill of frankincense. Once He said, Come, My Beloved, let us go forth into the field. And let us lodge in the villages, and another time He changed the scene and said, Come with Me from Lebanon, My Spouse. Look from the top of Amana, from the top of Hermon, from the lions dens, from the mountains of the leopards.

Have we not sometimes had special festivals when He has broached the spiced wine of His pomegranate? When our joy has been almost too much for the frail body to endure, for our joyous spirit, like a sharp sword, has well-near cut through its scabbard? Ah, it is sweetly true. He has baptized us in the fire of His love, and we shall forever remember those secret spots, those dear occasions. This, then, was a token, a secret token between Christ and Nathanael, by which the disciple recognized his Divine Friend and future Master and Lord. He had met the Messiah in spirit before, and now he meets Him in very flesh and blood. And by this token does he know Him. In spirit the Lord set His seal upon Nathanaels heart, and now, by the sacred signet, the Israelite discerns his King. Thus we see the Lord had seen Nathanael in his previous engagements, before he became actually a Believer in Jesus. This fact suggests that each of you who have been sincerely seeking to be set right, and to know the Truth, have been fully perceived in all your seeking and desires by the God of Grace. When you let fall a tear because you could not understand the Word, Jesus saw that tear. When you groaned because you could not get satisfaction of heart, He heard that groan. Never true heart seeks Christ without Christs being well aware of it. Well may He know of it, for every motion of a trembling heart towards Himself is caused by His own love.

He is drawing you , though you perceive not the hands of a man which encircle you. He is the hidden loadstone by which your heart is moved. I know it is night with you, and you grope like a blind man for the wall. But if your heart says, O that I could but embrace Him! O that He were mine! If I could but find rest in Him, I would give all that I have. Then be assured that Jesus is close to youyour prayers are in His ear, your tears fall upon His heart. He knows all about your difficulties, all about your doubts and fears, and He sympathizes in the wholeand in due time He will break your snares, and you shall yet, with joy, draw water out of the wells of salvation.

This Truth is full of consolation to all who seek with sincerity, though as yet in the dark. Before the ministers voice spoke to youwhen you were under the fig tree, when you were by the bedside, when you were in that inner chamber, when you were down in that saw pit, when you were in the hayloft, when you were walking behind the hedge in the field Jesus saw you. He knew your desires, He read your longings, He saw you through and through. Even from of old He has known you.

IV. So we have seen Nathanaels sight of Christ, and then Christs sight of Nathanael. Now the fourth thing is, NATHANAELS FAITH. I must go over much the same ground again under this head. Nathanaels faith note what it was grounded on. He cheerfully accepted Jesus as the Messiah, and the ground of his acceptance lay in thisJesus had mentioned to him a peculiar incident in his life which he was persuaded no one could have known but the Omniscient God. He concluded, therefore, Jesus to be the Omniscient God, and accepted Him at once as his King. This was very frequently the way in which persons were brought to confidence in Christ.

The same thing is recorded in this very Gospel a few chapters further on. The Lord sat down on the well and talked to the Samaritan woman, and there was no kind of impression produced upon her until He said, You have had five husbands, and he whom you now have is not your husband. Then it flashed upon her, This stranger knows my private history! Then He is something more than He appears to be. He is the Great Prophet. And away she ran with this on her tongue, because it was in her heart, Come, see a man which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?

The same was the case with Zaccheus. You may think, however, that this mode of conversion was confined to the days of our Lords flesh, and the age of miracles, but it is not so. The fact is that at this very day the discovery of the thoughts of mens hearts by the Gospel is still a very potent means in the hands of the Holy Spirit of convincing them of the

Truth of the Gospel. How often have I heard enquirers say, It seemed to me, Sir, as if that sermon was meant for me. There were points in it which were so exactly like myself, that I felt sure someone had told the preacher about me. And there were words and sentences so peculiarly descriptive of my private thoughts, that I was sure no one but God knew of them. I perceived that God was in the Gospel speaking to my soul.

Yes, and it always will be so. The is the great revealer of secrets. It is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Jesus Christ in the Gospel knows all about your sins, all about your seeking, all about the difficulties which you are meeting with. This ought to convince you that the Gospel is Divine, since its teachings lay bare the heart, and its remedies touch every spiritual disease. The knowledge of human nature displayed in the simplest passage of the Gospel is more profound than the productions of Plato or Socrates. The Gospel, like a silken thread, runs through all the windings and twisting of human nature in its fallen state. O that its voice may come home personally to you! May it, by the Spirit, convict you of sin, of righteousness, and of judgmentand bring you to lay hold on eternal life!

Nathanaels faith, it must be mentioned, was peculiar not only in its ground, but in its clear and comprehensive character. He accepted Jesus at once as the Son of God. He was Divine to him, and he adored Him. He also accepted Him as the King of Israel. He was a royal personage to him, and he tendered Him his homage. May you and I receive Jesus Christ in this way, as a real Man, but yet certainly Goda Man who was despised and rejected, but yet the Man anointed above His Brethrenwho is King of kings and Lord of lords.

I admire Nathanaels faith, again, because it was so quick, unreserved, and decisive. You are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel! Christ was glorified by the decision, the quickness of this faith. Delay in believing Him dishonors Him. O honest Heart, O sincere Mind, pray that you may as quickly come into the light and liberty of true belief! May the Holy Spirit work in you a ready satisfaction in the atoning sacrifice and Divine Person of the ever blessed Immanuel.

V. This brings us to the last point of consideration. We have shown you Nathanael and his sight of Christ, and Christs sight of him. And then the faith that Nathanael received. Now notice NATHANAELS AFTER-SIGHT. Some persons want to see all that there is in Christianity before they can believe in Jesus, that is to say, before they will go to the primary school they must clamor for a degree at the university. Many want to know the ninth of Romans before they have read the third of John. They are all for understanding great mysteries before they understand that primary simplicity, Believe and live.

But those who are wiser and, like Nathanael, are content to believe at first what they are able to perceive, namely, that Christ is the Son of God and the King of Israel, shall go on to learn more. Let us read our Lords words, You shall see greater things than these. Verily, verily, I say unto you, hereafter shall you see Heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man. To full grown disciples Jesus promises, Greater things than these shall you do. To young converts He says, Greater things than these shall you see.

He gives promises in proportion to our ability to receive them. The promise given to Nathanael was a most fitting one. He was all Israelite, indeedthen he shall have Israels vision. What was the great sight that Israel or Jacob saw? He saw the ladder whereon angels ascended and descended. Precisely this shall Nathanael see. He shall see Jesus Christ as the communication between an opened Heaven and a blessed earthand he shall see the angels ascending and descending upon the Son of Man!

If you bear the character of Israel, you shall enjoy the privileges of Israel. If you are an Israelite, indeed, you shall have the blessing that made Israel glad. Nathanael had owned Jesus as the Son of Godhere he is told that he shall see Him in His glory as the Son of Man. Note that last word of the chapter. It is not so much that Christ humbly called Himself the Son of Manthough that is truebut that to see the glory of Christ as God is a simple thing. To see and understand the glory of Christ as Man, this is a sight for faith, and probably a sight which, so far as our senses are concerned, is reserved for the day of His coming.

When He shall appearthe very Man that suffered upon Calvary when He shall appear upon the Great White Throne to judge the quick and the dead, if you believe in Jesus as the Son of God, you shall yet see Him in His glory as Man swaying the universal scepter, and enthroned as King of all the earth. He had called Jesus the King of Israel, if you remember. Now he is to see his Lord as the King of the angelsto see the angels of God ascending and descending upon Him. Believe, my dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ, as far as you know Him, and you shall know more of Him. Open your eyes but to the candle light of the Law, and you shall soon behold the sunlight of the Gospel. The Lord is very gracious to fulfill the Gospel rule, To him that has, shall be given, and he shall have abundance.

If you acknowledge the King of Israel, you shall see Him as the Lord of Hosts before whom archangels veil their faces, and to Whom seraphim are servitors. The great sight, I suppose, Nathanael saw as the result of his faith was not the transfiguration, nor the ascension as some suppose, but a spiritual view of Christ in His mediatorial capacity as the great link between earth and Heaven. This is, indeed, a sight transcending all others. We are not divided from the invisible. We are not separated from the infinite. The mortal has communion with the Immortal. The sinner speaks with the Holy Oneprayers climb up to Heaven, and benedictions descend by way of the Great Substitute.

Can you see this, O Soul? If so, the sight will make you glad. You are not exiled now, you are only at the foot of the stairs which lead to the upper chamber of your Fathers House. Your God is above and bright spirits traverse constantly the open gangway of the Mediators Person. Here is joy for all the saintsfor this ladder can never be brokenour communion is abiding. No doubt, to Nathanaels view, the promise would be fulfilled as he perceived the Providence of God as ruled by Christ Jesus who orders all things for the good of the Church. Was not this intended in the figure of angels ascending and descending upon the Son of Man, that is, all agencies, whether living or material, all subject to the Law and the dominion of Christ?

So that all things work together for good to them that love God! Do not go fretting to your homes and say, Here are new doctrines springing up, and new gods that our fathers knew not, and ministers are slipping aside from the faith, and bad days have fallen upon the Church, and Romanism is coming up, and infidelity with it. All this may be truebut it does not matter one figfor God has a great end in view. He has a bit for the mouth of leviathan. He can do as He wills with His most powerful enemies. He rides upon the wings of cherubs and rules the storm. The clouds are but the dust of His feet. Never believe that Providence is out of joint. The wheels of this great engine may revolve some this way and some that, but the sure result will be produced, for the great Artist sees the final result to be secure.

Gods glory shall arise from it all! Angels descend, but they as much do the will of God as those which ascend. Some events seem disastrous, and even calamitous. But they shall all, in the end, prove to be for the best. For he

*From seeming evil still educes good,*   
And better still, and better stillin infinite progression. Until the crown shall come upon the head of Him who was separated from His Brethren, and all the glory shall roll in waves of mighty song at the foot of His Throne, may you and I continue to see this great sight more and more clearly. Until the Lord shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the trump of the archangel, and the voice of God, and once and for all we shall see Heaven and earth blended, may we continue to see angels ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.

All this matchless glory will come to us through that little window by which we first saw the Savior. If we will not see Him as our Lord until we can see all the future, we shall perish in darkness. If you will not believe, neither shall you be established. But if, with simple and true hearts you have been seeking Jesus, and now come and accept Him as the Lord, the King of Israelthen greater things than these shall be in store for you! Your eyes shall see the King in His beauty and the land that is very far off.

And the day of His pompous appearing, when Heaven and earth shall hang out their streamers for overflowing joy because the King has come unto His own. And the day the crown is put upon the head of the Son of Davidthen shall you see it and see it allfor you shall be with Him where He is, that you may behold His glory, the glory which the Father gave Him before the foundation of the world. Come Lord Jesus! Come quickly!

Adapted from The C.H. Spurgeon Collection, Version 1.0, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307 Sermon #2068 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

NATHANAELTHE MAN NEEDED FOR THE DAY   
NO. 2068

INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS DAY, FEBRUARY 3, 1889

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS DAY EVENING, SEPTEMBER 20, 1885.

**Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no deceit! John 1:47.**

THIS morning we had a beholda behold about a new convert. Behold, he prays! It seemed to me most suitable to occupy the evening with another beholda behold about another new convert who is just having his eyes opened to see the Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ and to become His disciple. Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no deceit! When Jesus says Behold! we may be sure that there is something worth seeing. A man in whom is no deceit is so rare a person nowadays that we ought not to grudge an evening for such a sight. We are always beholden to a man who enables us to see an honest mansuch a man is one of the noblest works of God and will reward our observation. Diogenes looks for an honest man with a lantern. But Jesus finds him.

I shall not go into the full meaning of what an Israelite indeed, is, but I shall dwell, principally, upon the fact that Nathanael was a man with no deceit in him. The Lord Jesus Christ made that discovery. And who so fit to spy out a man in whom was no deceitas the Christ in whom there is no deceit? Two guileless men were that day together, for in our Lord Jesus there is neither guilt nor deceit. In us there is guilt but we trust that by Divine Grace deceit has been cast out of us. It will be so if the Lord does not impute iniquity to us, according to the words of David, Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputes not iniquity and in whose spirit there is no deceit. The Lord is sure to put all deceit out of us when He removes all guilt from us.

Men generally see what they are. And because Christ has no deceit, therefore He spies out the man with no deceit in his heart and at once commends him and welcomes him and says, Behold, as if delighted and charmed to see him. The Lord Jesus appreciates the sincerity which He perceives in Nathanael. I am afraid that a man without deceit is not much esteemed by the ordinary run of mankind. He will be wise, however, not to trouble himself about that matter. The approbation of Jesus is better than the approbation of the whole world. They say of a man nowadays who has no deceit, Well, he is a very simple-minded kind of fellow. Exceedingly good, but rather blunt. Quite unsuspicious and therefore you may readily take him in.

Mark you, there is no reason why a man without deceit should be taken in. For while we are harmless as doves we can also be wise as serpents if we are rightly taught. But in the ordinary way, a man that is not

crafty and cunninga man that speaks his mind and practices no policy and is not acquainted with tricks and shiftsis thought to be a poor creature by the wise and deceitful men of this day. But if Jesus Christ takes delight in a guileless man, the guileless man may be perfectly satisfied with this high measure of acceptance. God grant to each one here present, man and woman, that we all may be found free from deceit!

I am going to speak upon the text in two ways. First, here is a happy sign in a seeker of Christa man in whom there is no deceit. And secondly, here is a vital point about a Believer in Christabout the man who has passed the stage of seeking and has become a Believer. He must have in his spirit no deceit. It is vital to him that it should be sincere and straightforward.

I. Here, first, we clearly see A HAPPY SIGN IN A SEEKERhe is a man in whom is no deceit. We were talking, some time agoa few of us ministers of Christ who have been familiar with the souls of men for yearsand I made a remark that seemed to startle my Brethren. The remark was thisalthough I had spoken with thousands of men and women who had been converted and I had seen persons brought to Christ of every age and of every character, yet I scarcely remembered the conversion of a man who was double-minded, crafty, false, deceitful.

Of course, Gods Grace is sovereign and God chooses whomsoever He wills and He does not choose according to human merit. But it is very singular that of the ground which is mentioned in the parable, which brought forth fruit to the Divine Sower, it is said that it was honest and good ground. By this was not intended any spiritual grace, nor even any moral virtue of high degree in the condition of the persons who received the Gospel. But there was sincerity about the people so describedthey were honest, straight, unsophisticated and free from subtlety and cunning. It is in the honest heart that sowing Truth takes root.

I have known the drunkard saved. Blessed be God for that! I have seen the swearer have his mouth washed so that he has spoken sweet and goodly words for the rest of his life. I have known the fornicator and adulterer and the harlot delivered from the Stygian ditch of abominable lust. I have known men guilty of almost every sin delivered from the power of evil. And concerning all these, the living evidence of holy conduct has proved their sincerity beyond all question. But I still say that my memory does not bring before me a single person habitually guilty of the doubleshuffle, habitually a liar, habitually a cheat, converted to God at all. The insincere, the canting, the hypocritical, the habitually deceptiveI know not of converts from these classes.

There may have been such and I should not wonder if there have been. But I do not happen to have met with them. The most of the converted people I have seen have been straightforward and true after a way. They might curse and swear, they might deny the Gospel, they might occasionally lie under strong pressure or from sheer flippancy. They might commit all manner of criminalities but as a rule, there they were and you could see them to be what they were. They were bad fellows, enough, but they did not dissemblethey sinned most grievously but they never pretended to be saints. Such were the men that Christ converted. Such was Paul, of whom we spoke this morningintensely earnest and honest in all that he dideven when he persecuted the saints of God.

It seems to me that often in the man who is filled with deceit there is a want of something for the Grace of God to work upon. When this creature repents it is only a skin-deep businesshis heart is never wounded. When he believes something you do not know that he believes it. His faith is no better than anothers unbelief. He begins at once putting another meaning on what he professes to believeyou cannot hold such an eel. If anything comes home to his feelings, he has such a very minute conscience left that there is no room for conviction to light upon, when it does pay him a visit.

He has got into such an habitual condition of cheating that he cheats himself as well as others. He cannot be true and thoroughit is not in him. When the Truth of God shines full upon his face he does not openly pull down the blind to shut out the lighthe talks about how delightful it is and yet manages to shut his eyes to it. He praises the Truth of God but he does not love it. He is a lover of the Gospel in words but he cunningly spreads abroad sentiments which undermine it. I am sick of such men and yet they are not hard to find. We have all around us the hollowness which would, if it were possible, deceive even the very elect.

There is scarcely anything under Heaven so damnable as deceit, deceit and craft. The ingrained deceiver is capable of everything evil and incapable of anything good. Out of that kind of man the devil manufactures his chief instruments. Traitors like Judas Iscariot are carved out of the ebony of deceit. I say, again, that it is horribly difficult for any of these people ever to be converted and it seldom happens that they are. They may get into the Church even like Ananias and Sapphira, but they have to be carried as corpses outside of hersuch a dishonor are they to the company of Gods people.

The man of whom we have great hope is one in whose spirit there is no deceit. Now I will show you the sort of man he is. He is one who, when he is spoken to about Christ, has difficulties but in his difficulties he is honest. Nathanael is told by his friend Philip that he has found the Messiah. Nathanael enquires, Where did you find Him? Why, He comes from Nazareth! Well, says he, but can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Now, when a man will plainly state his objection, his friend can do his best to meet it and to answer it with some such word as, Come and see.

Around us are a number of persons who object to our Lord. But the objections which they mention are not their real objections. Their pretended difficulties are a red-herringto turn the scent from their real reasons for opposition. Many scorn Christ because they do not want to give up their sin. They pick up some technical questionsome difficulty raised by geology or evolution, or something or other and they make a fuss over it while the real impediment is that they are living an unclean life and do not want to give up their evil ways. The difficulty is that they are making gain in a wrong way and to be Christians would not suit their pockets, for they would have to quit a bad trade, or conduct their business with less profits.

There is where the true difficulty lies. But they do not care to mention the real impediment, and therefore they pretend that they are the victims of some awful mystery or terrible dogma which frightens them out of their salvation. We know the bugbears which these deceivers set up. They deceive themselves more than they deceive anybody else. He is the sincere seeker who does not play at sham difficulties but who speaks out at once and tells his friend what the point is that hinders him.

Of the man in whose spirit there is no deceit, we may also say that, as a seeker, he is also candidhe is willing to examine. Consequently, like Nathanael when Philip said, Come and see, he does come and see for himself and he examines on his own account to see if it is so. Oh, if half the people that object to the Gospel would but read the Bible for themselves they would not object any longer! Few people nowadays care to read solidly good books. But when they do so they are usually greatly the better for it. I saw a young Brother last Friday and in answer to the question, How were you converted? he said, It was through reading Luther.

I was somewhat surprised and I said, Luther? What book of Luther? I read Luther on the Galatians. You did? I am glad to see the man that reads Luther on the Galatians. He was a young man employed in the city and I admired him for preferring Luther to the wretched novels of the period. I read it two or three times, he said, and I saw the difference between the Covenant of Works and the Covenant of Grace. I saw how man was ruined by his works and how he must be saved by faith and I found the Savior while reading that book. I was delighted with the young man and I feel persuaded that one day we shall hear of him in another capacity.

Oh, if people would but read the Bible and books about the Bible which explain the Gospel with the desire to know what the Gospel is, they would find Him of whom Moses and the Prophets did write! Alas, men do not find Jesus, for there is deceit in their spirit and they do not desire to find Him. They do not want to know and so they remain ignorant. They do not want to discover and so do not discover. In the Last Great Day, when that curtain shall be drawn back which hides from our eyes all souls that are lostif we are permitted to look into that dreadful placewe shall not find there a soul that ever sincerely cried to God for mercy through Jesus Christ.

Nor do I think that we shall find one who searched the Scriptures and heard the Gospel with the desire to find Christ. Hell is filled through that deceitfulness of the natural heart which will not let them receive Jesus and His salvation. They blind their own eyes to the light of God. Happy is the pastor to whom enquirers state their difficulties honestly and who can persuade them to examine the subject about which they are in doubt!

Now, dear Friends, a man who is really free from deceit in his hearta downright, upright, straightforward manis open and ready for the work of Gods Holy Spirit. For instance, such a man is open to conviction. When he reads the Bible or hears a sermon, he says, I desire to know all about it. Tell me the Truth of God, however unpleasant it may be. He does not want the preacher to flatter him. Some do, you know. They must have very pretty words spoken about the dignity of human nature, the universal Fatherhood of God, the almost unavoidable character of sin and the hopeful destiny of universal manhood or else their proud hearts sneer at the preacher.

But the man in whose spirit there is no deceit loves best the preacher who uses the surgeons knife without partiality and cuts down to the root of the cancer. No, says he, I did not come here to be fooled and amused. I want to know about that which concerns my soul for life and for death and to know the truth of it. Such a man is open to conviction. He has laid aside prejudice. He does not dictate to the minister of God but he is ready to hear all the Truth and to feel the power of the message if it is, indeed, from God. He is ready to confess his sin when he finds that he has broken the Law of God. When he perceives that the Law deals with thoughts and words and deeds. When he sees how wide its range is, so as to take in every action of this mortal life, he is ready to bow his head and say, I am a sinner. God be merciful to me a sinner.

The man who is crafty and double-minded will not do thatindeed, it is the last thing he cares to do. He begins excusing himself in some fashion or other. He is no worse than other people. He was misled by others. He could not help it. Everybody else did it. He only followed his natural passions and he could not help his constitutional inclinations. It was his fate to do it. He had intended to do better but was overcome. These are a few of the forms of the shuffling of deceit. If the man were an honest man he would say, Yes, it is so. I broke the Law and did wrong. I am not going to dispute the question. I am forced to plead guilty. And if you condemn me, O my God, You will do no more than is just. That is the kind of man who, before long, will find salvation and enter into peace with God.

This is the man who lies open also to the power of the Holy Spirit in reference to conversion. You have proved to him that he is wrong and with his whole heart he desires to turn from evil. Show him his mistake and he will be eager to redress it. His honest soul will not rest in wrong-doing. Look at the Apostle Paul before his conversion. He is a desperate Pharisee and a furious persecutor. He tears along like a wild horse in his mad career of self-righteousness. But he no sooner perceives that Jesus really is the Christ than he is just as intense in his attempts to make known the glory of Christ as he was before to overthrow His kingdom. He sinned through ignorance and unbelief and not from malice.

If we spoke to honest hearts at all times, we should see plentiful conversions. But, alas, the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked: who can know it? Further than this I believe that a sincere heart, a true heart, is a great guard to a man against pretended plans of salvation. Come here, says one, I will prove to you salvation by works. The honest man replies, That will not suit me. For salvation by works would require that my works should have been perfect throughout life and mine have not been so. Mine have been imperfectare still imperfectand will be imperfect till I die. I cannot stand on the footing of merit for an hour.

Come, says another, here is salvation by sincerity. Sincere obedience is the patent article by which men are saved. Do your best and be sincere and the matter is squared. But the man who is upright in heart answers, I do not see that. Neither can I rest therein. Indeed he ought not to do so. For such a hope is based on a lie. If a man were to take poison sincerely, thinking it to be medicine, it would not cure him, but kill him. If a man most sincerely stands in the way of an express steam-engine and

thinks he can stop it, it will stop him and his life altogether. The candid, thoughtful mind cannot believe that invention of self.

You see, the man whose heart is quite honest wants something real and solid and has no desire to arrive at an easy peace by deceitful means. Being truthful himself, he cannot bear a lie. And when somebody offers him a comforting falsehood, he replies, I cannot be comforted except by the Truth of God. I will not let my conscience be stayed and eased except by that which is legitimate and right. I want to be justly and truly saved and not merely tempted to believe that I am saved, when I am not.

I believe that many persons will never be a prey to priest craft, or any of the thousand inventions of mankind, because God, in great mercy, has made them men in whose spirits there is no deceit. And therefore they search after that which is true and have an inward perception of what is the Truth of God. They may be mistaken in some things and will be, for we are all fallible. But a true heart is very much like the mariners needle which is true to its own pole and therefore helps a man in his steering. God grant us all to have an instinct for truth and to be led by its aid to Christ, who is the Truth, so that we may truly find Him and be saved by His great salvation.

To be free from deceit also helps us to see our need of the Spirit of God. The right-minded man who will examine himself carefully will perceive that what is required of him is more than he can ever give, unaided and unassisted. He will discover that there is that about a Christians life to which he cannot attain unless he is born again. He will feel that there is a something about the child of God which he does not possess and cannot imitate and can only gain by a work of the Spirit of God in the heart.

Brethren, a man whose heart has been made to be trueeven though as yet he may not have found Christis one of those men who are pretty sure to find Him. He is on the outlook for such a Savior as Christ, and therefore he will spy Him out when He passes by. To such men I like to tell the story of substitutionhow a just God cannot pass by sin without a penalty. How that just God, in the Person of His Son, came here on earth and took human nature into connection with His own. How in that perfect Manhood He took the sins of all who believe in Him and bore them in His own body on the tree. That, by bearing what was due to the dishonored Law, He might put away sin, so that God might be just and the Justifier of him that believes.

Why, I have seen true hearts leap at this. They have said, Yes, that is the secretthat is the solution of the dread problem of my conscience. I see now how righteousness and peace can kiss each otherhow an offending sinner can meet his offended Godhow they can justly stand on terms of mutual amity and love. The sinner washed in the atoning blood and God rejoicing in the sinner as He sees him in the righteousness of His dear Son. The truthfulness which God puts into mens hearts seems, somehow, to open wide the doors of the understanding and the entrances of the entire being to the glories of the Cross of Christ. And Jesus enters the Truth and the Lifeand takes possession of that honest spirit and dwells there to the salvation of the sinner, world without end.

Now, if any man or woman here is resolved to come to Jesus, let them carry out the resolve. Come along with you! The true Savior shuts out no true man. If you mean to pray tonight, pray. If your heart means the prayer, God will hear it. O my Hearer, if you will turn from your sin in real earnest, God will help you and enable you to overcome your sin. If you will give yourself up to Jesus Christ at oncenot in words but from your very soulHe will receive you and save you. Let there be no trifling, no mocking God. No stopping to talk with a Christian friend to chat away your feelings with pious words. But come as you are! Only come really and truly and Jesus will meet you and welcome you and say, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no deceit! Those who come thus are always welcomed by Him. Come and see for yourself!

II. But now, secondly, I am going to give a picture of A SINCERE MAN AFTER HE BECOMES A CHRISTIAN. It is the sine qua non for a Christian that he should be thoroughly sincere. Of every man who is really a child of God it must be saidor we shall question whether he is a child of God at allan Israelite indeed, in whom is no deceit! Just let me briefly state how the true Christians portrait is here painted in lifelike colors in the words, in whom is no deceit.

First, the real Believer in Christ desires to be what he thinks he is. That is to say, if he judges himself to be converted he desires to be soundly converted. If he judges himself to be a Believer, his desire is that he may not be anything else than a true Believer. If upon examination he perceives that he is regenerate, his prayer is that there may be no mistake about it, but that he may be really born again from on high. Some people do not like to be examined on these points but the genuine Christian loves to be searched and tested.

He prays, Search me, O God. Because searching by his own conscience may not be enough. He asks God Himself to search and test him whether he is true or not. It would be an awful thing if you or I should form the comforting conclusion, I am all right, for I am in the light!and it should turn out that we are abiding in death and darkness. It would be an awful thing to find out that terrible truth just when we are in the valley of death and wading through the dread river. Let us find it out at once, if we must find it out at all! Startling as the discovery would be to some of us, yet we would rather know it now than go an inch furtherfor every inch we go, we are further away from the right road, if we are on the wrong track.

I heard of one who got into the backwoods and went traveling on all day long and at nightfall he discovered that after the most weary plodding he had arrived at the exact place from which he started in the morning. He had been wandering in a circle and spending his strength for nothing. It is a fearful business, when one is starving, to be at the same time losing ones way. We pray that it may not be so with us. We wish to be what we think ourselves to be. We want to carry out to the full any profession that we may have madewe desire to go beyond it rather than fall short of it.

And, next, every true Christian desires to do what he thinks he does. You will understand me when I say that when we go upstairs to pray, if we are true Christians, we shall want to feel that we really pray. For there may be times when we have not prayed at all, though we have been on our knees and have repeated very excellent words. When you read the

Bible you know well that there is no practical good in getting through a chapter of the Bible any more than a passage of any other book if the heart has not received the teaching of the Holy Spirit.

John Bradford vowed that he would never leave off a holy exercise until he felt that his heart had entered into it. He resolved that if he sang, he would sing until he did sing. If he prayed, he would pray until he did pray. If he heard the Word, he would hear it until he did hear it, so as to profit by it. But O dear Friends, how easy it is to fall into the hypocritical cant of talking and not doing, doing and half-doing and flattering ourselves that we have done it when, indeed, we have only talked of doing it! Let us be straight and sincere. If you have given alms, take heed that you have given almsand not spent your money in buying for yourself a name for generosity.

If you preach the Gospel, mind you have preached itand have not merely played the orator and aimed at being thought a man of admirable parts. If you have engaged in public prayer, let it never be merely because you were called upon by the leader of the meeting. But let it be a prayer in which you breathe out a burning desire to speak with God. When you plead on behalf of your Brethren, do not compel them to think of you. But lead them to the Mercy Seat. Let us cultivate a spirit in which there is no deceit. If you have had a quarter of an hour for prayer and you have not prayed, rather mark it down as a wasted quarter of an hour than reckon it a season of devotion. It will never answer to keep false accounts with the Lord.

If you have been reading the Bible and you really have not read it and have got nothing out of it, do not say that you have read itjust say I pretended to do so. That is the honest way. Be very straight with yourself, for he must be a great knave who is willing to cheat his own soul. If you are not very watchful and severe with yourself, you may be giving your heart and your life credit for things which are but the names of things and not the things themselves.

The Christian man in whom there is no deceit is true to his convictions. This is an age in which convictions are sadly rare and where they do exist they are singularly sleepy and torpid. I take it, as a Christian man and minister, that I have no right to occupy the pulpit of a congregation if I do not believe those doctrines which I professed to believe when I became the pastor of the Church. I have no right to undermine the basis upon which the Church was formed. As a private member of a Church, I have no right to be a member of a Church whose doctrines I do not accept. Indeed, I ought not to regard it as a possibility that I could remain to profess what I do not agree with. I am responsible, as a member of a Church, for all that is taught and all that is done by that Church in its capacity as a Church.

And if I am protesting in my heart, and yet in my proper person continue part and parcel of that ChurchI am not acting truthfully to God. We want, in this century, a class of men who are endowed with a double portion of conscience to what is generally exhibited by professors. For there are many of them who have got enough conscience to make them miserable and disagreeable but not enough to make them honestly quit their positions. They have enough conscience to make them feel uncomfortable but not enough to force them to act bravely for what they believe.

Who wants to have a conscience that will only be quiet by being drugged? Trifling with conscience, though common enough, is one of the most deadly sins against a mans self of which he can be guilty. If you are following a trade and you know that it is evil, quit it. Quit it at once. Quit it before you get comfortable in it. For after a while, by continuance in it, you will become saddened with dishonesty and you will not be able to see the dishonor of it. I do not doubt that many persons in London who get their living by the most infamous vices entered into those infamous ways by degrees. They began with some little divergence from morality and then turned decidedly into wickedness. It was a very little fault at first and it troubled thembut they soon grew used to it and said, Oh, well, everybody does it.

Then they went on a little farther and a little farther till they were out of sight of the right road and had lost all desire to return to it. Sad is that mans case who has lost all power to hear the foghorn and yet is nearing a rock. Blessed is that man who will not listen to the common talk about making small nicks in his conscience. For he that makes a little rent will find that in the wear and tear of life those little rents soon gape wider and wider. Be true to your conscience, though it cost you your honor or your life. What if your barn is empty and your purse is taken from you? What if your reputation sinks? If you are true to God and to yourself you need not fear, for you shall have the approbation of Him who said of Nathanael, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no deceit!

I do not myself like the doing of things for which I have to make an apology. I do not refer to apologies to my fellow men. For what matters what people think about us? We need not mind the judgments of erring mortals. But I refer to apologizing to myself and to my God. Every man who respects himself feels that the first thing he has to do is to deserve his own good opinion. And numbers of men and women have not won that good opinion yet. If they were to talk to themselves, they would say to themselves, Why, you know you are not acting straight. You know you are not doing right. You are mean and cowardly and afraid to do right.

But they will not give themselves an opportunity of talking to themselves, lest they should be uneasy. He that never likes to be alone probably knows that when he is alone he is in bad company. And this fact ought to startle him. Would he be so mightily afraid to commune with his own heart in solitude if he did not suspect something to be rotten within? Never violate your convictions. If you do, you are not one in whom is no deceit.

Again, a genuine Christian man is simple in his aims. He is aiming at Gods glory. He is aiming at the good of his fellow men. He is aiming to lead a holy life. That is what he says. And if he is, indeed, a child of God, he is really aiming at these things and he is not basely taking up with godliness for the sake of gain and reputation. Are not many looking one way and rowing another? Do you not know Mr. Facing-Both-Ways, who looks this way and the other way, too? He runs with the hounds when there is anything good to be hunted. But he is off with the hare when a little fear surprises him.

Trimming is a despicable businessa diabolical thing and those who follow it are the worst of men. Such men are common as blackberries and base as dirt. Oh, be not so! Let your life be laid like a gun that is sighted for the center of the target and then let it be fired at once that the bullet may go straight to its place, driven on by all the powder of your energy. God give us to be like thunderbolts hurled from His own hand against all falsehood and sham. Never caring what the consequences may beso far as we ourselves are concernedlet us be resolved that if the heavens fall we will follow the Truth of God and justice, and righteousness, and leave those whose likings run the other way to shift for themselves by trickery and policy.

The Christian man is clear in his aims, and if he is a true Christian, he is also very clear in his modes of pursuing his aims. Some people have a sort of spiritual or moral squint. If they want to look over there, they turn their eyes up this side of the gallery. They never say plainly and exactly what they mean, but use words in a double and doubtful sense. I abhor this most in a teacher of religion but it is far too common. Some preachers are great men at beating around the bush. They never go to work as a truthful man would go to work because, they say, No, I must play my cards. Beware of all that moral card-playing. Hate the idea of playing your cards for this and that.

I do not say that you and I might wish with the Roman that we had a window in our breast, that all men might see our thoughts. For he that had a window in his breast would sometimes need to pull down the blind. But I do say thisthat if we are walking as Christ would have us walk, we shall so live that our design and our mode of getting at our design will bear the test of the judgment of the Last Great Day. I say yet further that he among you who is proposing to do one thingas his fellow man judges but who is really aiming to do another thing, as God knowsis not an Israelite indeed, in whom is no deceit.

Brethren, in your trade, in your business, in all that you do, be straight as a line. Policy may be a guide for the world but it should never be the rule of life of Church members. O my Brothers and Sisters, be true in all things! Do that which will bear the burning heat of the last fire and the fierce light of the last day and then you do that which you can sleep upon on your deathbed, can remember in the Day of Judgment and remember without fear before your God. Live unto God. Live as in the sight of God. Live under the command of God. Court His approbation and care for nothing else. Set your helm towards the right course, and then fasten it there and turn not aside an inch, God helping you, all your days.

Such a man as this need never be afraid. He may live or die without apprehension. He may face any company without a blush. It is a great mercy when you do not get into the way of talking one way to one set of people and another way to another. I know some professed Christians who are so delightfully sweet and earnest that they try to make things pleasant all round and therefore never speak out the whole truth in any companyunless it happens to be such as will be agreeable. It is, Oh, yes, my dear Sir. And though there is something hard said about an absent person they quite agree with it.

When they get with that very person it is again, Yes, my dear Sir. And they join hands with him in tearing up the character of the opposite party. This method of talking is very liable to accidents. A person who acts this double part must always live a very unquiet life because he does not know when No. 1 and No. 2 may meet and put their accounts together and find out his treachery to both parties. Brethren, let no one among you be guilty of such conduct. Always say anything you have against a man straight to his face. When you speak behind his back, speak as kindly of him as truth permits. You need not do that before his facefor that might seem flattery on your part.

To his face you may tell him a few things that do not please him, if it is just to do so. But when he is absent, be silent on such themes. Doublefacedness often brings a bitter reward in this life. Do not play the double in your conversation, either towards God or man. Be an Israelite, indeed, in whom is no deceit. Such a person who has lived honestly in the sight of Godtrusting alone in the precious blood of Jesus and not to his own sincerityneed not fear in time or in eternity.

I remember seeing a good but very timorous woman whose gracious life was drawing to a close. I was sitting by her bedside and she seemed to be very low and filled with fear as to her future state. But at last she was comforted by a word I spoke. Then she said to me very tremblingly, I do not think that God will send me among the wicked who did not love Him and did not trust His dear Son, for I never sought their company here. I have always loved the people of God and I have loved His house and I have loved His Word and I have loved holiness, and therefore I think that He will let me go among my own people.

This was sound reasoning. The true shall go with the true at the last. The man whom God has made to be upright and truthful shall not be driven down to the place where all liars go. He shall keep his own way and go to his own company. Up there in Heaven it is all Truth of Godthe God of Truth is there and the Christ of Truth is thereand men are there who loved the Truth and who, despite all their imperfections, came to the light that their deeds might be made manifest that they were worked in God. If you are truthful, you will go with these truthful people. Oh, may God make you so at once!

Remember that there is an absolute necessity that a Christian should possess thoroughbred sincerity and intense, downright reality. The child of God may have spots on his countenance but he must not paint his face. It is the hypocrite that paints. There may be a speck here and a speck there upon the countenance of the true Believer but he is sorry that it should be so and he tries to wash off all such stains. But he never uses the color-box. In this he is the reverse of the worlds religious professors. Oh, the multitude of hypocrites that rouge themselves up to their eyes! They are such beauties as Jezebel made herself.

You would suppose that they possessed the beauty of holiness. But see them when the paint is offcatch them at homewatch them in their own familiestrace them into their secret places and there you will say, Can these be the same men? When one saw a woman of eighty tricked out like a girl of eighteen, he shouted, What old hag is this? So might you say of many a brave professor, What disgraceful creature is this?

That which we thought was the beauty of Divine Grace we find to be the worn and shriveled countenance of the old man hidden beneath coats of deceptive coloring. Loathe all this and be as free from it as you would wish to be free from theft or murder.

O Sirs, if any of us are lost, let us at least know that we are so. If we hope that we are saved, God grant that it may be a true hope and a vital experience. I will speak to you, one and all, the Gospel of the Grace of God and I have done. To each one the Word of the Lord says, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be savedsaved from hypocrisy, saved from falsehood, saved from deceit and guiltfor he that believes and is baptized shall be saved. But he that believes not shall be damned. May God set His seal upon this admonition, for Jesus sake! Amen.

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LETTER FROM MR. SPURGEON

DEAR FRIENDSWriting at this present time I must personally sing of tender mercy and restoring love. Health is returning. And if I could but gain sufficient strength to stand through a sermon, I would come home at once. Morning by morning my knee becomes just a little better and therefore I look forward with joyful hope to a return to my pulpit from which I have been so long absent. If I may be favored to preach on February 17th, I shall be happy, indeed.

The last few months have been crowded with more trials than it would be worthwhile to mention. But in nothing has Divine Grace failed to support the struggling heart. More sure than ever am I of the Truth of the Gospel, the faithfulness of God and the certainty of His purpose. The Lord lives when comfort dies and reigns when nature fails. Not a line of His Revelation has proved erroneous. There is not a syllable of the inspired Book which has ever started from its place. You may hang the weight of your soul on any one of the Words which have proceeded out of the mouth of God. This I have proved by personal experience time out of mind.

Although I am not worthy to wash the feet of the servants of my Lord, I yet most boldly ask the prayers of my fellow workers that I may not, upon this occasion, be disappointed, but may be allowed to rise from pain and return to my happy sphere of service. I beg this specially of choice friends, to whose intercessions I already owe so much.   
Yours heartily,   
*C. H. SPURGEON.*   
Mentone, January 26, 1889.

Adapted from The C.H. Spurgeon Collection, Version 1.0, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307 Sermon #2021 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

NATHANAELOR, THE READY BELIEVER AND HIS REWARD   
NO. 2021

BY C. H. SPURGEON,   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said unto you, I saw you under the fig tree, you believe? You shall see greater things than these. John 1:50.**

NATHANAEL was by nature a man free from cunning and deceit. He was a specimen of that honest and good ground of which our Savior speaks in the parable, upon which, when the seed fell, a hundred-fold harvest was produced. We have some such men about us, thank God, in this countryregular John Blunts, as we say, clear as crystal, true as the sun in the heavens. Many men are well known to us who are upright, downright, truthful, honest, candid and openhearted. You might trust them anywhere. Yes, trust them to repeat a conversation without misrepresenting it and that is saying a good deal in these times.

Such people do not understand the clever arts of craft and cunning for they do not take to them naturally and have never been trained in the practice of policy. Speech is not to them the medium for concealing their thoughts. When they have a mind to speak, they speak their mind. You know where they are. They may have a great many faults but they have not the faults of deception and dissimulation. They are Israelites, indeed, in whom is no guile. You know the kind of peoplethey may at times speak too harshly and hurt your feelings. They may put things in an ugly shape and tread on peoples cornsbut they are as straight as a plumbline and you may be sure that you know them when you have heard what they say.

In the end they cause far less pain to peoples feelings than those who have a great deal of finesse and policy, whose words are softer than butter but inwardly they are drawn swords. Smooth and oily tongues, with lying hearts at the back of them are fit instruments for Satan. But truthspeaking lips, which are joined to an honest heart are precious things which the Lord Himself delights to use. Now, when the good Brethren who had joined the Savior came to tell Nathanael that they had found the Christ he blurted out his objection at once.

They said, We have found Him, of whom Moses in the Law and the Prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth. But he did not take everything for Gospel which his friends told him. Nathanael had been born and bred in the midst of people prejudiced against Nazareth and he had sucked in their prejudice and felt sure that the Messiah could no more come from Nazareth than a profound philosopher could come from Gotham. He does not beat about the bush but he says at once, Can there any good thing

come out of Nazareth?

It is always a good thing, when a man has a prejudice, if he will but state it and out with it. You can always deal with this kind of fellow. If he will say what is troubling him and tell you what keeps him back from faith, why, then you can put your finger on his difficulty and try to remove it. It is a great miracle when a dumb devil is cast out. If the evil will but speak and so declare itself we have a chance of overcoming it.

Nathanaels question was met at once by his comrades, who said to him, Come and see. And like the honest man that he was, he took up their challenge. He would come and see. How many there are who make objections but they will not come and see! They have heard concerning a certain preacher, perhaps, such-and-such absurd things. But another says, It is not so. Come and see. Not they. They do not want to come and seefor they are unfair and prefer to cherish a bad opinion of the man. They have heard that Calvinistic doctrine is cruel, harsh and unjust. Ah, says a Believer in Free Grace, you have only seen a caricature of it. You should read for yourself and judge by Scripture.

Oh, nothey do not want to read! They have made up their mindsnot that they have much of a mind to make up. If they had more mind it might take them longer to make it up. But, having once made up their little mind, they have no mind to unmake it. They prefer to go blindly on whether they are right or wrong. They know so much that they do not wish to learn any more. Nathanael was not of that sort. Come and see, was an invitation which commended itself to his judgment. Oh, yes, said he, by all means! I am open to conviction. I will come and see.

I wish I could prevail on each one of my hearers to search the Bible for himself to see what the true doctrine is, that he may have a firm foundation to build upon and not take his religion second-hand from another. Nathanael is on his way to see for himself, when the Lord Jesus Christ, turning to those round about Him, says, in a voice loud enough for Nathanael to hear, Behold an Israelite, indeed, in whom is no guile! Here comes a man with no craft, no cunning in him. Nathanael is startled to find his real character so clearly read and somewhat bluntly asks, From where do You know me?

I must do him the justice of believing that he said it respectfully, yet, nevertheless, he curtly said, From where do You know me? As much as to say You have hit the nail on the head. But how came You to know this? You see, the enquiry that was in his mind is soon upon his tonguehis words at once declare his thought. It is a great mercy when men dare speak upon that which troubles them. Instead of letting a doubt or a difficulty fester in their souls, they bring it outthat the light may play upon it and it is soon gone.

Jesus answered and said to him, Before that Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you. What Nathanael was doing under the fig tree I do not know. Some think that he was there in meditation. Others say in prayer. Very possibly, but I do not know, and the wisest expositors do not know, and you do not know. Nobody knew but Jesus and Nathanael. He was doing something of which he was not ashamed but which he modestly did not wish to have known and so he had chosen a private place. That transaction was a secret between himself and the Lord, his God, and He who knew that secret must have come from God.

Perhaps he was doing nothing there but sitting still before the Lord in anguish of spirit. Possibly he there had looked towards the God of his fathers with hope, or had enjoyed hallowed fellowship with Heaven. Anyhow, Jesus mentioned to him something which he remembered and thought much of, though it was entirely between God and his own soul. Between Jesus and Nathanaelunder the fig treeserved as a password. They were known to one another by that. And at once Nathanael cried, Rabbi, You are the Son of God. You are the King of Israel.

He is fairly won and by an open confession he commits himself at once to what he believes. He is not ashamed of his convictions. He has enlisted beneath the banner of the King of Israel once and for all. Forth he comes without a moments reservation with that blessed confession of faith Rabbi, You are the Son of God. You are the King of Israel. Our Lord Jesus, charmed with the grace which He had Himself given, delighted with the faith which He had Himself created, answers, Because I said unto you, I saw you under the fig tree, you believe? You shall see greater things than these. This ready convert, so speedily convinced, was very acceptable to the Lord Jesus.

Now, we have tonight here, first, one who believed readily. I am going to speak of that. Secondly, here is one who was highly commended for it You shall see greater things than these. Thirdly, here is one who might possibly in after days be subject to a peculiar temptation on account of his very readiness to believe. And, lastly, here is one who, I doubt not, was peculiarly grateful. And if there is another here like he, he ought to be very grateful, too.

I. First, then, HERE IS ONE WHO BELIEVED READILY. The first time he saw the Savior he was converted to the faith. The first sentences that were addressed to him by the Lord Jesus Christ fairly won him to hearty faith and loyal service. Why was that? Why was he so soon brought to discipleship?

I think, perhaps, it was because he was such a true man himself that the element of suspicion was not in his character. Persons who are remarkably suspicious and constantly incredulous are seldom very truthful themselves. If you follow them home, you will discover that they are suspicious of others because they are not true themselves and their difficulty in believing others arises from the fact that they measure other peoples corn with their own bushel. They imagine that other people are as big liars as they are themselves. I believe that this is the bottom of much of the mistrust and questioning which seethes around us.

Sometimes that suspiciousness comes upon mens minds through long dealing with deceptive persons. But if you find that a man began life with a general suspicion and doubt of others, you may conclude that he was a born deceiver, radically false from his birth. He judges human nature from his experience within his own heart. He has observed his own trickiness and he thinks that everybody else is going to trick him. And so he is full of suspicion. Nathanael had never taken anybody in nor tried to mislead anyone in his life and therefore he did not expect to be deceived.

I wonder whether he was a sailor. I should think that he must have been, for sailors are generally as open as the sea they sail over. He never said anything with reserve. Not he. He was accustomed to wear his heart on his sleeve even if the crows did peck at it. He could not conceal anything, nor think that others did so. He was just as honest as the day. And so he came to the Savior with a heart that was open to faith, ready to believe Him. I should think the very sight of the Saviors blessed face had half won him and the tone of that truthful voice had moved him. But when it came to his laying bare a secret in his life which he was sure that nobody knew but himself and God, then Nathanael yielded to conviction at once and became a Believer straightway.

Now I do hope that there are some here to whom the Lord has given, from their very birth, a truthful, openhearted natureand if you should believe in Jesus Christ tonight straightway, even though it is the first time you have ever heard of Him, I shall bless the grace of God which has led you to so speedy a closing in with Christ. Oh that the Holy Spirit may complete the work of which there is already so hopeful a beginning! But, further, this Nathanael, this rapid Believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, had, I have no doubt, been seeking guidance beforehand and that guidance he had honestly followed.

I should think that he had for years been expecting the coming of the Messiah. The tone of his language argues that. Therefore, when Philip came to him and told him that he had found the Messiah and indicated to him that he had better come and see for himself, he was willing at once to come and without delay he came with the view of seeing for himself whether this Jesus of Nazareth was the Promised One. He was not only candid but he was interested. He was concerned about Divine things and in thorough earnest to know the Truth of God in reference to them. So he came to Jesus with solemn intent and eager desire.

O dear Friends, if you came to hear the Gospel in sincerity, we should expect to see more of you converted. But people come into our great assemblies to see the congregation, or to inspect the building, or to hear the preacher. Their motive is mere idle curiosity. If they get a blessing we shall heartily thank God for it and admire the sovereignty of His Grace. But when persons come, as they often do, I thank God, even from a great distance with the desire to know what the Gospel is and with a wish to find the Savior for themselves, then we have surer hope. These enquirers are the people that are likely to be converted.

When fish want to be caught, it is good fishing. When they are anxious to take the bait, then the fisherman have fine times. If, my dear Hearers, you would come here saying, I will go and see whether I can find salvation. I will hear with the intention that the hearing may be a means of grace to my soul, none of you would come long in vain where Christ Jesus is faithfully preached. If you come with a desire of understanding and knowing Him, He will come and reveal Himself to you. This was one main reason why Nathanael so speedily believedthat he came having sought guidance and desiring really to find the Messiah of whom Philip had spoken.

Observe that he was satisfied with one piece of clear evidence. That one item of evidence convinced him. The Lord Jesus said, Before that Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you. Nobody knew that he had been under the fig tree except the Lord who sees all things. No mortal living was aware of what Nathanael had done, or thought, or purposed in that shady retreat. When Jesus, therefore, with a peculiar look, said I saw you, Nathanael also saw Him that spoke to him. Godhead alone could speak thus, said hethere is the Spirit of God in that man. He knows the secret things of my life. He has revealed me to myself. Rabbi, said he, You are the Son of God. You are the King of Israel. The conclusion was a sound one but how speedily it was reached!

One argument, if it is sound, is enough. If a matter is in dispute and if one man can solemnly declare that he saw such-and-such a thing and that one man is of high repute, his evidence is sufficient for a truthful man to rest upon. Twenty may come and say that they think it is so-andso but twenty weak links will not make a strong chain. And I would rather trust to one solid link than I would trust to a chain of twenty worn and rusted linkseach one of which is ready to snap. If it is so, it is so. If it is not so, it is not so. If a man has proved anything to me by one infallible proof that is enough. Hence, I believe that those who come to Christ on one bit of evidence are justified in so doing. They afterwards receive a host of confirming evidences but one is quite enough for them to begin with.

Oh that I might have some tonight who shall hear in this sermon some one thing which shall strike them as being of the Lord! I pray that some secret matter, which I do not personally know, shall yet be uttered by me so that my hearers will say to themselves, How came that to be spoken? That fits me exactly, yet the minister could not have known it. God must have spoken to me. Only the Lord knew what I did in the back kitchen. Only He knew what I was thinking of this afternoon. But speaking through His servant He has touched a secret spring and opened a drawer in my cabinet that nobody knew of, save myself! This is the finger of God.

God grant that some may thus be led to Jesus Christ by one piece of evidence and may not tarry to feel fifty impressions on their hearts. Oh, that you would not wait for whole weeks of invitations and months of pressure and years of expostulation. But oh, that you would yield tonight! Sometimes, in warfare, cities have been taken without a shot being fired. The valiant men have come up to the gates and they have said, Capitulate and you shall be spared. And the townsmen have opened wide their gates. I know that many other cities have had to be battered till there has been scarcely a house without tokens of shot and shell. But what has been their gain when they have been captured after all? Do not let it be so with your souls but yield at once to the conquering Savior who comes forth in the robes of His glorious Grace and bids you yield. He promises that if you accept His scepter you shall see the greatness of His Grace.

Notice, however, that although Nathanael yielded at once and believed on one bit of evidence, yet his faith went a long way! He did not merely say, Rabbi, I believe that you are the Messiah, but he said, You are the Son of God. This was farther than anybody else had gone at that time so far as I remember. He added, You are the King of Israel. And this again was a great declaration to make. He worshipped Jesus and he crowned Him. He owned Him as God and he magnified Him as King. Do not suppose that the faith which is quickly born is therefore weak. No, but that faith which comes suddenly and quickly is often the very best and strongest faith in all the world. And I trust that some of you may prove it to be so tonight by flying to Christ at onceas the doves fly to their windows and rest in Him till you find fullness of peace.

Thus much concerning the Israelite, indeed, who believed readily. II. In the second place, HERE IS ONE WHO WAS HIGHLY COMMENDED. The Lord Jesus owned his faith to be true faith. He said, You believe? But He meant that He perceived that he truly believed. He owned that though his faith was born then and there, it was the genuine article. Christ owns, as true faith, that faith which is not long in coming. Fear not, dear Hearer, that if you believe at this very moment your faith will be any the less sincere and effectual.  
Jesus did more than own it to be faith. He commended it as rarely excellent. He spoke as if He were astonished. Because I said, I saw you under the fig tree, you believe?as much as to say, Many see Me work miracles and do not believe. Do you believe so soon? They see Me heal lepers and raise the dead and yet they will not believe. But you believe merely because I said I saw you under the fig tree? He is charmed with him for his readiness to own the Truth. Why, there are some young people who come to Christ and believe in Him by one little word from their mother. And on the other hand there are men and women who have been for fifty years hearers of the Gospel and yet have not believed.   
Now, the text proves that Christ has an admiration of those who readily, willingly, obediently and cheerfully come. Those who make no questions, raise no difficulties but on comparatively slender evidence, that evidence being quite sufficient, yield their full trust to Jesus Christ their Lord. And our blessed Lord was so pleased with this ready faith that He made a promise to Nathanael. Said He, You shall see greater things than these. If you can see so much in My one saying that I saw you under the fig tree, you have the kind of eyes that are fit to see great sights.   
He that will see shall see, but he that closes his eyes shall be blinded. Many are the people in this world who, if you show them the greatest marvel, do not wonder. They look at it and see nothing. When you meet with such an unobservant person, you say to yourself, I shall not show that man anything more. It does not pay to unveil rarities to him, he has no appreciation of them. But here is another who, when you show him some curio that you have in your house, is pleased with it and spies out at once the excellence and beauty of it. You say, I have something more which I will gladly show you! When your visitor appreciates your choice treasure, you say to him, I will unlock all my cabinets. I will take you into my private room and every little thing I have that can interest you, you shall see, because I perceive that you have eyes and a mind which finds gratification in rare curiosities.   
Oh, you that readily believe in Christyou are the men and women to whom Christ will make known His secrets! Those of you who are fools and slow of heart to believe must mend your manners, or the Holy Spirit will never lead you into the mysteries of the kingdom. Did not Jesus say to one who came to Him by night, If I have told you earthly things and you believe not, how shall you believe if I tell you of heavenly things? But, you Israelites, indeed, you quick Believersto you will He reveal Himself as the Ladder that father Jacob saw, reaching from earth to Heaven, upon which the angels ascend and descend between God and His chosen. You shall see the deep things of God. You are the people out of whom He will make such men as John, who, in Patmos, beheld a glorious Apocalypse.   
O my beloved Hearers, may it be so with you! Because your faith so readily chimes in with what Christ reveals, may you have visions of God and may none of you be so dull of heart that it shall be said, He could not show them many mighty works because of their unbelief!   
III. I have thus spoken and I come, thirdly, to notice that HERE IS A MAN WHO MIGHT POSSIBLY BE TROUBLED WITH A PECULIAR TEMPTATION.   
People of this kind are subject to a special trial with which I will now deal. In this Church a considerable number of us, beginning with the pastor, came to Christ after an awful amount of conviction and despondency. We are none the better for this but we are at least free from one particular temptation of the Evil One. Oh, how I look back upon those times in which I felt my bondage but could not attain libertythose days in which Christ was preached to me but I could not hear Him and I wandered up and down everywhere before I found peace!   
In this Church and in the officers of the Church among the deacons, there is especially one dear Brother who sometimes can hardly understand me when I speak about the difficulties some have in coming to Christ for he never experienced them. You all know him, one of the sweetest and best of men. But he came to Jesus Christ as a boy readily enough. He heard the Gospel and he believed it and without any sort of terror he rejoiced in the Lord and he continues to do so to this day. He is none the worse saint for this but in some respects all the better.   
I know, however, what is the peculiar temptation of those who come so readily to Christ. The devil comes to them and he says, Now, look at you. You have read Mr. Bunyans Grace Abounding, have you not? Yes, says the good man. Well, says he, you never went through the like battle and struggle. No, I never did. Then, says he, You are no child of God. You see you were easily convertedthere was no deep work in your soul. You came to Jesus Christ one sunshiny day and you will go away from Him one dark day. You are like the stony-ground hearer, the seed sprang up in you on a sudden, because there was no depth of earth and you will soon die away when the sun is risen with fervent heat.   
Now, the next time the devil comes to any of you with that, I want you to talk to him, if he is worth it, for your own good. I want you to quench the fiery dart which he will fling at you. It is true that many come to the Lord Jesus under extreme difficulties and are long before they can rest in faith. But you must not compare yourself with others, nor expect that the work of God will take precisely the same shape in every heart. Some, like Nicodemus, say, How can these things be? But others believe in Jesus as readily as Nathanael did and they come just as truly, just as really, just as lastingly as those who find it difficult to come.   
Let me help you with a few considerations. Those you have read of, who came to Christ under so much terrorit may be that they had some other trouble at the same timeas well as the trouble of their conscience. Perhaps, in addition to being convinced of sin, they were suffering from poverty, or sickness, or indigestion, or remorse, or some other vexation of spirit. Discern carefully between spiritual trouble and temporal trouble. Temporal trouble may help to aggravate the spiritual but it is not a necessary part of itin fact, very much the reverse. It may increase the apparent depth of the work of repentance but it may detract from its real worth.   
In the next place, it may be, and probably is, the fact that those who found so much difficulty in coming to Christ were worried by Satan. Perhaps he injected into their minds blasphemous thoughts or he suggested doubts concerning the Scriptures, or the Truth of God. Because they were just escaping from his power he worried them most maliciously. Do you want to be worried in that way? Do you think that there is any advantage in Satans attacks? If you can get to Christ without them, ought you not to be thankful to escape them? How can you desire an affliction so utterly undesirable? How can you wish to feel that which those who suffer from it would give their eyes to be rid of? I beseech you, be reasonable.   
In many persons their difficulties in coming to Christ were caused very largely by their melancholy temperament. We are not all alike cheerful by natural constitution. Why, here is one man who is bright-eyed by nature and when he is down he is higher up than others are when they are up. He is always bright and hopeful. Yonder is another Brother who seems inevitably to take a dark view of matters. He is an unhappily constituted person. A person with whom it is not easy to live except in a very large hotel, in which the dinner-table is many yards long. You know and avoid the style of man.

If there is a melancholy disposition, it tends to darken the work of the Spirit in the heart. And whereas the work of the Spirit makes the man sorrowful, his own melancholy disposition, perhaps caused by mental disease, darkens that sorrow into black despair. Few of us are perfectly sane. In fact, I do not think anybody is altogether so. I see you smile but I am not jestingwe have each one a peculiarity which we could hardly defend by the rules of strict reasoning. Have we not? We are all a little touched by that black hand which sin stretched out when it shook our universal manhood in all its faculties.   
Some are touched with melancholy from their birth and so a part of their great terror, when under conviction, may arise from the fact that they are not absolutely free to form a hopeful judgment. Why should you wish to be like they? What can there be desirable about feelings which spring from a disease?   
Again, there is no doubt that many in coming to Christ are greatly troubled because they are ignorant. They do not know that which would comfort them if they did but know it. They are vexed with fears which would not exist if they were better acquainted with Scripture. If they knew more of the Doctrines of Grace they would not be vexed with the fears which their ignorance creates. You who are taught in the Word are all the more likely to find speedy peace. Now, dear Friends, do you want to be bothered with fears which only spring out of ignorance? Must it not be much better for you, having a clearer light and a brighter knowledge, to say, Yes, that is it. I believe in Jesus Christ and I am saved. Blessed be His name! I ask no questions. I believe and am saved at once?   
May it not also be that those who are so hard put to it in coming to Christ are without the helps that you have? Perhaps they cannot read. Possibly they have nobody to explain the Scriptures to them. They may be misled by their religious guides and have no one to keep them out of the ditch. It may be that they are placed where they are rather hindered than helpedthey have no Sunday school teacher, no Christian friend to sympathize with them. And so they have a hard fight of it. Many a man who is wounded in battle is soon restored because the surgeon takes him up as soon as the bullet lays him low. Whereas the wound of another, who has to lie and bleed for hours, will prove far more serious. Do you not think that you ought to be very thankful that you have so many things to help you, and that thus you the more readily come to Christ?   
Very possibly, too, many of those who had those terrors and horrors in coming to Christ, as I had myself, must lay them to the door of their unbelief. Had they believed, they might have had comfort long before. But they went to the Law for comfort, or they looked to feelings instead of looking to Christ and so they remained in darkness. Now, if you have the privilege of believing at once, as I pray you may have, should you not be glad of it and instead of envying those others, should you not thank God that you were brought to find Jesus Christ by so sunny and speedy a route?   
There is a story that I have told you before but I must tell it to you again, for I do not know anything better. A young man in Edinburgh went out and he thought he would speak about Jesus to the first person that he met with. He met a Mussel burgh fishwife carrying a great load on her back. I cannot speak ScotchI have not that useful acquirementso I will put the conversation into English. He said to her, Here you are with your burden. Yes, said she. Well, he said, did you ever feel a spiritual burden? Yes, said she, that I did, long ago, long ago and I soon got rid of it. For I did not go the same way to work that John Bunyans pilgrim did.   
Oh, thought the young man, I hoped that I had met with a Christian woman, but she must be a great heretic to talk in that way. Now, said she, Bunyans Evangelist that he speaks of was not half a Gospel preacher. He was one of the usual sort. He was not clear in the Gospel. For when he met with the poor pilgrim, weary with his burden, he said to him, Do you see that wicket-gate? No, said the man, I do not see it. Do you see that light over the gate? Well, he said, I think I do. Now, he said, you run that way with your burden. Why man, said she, that was not the way to do at all. What had that man to do with the wicket-gate or with the light over it?  
The Gospel does not say run to a gate or a light. What he should have said was, Do you see that Cross? Look at that and your burden will fall from your shoulder. I looked straight away to the Cross and not to the wicket-gate. And at the Cross I lost my burden. Now, said she, what did Pilgrim get by going round to the wicket-gate? He tumbled into the Slough of Despond and was like to have lost his life there. Ah, said the young man, did you never go through the Slough of Despond? Ah, yes! she said, I have been through that slough many a time. But, let me tell you, it is much better to go through it with your burden off than it is with your burden on.   
And so it is. I do not want any of you to attempt to flounder through the Slough of Despond with your burden on. I want you to have done with the Slough of Despond and the wicket-gate and all that bother and just look to Christ alone. For salvation lies in a look at Him and there is salvation in none other. Peace comes to sinners by nothing else but faith in Jesus. All else is vain, be it what it may. Frames and feelings, sinkings and risings, doings and frettingall these may go for nothing. Believe in Jesus Christ and you shall be saved. This is Gods short way to Heaven and blessed is he who knows how to take it.   
Listen yet once more. You say, But I have heard of some who endured a dreadful Law-work within their souls. They were plowed and cut up dreadfully and I never was. I will further tell you that certain persons need rougher handling than others. The needle in surgery will do for certain cases, whereas the lancet is wanted for others. If the Lord can, with a needle, do for you all that is needed, why do you want more? The Lord required to take the knife to me and are you going to fret because you have never felt the deep gashes which made me cry out in agony? I pray you, be not such a foolI cannot speak a softer word if you have a craving after anguish.   
Again, the Lord may deal roughly with some because He means to qualify them for comforting despairing souls. He puts His servants through the furnace when He means them to work at pulling others out of the fire. He chastens them every morning because He means to make Barnabases of them, that they may be sons of consolation to souls in distress. I have been through the thick darkness at times for your sakes. If ever a soul was in a horror of great darkness, I was, one day, when I preached in this pulpit from My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? I could not understand why I felt in such an awful state as I did, till that evening there came into the vestry a man whose hair seemed to stand on end.   
He looked at me and said, I have never found a preacher that met my experience before. We sat down and he told me his tale of woe. By Gods grace I rescued that man, by seasonable comfort, from being sent to a lunatic asylum and perhaps from committing suicide. And then I said to the Lord my God, Let me go through the fire again if it will help me to meet the case of your poor afflicted children. Let me feel the horror of great darkness, if so I may thereby find light with which to cheer the victims of despair.   
But you, my dear Brother, my dear Sister, may not be called thus to cut your way through the forests of sorrow as the pioneer of others. You are not sent to be a guide to thousands but quietly to pursue your own lowly way. And why do you want all this painful experience? You cannot make use of it. Be thankful that you are spared the ordeal. These who have to be champions must be trained for war after a sterner sort than those who only make up the rank and file of the army. If your Lord means to lead you only as sheep at His heel into the green pastures by the still waters, you will see but little of the war and little of the rough side of the march. And why should you be so stupid as to desire distress and condemn yourself because you have it not?   
Be a Nathanael. Take the happier and better side and believe your God without a doubt or a quibble. And go to Heaven following the Lamb wherever He goes, without doubt or fear. I was going to have another head but I think that I will not, I will venture no further but close with a word to sinners, although I have in truth been speaking to them all through my discourse.   
Hear me, you that would be saved! The way of salvation is by believing in the Lord Jesus Christ. That is, by trusting Him. There are two things I have to say to you. First, God COMMANDS you to believe in Jesus Christand, secondly, nothing you can do will please God so much as for you to believe at once in His Only-Begotten Son, whom He has set forth to be the propitiation for sin.   
These are two strong things to say and so I will not say them, of myself, but give you Gods Word for them. Please note these texts down, all of you. First Epistle of John, third chapter, at the twenty-third verseAnd this is His commandment, that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ. Let me tell you where it is again. First Epistle of John, third chapter, twenty-third verseThis is His commandment, that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ. If you are commanded to do it, do it. If you have salvation promised you when you do believe on the name of Jesus, why then, believe, and have salvation. Believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ. That is the first point. God commands youwill you disobey?   
The second thing I said was that nothing you can do will please God so much as for you, now, to believe in Jesus Christ. Look at the sixth chapter of Johns Gospel and the twenty-eighth and twenty-ninth verses. There you have it. Then said they unto Him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? They meant, What are the best works, the works most pleasing to God? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that you believe on Him whom He has sent. If you could build a row of almshouses, or endow a Church, or pay the salaries of a hundred missionaries, it would not half so well please God as for you to believe on His Son Jesus Christ.

Trust Christ and you have worshipped God as acceptably as cherubim and seraphim. Trust Christ and you have brought unto the Lord that which will charm Him more than the hallelujahs which day without night, circle His Throne with praise. You poor guilty man, you poor guilty womanhumble, unknown, obscure, a nobodyGod bids you trust His Son and assures you that this will please Him more than all else you can do! Will you not do it? Oh, end your ramblings! End your strivings! End your seeking! Come and trust my Lord Jesus and you shall receive eternal life. Your fretting and your hoping and your doubting, your coming and your goingend them all by simply trusting Jesus and it is finishedyou are saved from wrath and the life of holiness has begun in you.   
Now shall you live after a nobler sort. Now shall you be filled with good works to the praise of His Glory, seeing you are no more trusting in them. I beseech you, trust in the Lord Jesus Christ alone and you shall receive power to become a child of God.   
May the Lord bless you, dear Friends! May we all meet in Heaven, the whole company of us, without exception, for Jesus Christs sake! Amen.

Adapted from The C.H. Spurgeon Collection, Version 1.0, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307 Sermon #1478 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

GREATER THINGS YET WHO SHALL SEE THEM?   
NO. 1478

**DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, JUNE 8, 1879, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said unto you, I saw you under the fig tree, do you believe? You shall see greater things than these. And He said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Henceforth you shall see Heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man. John 1:50, 51.**

WE cannot help making a few remarks upon the narrative before we proceed to the distinct subject of discourse. Certain catch words are exceedingly worthy of notice since they are abundantly full of instruction. When Nathanael had doubts as to whether the Messiah could come from Nazareth, Philip answered Him, Come and see. Now, those were the precise words which the Lord Jesus had Himself used to His earliest disciples when they began to follow HimHe said to them, Come and see. It is always safe for us to use over again words which God has blessed. Did the Master say, Come and see? Then we cannot do better than say what Jesus said and use, as near as possible, the Inspired expressions.

Was that short sentence, Come and see, made useful to other souls? Then those who would win souls cannot do better than use such Gospel nets as have been tried and proven efficient in their own cases. Let none of us say that we cannot speak to others about their souls. There was one passage of Scripture which was the means of our conversion and we cannot do better than repeat it in hearty tones to others, hoping that what God has blessed to us, He may bless to others. Short as were the inviting words, Come and see, it was full of wisdom. Our Lord knows the philosophy of the human mind and understands how best to produce faith in doubting hearts. Come and see is the sure cure for unbelief.

Some would tell doubters to sit down and think and create faith by reflecting on the nature of things. We may long consider the state of man and the condition of our own nature before we shall thereby be enlightened as to the way of salvation. If we would judge of Christ we must consider Christ, Himself. He is His own best argument! The cobweb spinnings of conceited brains are easily broken through, but the facts, the indisputable facts of the Saviors life and death hold the understanding and the heart as with iron bands. As our Savior said and as His servant, Philip, said, even so say we to all who would know Christ, Come and see!

Be not blinded by prejudices or misled by preconceptions, but read His story for yourselves. Seek His face for yourselves and taste and see that the Lord is good! Personal communion with Jesus is still the best evidence of His personal excellence and His power to save. Brothers and Sisters, have you any doubts about the Master? Come and see. Do you say within yourself, Can He save such an one as I am? Come and see. Do your sins cast you down and cause you to despair because you fear that

even the Redeemers blood cannot cleanse you? Come and see. See Him as the Son of God and the Son of Man! See Him in His life of holiness and in His death of substitution! Or see Him, if you will, up yonder at the right hand of God, making intercession for sinners!

And as you are looking upon Him, faith will steal in upon you through the power of the Holy Spirit. It is the minds eye that must look and by that look, repentance and faith find entrance to the soul. Come and see, for nothing will save a man but a personal sight of a personal Savior. Therefore, Behold the Lamb of God which takes away the sin of the world. The Lord Himself says, Look unto Me, and be you saved, all the ends of the earth. Our Lord Jesus Christ seems to have so approved of the advice of Philip that He, Himself, followed it up and kept to the same form of expression.

Did Philip say, Come and see? Then the Lord Jesus says, Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you: you have come to see Me, but I have already seen you: there has been an antecedent look on My part: I saw you before you did know anything about Me, or had even heard of Me from Philip. Nor does our Lord change His note even to the end of the conversation, but closes it by saying, Because I said unto you, I saw you under the fig tree, do you believe? You shall see greater things than these. There, you see, is the great plan of salvation as it is worked in us! First the Savior sees us, even when we are a great way off. Then we come and see and our hearts find rest in our Redeemer. And then, in later days, He gives us yet brighter and clearer views of Himself and of His Kingdom!

Oh, who would not come and see if this is so? If at our first coming and seeing we find life and rest, what must those still greater things be which are yet to be revealed? All that faith has yet discovered is but a foretaste and an earnest of more glorious sights which shall yet be opened up before our favored eyes, for Jesus Himself says, You shall see greater things than these.

Other parts of the conversation are equally worthy of notice, as showing how fully the mind of the childlike Nathanael and the holy Child Jesus responded to each other, as all true and childlike minds always do. Our Lord, as soon as He saw Nathanael, called him, an Israelite, indeed, in whom is no guile. Jesus knew his simple, frank, open-hearted character and he produced an example of it, for Nathanael did not blush with mock modesty and pretend to question the praise, but in the simplest and most unaffected manner, he tacitly admitted the description to be true and said, From where do You know me? He felt in his own conscience that he was a true son of that wrestling Jacob who became prevailing Israel and, in accepting the title, he made his words responsive to those of Jesus, for he said in effect, True, I am an Israelite, but You are the King of Israel.

To this our Lord seemed to reply, You are an Israelite, and you have acknowledged Israels King. And now you shall have Israels privileges for, like he, you shall see Heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man. Thus, as in water, face answers to face, so did the heart of man to man in the communion of these two guileless spirits! Their thoughts were so true that they harmonized like the parts of well-composed music! Their words so frankly bespoke their hearts that they answered to one another like the echo to the voice. This is the character of the communion between our Master and His sanctified ones. He says, I am the Good Shepherd, and the heart replies, The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

The spouse says, Yes, He is altogether lovely, and her Bridegroom replies, You are all fair, My love, there is no spot in you. Our Lord calls us, My love, My dove, My undefiled, and we, being in full communion with Him, reply, My Beloved is mine and I am His. As upon the sea in time of storm, deep calls unto deep, so within the sanctified heart, in heavenly calm, truth calls unto truthone word of love wakes up anotherthe commendation given by condescending love brings forth the praise of grateful affection. But to produce this mutual sympathy there must be a common character, a similar absence of guile, for this is the great condition of fellowship with Jesus.

Gods ways towards us are made to meet our own in a most instructive way. With the merciful You will show Yourself merciful. With an upright man You will show Yourself upright. With the pure You will show Yourself pure and with the obstinate You will show Yourself obstinate. When His children open their hearts to Him, He opens His mind to them. When they are true Israelites, He gives them the true Israels privileges. When they acknowledge Him to be a great and glorious King, He makes them to see the great things of His Kingdom. May it be ours through Grace to be as little children, even as Nathanael was, for so shall we behold the Kingdom of God!

With those prefatory remarks we come at length to consider the promise of our Lord Jesus to Nathanael. May the Holy Spirit instruct us! I think I am warranted in saying that this is the Saviors first personal Word of promise and it is instructive that He gave it, not to the most talented, but to the most simple-hearted of His disciples. It was, moreover, no mean promise, but full of the largest conceivable meaning. You shall see greater things than these. Those must be very great things which were greater than what Nathanael had already seenthere is room for boundless expectation in the words! It was promise which brought another linked with it as part and parcel of it. How often one Divine blessing is like a link of a chain of gold and draws another with itYou shall see greater things than these is followed by, henceforth you shall see Heaven open.

The beauty of it, in this instance, is that albeit Nathanael obtained a promise for himself at first, you shall see, yet this drew on the promise for all his brethren, for the 51st verse does not run, hereafter or henceforth you shall see Heaven open, but henceforth, you shall see Heaven open. It is a great thing to receive a personal promise, but it is a greater thing, still, to secure a promise for all our Masters household! Happy Nathanael to have been the occasion for the proclamation of the opening of Heaven and the commerce between Heaven and earththe communion of saints with the things in Heaven through their Mediator and Lord! This is the highest form of blessing when we are not only favored, ourselves, but are made the occasion for enriching others! Was not this the choice inheritance of Abraham, I will bless you and you shall be a blessing?

In considering the words which our Savior spoke to Nathanael, I should like you to notice first, the favored man to whom He spoke them. Then the gracious reward which is described in them. And lastly, the special sight comprised in that reward. In all this may we be actual partakers and not mere lookers.

I. Let us think of THIS FAVORED MAN. Nathanael was an Israelite, indeed, in whom is no guile. He was one of those who were not only of the chosen seed after the flesh, but after the Spirit. He was noted for being a simple-minded, unsophisticated personas honest as the day. He was a truthful man who knew nothing of policy, or craft, or double dealing, or reserve. He was a man out of whom all the twists had been takenan upright and downright mantrue to the core and transparent as clear glass!

He was not a Jacobite, a child of the crafty supplanter, but an Israelite, an Israelite, indeed, with the Jacob extracted out of him. He was pure, simple-hearted, ingenuousnot childish, but yet thoroughly childlike. To such a man the Word of God was given, You shall see greater things than these. Notice, first, that he was a man who honestly made enquiries which fairly suggested themselves. Before he became a Believer, he did not, as some do, invent doubts and raise questions, which questions are merely raised for questions sake. He did not put queries to Philip which he could have answered himself, nor seek to entangle his instructor by artful speech. Nothing of the sort. He sought truth, not controversy and word-chopping.

The two questions which he put came out of his heart and were points which seemed to be vital to him. He did not go about to discover difficulties, but they occurred to him then and there and he spoke them out with honest plainness. He was told that the Messiah had been found and that He was Jesus of Nazareth. I am sure he was well acquainted with Holy Writ and he did not recollect any text in which the Christ was said to come out of Nazareth and, therefore, he thought within himself, I read of Bethlehem Ephratah, that out of it shall He come forth who is to be Ruler in Israel, but I do not remember a word concerning Nazareth. Without a moments hesitation, he put the question, Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?

Nazareth was a poor, miserable little place of unsavory reputation. This, then, was a difficultya true and real difficultyand he stated it and was content to, come and see. When the Savior met him with the words, Behold an Israelite, indeed, in whom is no guile, he enquired, From where do You know me? A most natural question to ask, for on its answer would depend the value of the words. Might it not happen that this accurate description of himself might have come to Jesus by report? If a correct description of Nathanaels character had reached the Savior by Philip or any other friend, then it did not prove anything. But if Jesus knew it by His own perception and could read the character of a man to whom He was a stranger, then Nathanael knew what conclusion to draw! So he only asks the question because it ought to be asked and not to be a trick question.

How I love to meet with seekers who, though they are in difficulties, are willing to be led out of them and are not studying how to invent more! Some of you cannot find peace in Christ because you willfully darken the atmosphere around yourselves. You are not assailed by doubt, but you invite doubt to assail you! You believe a great deal more than you care to admit, but you do not want to believe and are fishing for excuses for your unbelief. It is a sad state of mind for a man to be into be trying to discover reasons why he should not be savedbut that is what many are doing. That is a wretched mind which manufactures difficulties and complicates plain things because it cannot or will not take a thing in its straightforward, simple meaning, but must be puzzled and perplexed.

Some men are too intellectual to believe the poor mans Gospelthe poor man runs and reads the Gospelthe Gospel of, Believe and live. The intellectual must be mystified, or excited, or driven to despairor else they refuse to believe. There is a craving in some men for something that will appall them and fill them with despair. Is not this folly? Wait not for such sensations, I pray you! If you do, you will miss the blessing! But if, even while as yet you have not received full faith, you are honest enough to admit of none but honest difficulties, there is in you some good thing towards the Lord God of Israel and the Lord is praised for it.

This Nathanael without guile was, next, a man who honestly yielded to the force of the Truth of God. Omniscience was proven to be an attribute of Christ to Nathanael by the pointed remark which Jesus addressed to him. What was Nathanael doing under the fig tree? I know, says one, for I have heard it said he was praying. Well, I did not say he was not praying, but I will defy anybody to prove that he was! What was Nathanael doing under the fig tree? We frequently read, in the Talmudic writers, of learned rabbis who studied the Law under the fig tree. Was Nathanael studying the Law? I did not say he was not, but I will defy anybody to prove that he was! What was he doing under the fig tree? There are only two people who could have told us and both of these are silent on the matter. Both Jesus and Nathanael knew, but no one else!

What he was doing under the fig tree, we may not pretend to guess, for it is more instructive to leave it in the darkour Lords words were a kind of secret sign to Nathanael, all the more conclusive because perfectly unknown and uninterpreted by the rest of mankind. Whether he was going to be baptized by John the Baptist and sat down there to think of what he was doing. Or whether, having been baptized, being on the way home, he suddenly felt an impression that he must sit in that place and waithe knew not whyI may not profess to know. But it was an important moment to his own mind and he remembered it as such. As soon as Jesus said, with a look, When you were under the fig tree, Nathanael was startled into a conviction that his secret heart was known to Jesus.

Under that tree he had done, or said, or thought something known only to himself. How had the Person before him known of that deed? It was true that his deed, or word, or thought under the fig tree was a pure, simple and honest one, but how did Jesus know? If He knows that I was under the fig tree and knows what I was doing there. And if He read my simple-minded, guileless character when I was there, then He is the Son of

God, the King of Israel! This was Nathanaels immediate conclusion and the argument was very clear and complete.

Similar reasoning was used by others soon after Nathanaels conversion and with the same result. When our Lord said to the woman of Samaria, Go, call your husband and come here, and she replied, I have no husband, He answered, You have well said, I have no husband, for you have had five husbands and he whom you now have is not your husband: in that said you truly. Then the woman said, Come, see a Man which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ? It was good argument, for Omniscience proves Godhead. An Omniscient one here in human flesh among the sons of men must be the Anointed of God! He must be the Lords Christ!

I do not know whether Nathanael remembered the passage of Scripture, but this was the kind of argument used by the great God, Himself, when He proved Himself to be God in Isaiah 44:5. Notice how the passage, in many of its words, is parallel to our text. One shall say, I am the Lords and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob; and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord, and surname himself by the name of Israel. Thus says the Lord, the King of Israel, and His Redeemer, the Lord of Hosts; I am the First, and I am the Last; and beside Me there is no God. And what is the proof of it? Who, as I, shall call, and shall declare it, and set it in order for Me, since I appointed the ancient people? And the things that are coming, and shall come, let them show unto them. He challenges the false gods to tell what was being done in secret places and what was to be done in the future and He gives this as a proof of His Godhead!

The heathen oracles attempted prophecy because they saw how clearly it would prove the existence of their gods. Our Lord is a discerner of hearts, reading them as a scholar scans his books and we know Him to be our God. Nathanael had drunk into the very essence of that wonderful 139th Psalm. No greater proof of Godhead can be given than the fact that all things are naked and open before the Lord! O Lord, You have searched me. You know my sitting down and my rising up. You understand my thoughts afar off. When I sat under the fig tree You did read my heart.

You compass my path and my lying down and are acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word on my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, You know it altogether. You have beset me behind and before, and laid Your hands upon me. Where shall I go from Your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from Your Presence? All this, you see, is a manifestation of Godhead. Nathanael argued, thereforeHe saw me when nobody else did! He read my character in a simple act, an act which other people might have misunderstood and thought me a fool! He perceived the uprightness of my heart and now I know that He is certainly Divine!

Notice, further, the blessing of our text comes to a man who in simple honesty believes much upon the evidence of one assured fact. It is proven that Christ can see in secret and read mens heartsand from this, in addition to His Divinity, Nathanael infers that He is a great Teacherand he makes his first confession of faith by calling Him, Rabbi. He is sure that He who knows all things is worthy to be a teacher and he gives Him the teachers title. Then, as we have already said, he perceives that if He is Omniscient, He is Divine and he makes the confession, You are the Son of God. And, not satisfied with that, he sees that if He is, indeed, the Son of God, He must be Ruler and Lord and, therefore, he calls Him the King of Israel.

See here how he drinks into the spirit of the second Psalm, where Son and King are the two great notes of harmony. Yet have I set My king upon My holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: the Lord has said unto Me, You are My Son; this day have I begotten You. Kiss the Son lest He is angry and you perish from the way, when His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him. Gladly does Nathanael submit Himself to the Son and proclaim Him King of Israel. Was not this the first time that our Lord had been actually proclaimed as King since He had come into His public ministry? Was not this the answer to the wise mens question when they followed His star from regions far remote?

Here was He who was born King of the Jews! This guileless man, who seemed to lack shrewdness, had seen more than his fellows. His eyes, undimmed by falsehood or suspicion, had seen the King, though His humiliation had unclothed Him of His royal mantle and taken off His crown. See, then, Beloved, that the gist of our first head is thisIt is the pure in heart that shall see God! We must be honest and sincere; we must be clear of all subtlety and craft; we must be transparent as glass before Him or else the Lord will not reveal Himself to us or by us! He loves the guileless and the trueand when He has made us thus, He will fill us with light but not till then. Note, again, that those who are ready to believe upon sure evidencefor Nathanael needed thatare the men who shall see more and more. Nathanael did not require the evidence to be repeated to Him again and againhe saw the argument at once and yielded himself to it. When a point is once proven, it is provenand that is an end of it.

One conclusive argument is as good as 20 to an unsophisticated mind. Those who are willing to see shall see. Heaven is open to those from whose eyes the scales of prejudice are removed. The Lord manifests Himself to those who manifest themselves to Him. If you will be Christians of the highest type, you must be true to the core and you must realize Christ and believe in Him with that mighty faith which sees Him and realizes Him as close at hand. The Presence and the power of Jesus must be undoubted by your soulthey must be as much a matter of fact to you as your own existenceand then yours shall be the words which we are now about to considerYou shall see greater things than these.

II. Let us now look at THE GRACIOIUS REWARD. Only a few words upon it. Because this simple-hearted man had believed upon the one argument of the Lords discernment of his heart, he was favored with the promise of seeing greater things. By these words our Lord meant that His perceptions would become more vivid. Do you believe? You shall see! If we demand to see first, we shall never believe! But if we are willing to believe we shall, by-and-by, see.

There is a growth in faith which renders it not the less faith and yet approximates it more and more nearly to sense. I mean, sense, in its best significationso that what at first we believe, simply upon the testimony of God, we come, by-and-by, to believe upon personal experience. We believe until we so realize the Object of faith that we look at the things which are not seen and see Him who is invisible. From this we go further, still,

until we both taste and handle of the good Word of Life and faith becomes the substance of things hoped for. From looking to Christ we come to live, move and have our being in Him. The eye of faith gathers strength. At first it sees Christ through its tears and that look saves the soul, though it perceives comparatively little of Him. But in later days the eye of faith becomes so powerful that it emulates that of the eagle which can gaze upon the sun at midday. Thus faith becomes a second sight. Remember our Lords words to Martha, Said I not unto you, that if you would believe you should see the Glory of God? Do you believe? You shall see.

This was not all our Lords meaning. He virtually promised that Nathanael should discover other Truths of God than he as yet knew. You shall see greater things than these. Now, what is there greater to be seen than the Omniscience of Christ? Such knowledge is too wonderful for me: it is high: I cannot attain unto it. Is there anything greater than this? Yes, so the Savior says! I suppose He means thisFirst, as you have seen My Omniscience in your own case, you shall go on to see it in the case of all mankind, for by My Cross shall the thoughts of many hearts be revealed and by My Gospel shall men be revealed unto themselves. The Word of God is quick and powerful and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heartand when Nathanael came to preach it in later years, he found it so and saw for himself that Christ read every mans heart.

How wonderfully do we know this to be true in our time and in this place, for here the Word of God finds us out and lays us bare to our own consciences! You have been startled in your seats, sometimes. You have wondered how it could be that not only in the gross has your experience been set before you, but even in little details there have been minute touches which have amazed you with the distinctness of the Divine knowledge! Our Lord did not say, I saw you under a tree, as if it might have been an oak or an olive, but He spoke definitely of the fig tree. Even so does He cause His ministers to be very minute and particular so that you wonder where their knowledge comes from! And so, when this is done on a large scaleas it is done whenever Christ is preachedthen is it true that we see greater things than when, for the first time, we perceive that our own character is revealed.

He would see greater things, next, because he would see more of the Godhead. Did you see Omniscience? You shall see Omnipotence! Did you discover that I could read your heart? You shall learn that I can change your heart! Did you find that My eyes could glance into the secrets of your soul? You shall find My Word casting out devils, healing the sick and hushing the storms! You shall see clearer ensigns of My Godhead than this one experiment in the reading of the heart. The Lord, in calling Himself the Son of Man, opens up to Nathanael one of those greater things. He had perceived Him to be the Son of God by His reading his heart and it was a great thing to perceive the Godhead, but it was a greater wonder, still, to see that Godhead linked with humanity!

Jesus, as Son of God, is glorious, but at the same time as Son of Man, He has a double Glory! Our Lord seemed to say to Nathanael, You have believed that I am the Son of Godyou shall see the Son of Man. And is this a greater thing? In one sense it is a descent for Jesus to be the Son of Man, but yet, you who know how to read the riddle aright will say that the Godhead is not half so wonderful in itself as when it comes to be united with our humanity. The Incarnation has about it a mystery which is not seen, even in the mystery of the Godhead! That there should be a God, heathens might spell outbut that this God should come in human flesh among usthis is the mystery which angels desired to look into! Nor may I forget that the idea of our Lord as King of Israel is not so great as His connection with all nations which is displayed in His title, Son of man. He is not confined in His Grace to Israel, as Nathanael probably thought, but He is Brother to our entire humanity! Here was another of the greater things!

Note further that Nathanael had only seen an opened heart, but now he was to see an opened Heaven. He had seen Christs eyes entering into his secrets, but he was now to see communications established between the lowly hearts of men and the secrets of Heaven! He saw how Christ, Son of God, dwelt among menhe is now to see how the abodes of God and man shall be blended in one and high communion maintained between earth and Heaven. I come back to the one thought, that the sight of greater things is reserved for guileless Believers. To those who already have much by faith, more shall be given. Beloved, as a Church and people, we have seen great things in this place in the work of the Lord among us. And we have lately celebrated with much joy and thankfulness the loving kindness of the Lord to uslet us make this a new starting point and hear the Lord sayFrom this day will I bless you.

We desire to see much greater things than we have known and, in order to this, we must have more faith. And that faith must be more simple and childlike. The rule of the Kingdom is that according to our faith, so shall it be unto us. Unbelief bars the way of mercy. We tie the hands of Jesus if we have no faith. Is it not written, He could not do many mighty works there because of their unbelief? We must believe or we shall not be established, nor shall our works prosper. Whatever we have accomplished has been worked by faith, but we believe that we might have done a hundred times more if we had manifested a hundred times more faith. May the Lord grant us downright, honest, simple faith and then we shall see greater things than these, for all obstacles will be removed and eternal love will work wonders among us!

Faith makes a man a fit instrument for God to use and, therefore, God does great things by him. If you are unbelieving, God will no more use you than a warrior would use a reed for a weapon! He works no wonders by unbelieving ministers and unbelieving churches, for these are not prepared to be blessedthey are not vessels fit for the Masters userust is upon them of the worst kind. When your heart is resting in the Lord, expecting to see His arm made bare and quietly waiting to see how He will glorify Himself and fulfill His promises, then will you see greater things! When faith fails, it disqualifies us and sets us aside even as in the case of Moses and Aaron, to whom the Lord said, Because you believed Me not, to sanctify Me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this congregation unto the land which I have given them.

We must have faith, for faith fulfils the condition which is virtually appended to every promise. Has not the Lord promised to answer the prayers of those who cry unto Him believingly? But as for the wavering,

He has said, Let not that man expect to receive anything of the Lord. Is not faith our very life? The just shall live by faith. Is it not our entrance into blessedness? We see that Israel in the wilderness could not enter into Canaan because of unbelief. All the promises are for Believersthere are none for unbelievers. As you have believed so be it unto you, stands as the measure of blessingthere is no other. Strong faith, coupled with a guileless character, brings a man into the special, complacent love of God, for, albeit that He loves all His elect, He does not delight in all alike. There were Apostles among the disciplesthere were three choice ones out of the twelvethere was one peculiar favorite out of the three!

He is dearest to God who trusts Him most completely and is most childlike and true. God will do most by that man who is most reliant upon Him and most open with Him. David, who makes the Lord, alone, to be his confidence, is the man after Gods own heart. And Abraham, who in faith could even give up his only son, is the friend of God. We shall never be full-gown with God until we become too little to dare to doubt; too insignificant to venture to question and too true to suspect the Lord. Increase in faith is the one thing necessary to our advance in the Divine life and workand may the Holy Spirit work it in us for Christs names sake!

III. We have only a minute or two in which to mention THE SPECIAL SIGHT which was promised to Nathanael. He was to see an opened Heaven. The gates of Glory are not only opened now to Believers, but they are carried right away and Heaven is laid open to all its citizens, even to those who dwell below. This is a great joy to the believing heart, for free communion with Heaven is the delight of our spirit.

I cannot enlarge upon this, which is worthy of another sermon, but I may not say less than thisthat in Christ the saints are brought very near to God, for even now they have come to the heavenly Jerusalem. The franchise of the new Jerusalem is extended to these low-lying regions in which we sojourn. The veil is torn and we have access to the holiest. The wall of separation is removed and now the abode of the Church below is an adjunct of Heaven, a suburban district of the metropolitan city of the New Jerusalem. The gates shall not be shut, nor a division created, nor communion suspended. Is not that a glorious thing, that in the Person of Christ Jesus, Heaven is laid open to earth and earth laid open to communications with Heaven?

Do you know that, Beloved? It is a simple thing to talk of, but do you know it? Have you taken up your citizenship, so that you can say, Truly our citizenship is in Heaven? While you are sitting under that fig tree do you know what it is to sit in the heavenly places, together with Christ? Are you risen and reigning with Him even now? If so, this is a joyful state of things and one which should cause you much assurance! We are now dwelling in the house of our God, or at the very least we are sitting by the very gate of Heaven! Our condition is known to the Lord and He is near to help us. We suffer not unseen and labor not unobserved. Nothing hinders God from helping usnothing hinders us from securing His aid.

Then the Lord went on to promise that he should see that the communion between Heaven and earth, by the way of the Mediator, is not only possible, but actual. The ladder is set and there are angels ascending and descending upon it. God hears, helps and speaks with believing men of pure heart. Observe, that according to the text, the angels ascend first. It does say, Descending and ascending, as we might naturally suppose, but they ascend first because when Jesus was on earth they were already here and ascended at His bidding to carry His messages upward! When Jesus Christ was here, He was never without His bodyguard of angels and these were His messengers to the courts above.

We, today, Beloved, are surrounded by the forces of the Eternalthey have not to come to us for the first timelo, they have, these many years, kept watch and guard around the fold of the redeemed! And when a new danger comes, they are prompt to do the part of watchers and of guardians and to carry tidings to the sentinels of Heaven. Let us pray, for as we pray our prayers ascend to Heaven and our praises, too. If we lead an angelical life, our thoughts will always be going up to Heaven or returning. Beloved, have you realized thisthat as you have believed in Christ upon the testimony of His Word, you have now the right of access to the Eternal Throne at all times? You have but to speak and God will hear you!

Some of Gods people do not know much about this. Praying is a religious exercise with thema very proper exercise, but it is not speaking with Godit is not doing business with God and obtaining supplies at His hands. It is a ladder without angels, or, if you please, with ascending angels only, but none coming down with heavenly gifts! Beloved, I hope you have not fallen into this error. What? Is not prayer real with you? Do you expect nothing from it? Would you send an angel on a fools errand? Do these ascend to Heaven in mere sport and rush up and down to do nothing? Let us mean business when we pray, or we shall be mockers of the Divine Majesty! Too many come before God and ask for everything in general but nothing in particularand they get but scant answers to their pointless prayers.

Many more are very slack in prayer and, therefore, they starve their souls. Many angels must go up if many are to come down! Prayer must be constant and real with us. We should live as if we really had power with God, as if like, Elijah, we could go the top of Carmel and pray a bronze sky away and deluge the earth with showers of blessings! Are you unable so to live like this? Then the fault lies at your own door.

What was next? Nathanael was to see angels descending upon the Son of Man, that is to say, he was to see heavenly spirits and blessings coming down to man by Jesus Christ. He who truly believes in Christ and is without guile, shall have continual blessings from on highall Heaven shall be opened to him! God will help him by Providence; will help him by Grace; will help him by actual angels and will help him spiritually by the all power which He has given unto Christ in Heaven and in earth. How earnestly do I desire that this Church, this morning, may see for itself what my eyes have seen for myselffor my faith sees Heaven opened to supply the needs of Christs work and all the might of God working to achieve His purposes!

I am just entering upon another work for God. We have had enough of these enterprises, some say, why not wait? I am forced to go forward and onward! I must go, nor do I fear, for lo, I see Heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending, by the way of Christ Jesus, to bring us help! We may venture. There is no venture in itwe may trust

God for anything! We may trust God for everything and just go straight on! It looks like walking on water, sometimes, to trust Christespecially about gold and silverbut we need not fear! The waters shall be a sea of glass beneath our feet if we can but simply trust!

But oh, we must purge ourselves! We must be without guile! There must be no self-seeking! There must be a simple-hearted desire for Gods Glory and for nothing else! We must sink selfChrist must reign! And then we must trust and go forward. I hope we are right in this matter. And if so, we shall see the salvation of God! Nothing can stop us. Behold, this day all things work together for good to them that love God. The stones of the field are in league with us! Yes, it is not on earth, alone, that we find allies, but the stars in their courses fight against our foes and all Heaven is on the stir to befriend us in the service of God! See how the ladder swarms with coming and going angels! Heaven surrounds those who are doing Heavens work! God Himself is with us, for our Captain and His host, which is very great, is round about us even as horses of fire and chariots of fire were round about the Prophet.

All things shall be given that are needed and as our day, our strength shall be. Brace yourselves, my Brothers and Sisters, for a new endeavor! Be strong in the Lord and you shall see greater things than these. Full of weakness, yet stand in His strength, each one, and play the man! Say, I can do all things through Christ that strengthens me. Omnipotence is waiting to gird your loins! Buckle it about you and become mighty through God! Our Head, Christ Jesus, has all power in Heaven and in earth and that power He pours into all His members!

By faith I commit myself and I trust, also, my beloved Church and Friends, to farther efforts for our Lord, relying upon His Word, You shall see greater things than these, and fully believing that through Christ Jesus all the forces of Heaven are in alliance with us and the will of the Lord shall surely be accomplished!

**PORTIONS OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON John 1:3551; Genesis 28:1022.** HYMNS FROM OUR OWN HYMN BOOK412, 335, 317.

[ Mr. Spurgeon alludes to the Girls Orphanage. The fund has just commenced and land has been purchased. A large amount will be needed, but there is a great God to look to!]

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Sermon #2317 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

OBEYING CHRISTS ORDERS   
NO. 2317

**INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS-DAY, JULY 16, 1893. DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON THURSDAY EVENING, JUNE 13, 1889.

**His mother said unto the servants, Whatever He says unto you, do it. John 2:5.**

IT does not need a strong imagination to picture Mary, probably at that time the widowed mother of our Lord. She is full of love and of a naturally kind, sympathetic disposition. She is at a marriage and she is very pleased that her Son is there, with the first handful of His disciples. Their being there has made a greater demand upon the provisions than was expected and the supply is running short, so she, with an anxiety that was natural to such a mother of her years, and of her gentle spirit, thinks that she will speak to her Son and tell Him that there is a need. So she says to Him, They have no wine.

There was not much amiss in that, surely, but our Lord, who sees not as man sees, perceived that she was putting to the front her motherly relationship at a time when it was necessary that it should be in the background. How necessary it was, history has shown, for the apostate church of Rome has actually made Mary a Mediatrix and prayers have been addressed to her! She has even been asked to use her maternal authority with her Son. It was well that our Savior should check anything that might tend to give any countenance to Mariolatry which has been altogether so mischievous. And it was necessary for Him to speak to His mother with somewhat more of sharpness than, perhaps, her conduct, in itself, alone, might have required. So her august Son felt bound to say to her, Woman, what have I to do with you in such a matter as this? I am not your Son as a miracle-worker. I cannot work to please you. No, if I work a miracle as the Son of God, it cannot be as your Sonit must be in another character. What have I to do with you in this matter? And He gives His reasonMy hour is not yet come.

It was a gentle rebuke, absolutely necessary from the prescience of all that would follow. You can easily picture how Mary took it. She knew Christs gentleness, His infinite love, how for 30 years there had never come anything from Him that had grieved her spirit. So she drank in the reproof and gently shrank back, thinking much more than she said, for she was always a woman who laid up these things and pondered them in her heart. She says very little, but she thinks a great dealand we see in her later conduct, in respect to this very miracle, that she thought very much of what Jesus had said to her. Brothers and Sisters, you and I, with the very best intentions, may sometimes err towards our Lord. And if He, then, in any way rebukes us, and puts us backif He disappoints our hope, if He does not allow our ambitious designs to prosperlet us take it from Him as Mary took it from Jesus. Let us just feel that it must be right and let us, in silence, possess ourselves in His Presence.

Notice, then, this holy womans quietude, ceasing to say a word, quietly drinking it all in. And then observe her wise admonition to the servants who were there to wait at the feast. Inasmuch as she had run before Him, she would have them to follow after Him and she very wisely and kindly says to them, Whatever He says unto you, do it. Do not go to Him with any of your remarks. Do not try to press Him forward. Do not urge Him onHe knows better than we do. Stand back and wait till He speaks, and then be quick to obey every single word that He utters. Beloved, I wish that when we have learned a lesson, we would try to teach it. Sometimes our Master gives us a sharp word all to ourselves and we would not tell anybody else what He has said. In our private communions He has spoken to our conscience and to our heartand we need not go and repeat that, as Mary did not. But, having learned the lesson well, let us then say to our next friend, Do not err as I have done. Avoid the rock on which I struck just now. I fear that I grieved my Lord. My Sister, I would not have you grieve Him. My Brother, I would try to tell you just what to do that you may please Him in all things. Do you not think that we would minister to mutual edification if we did that? Instead of telling the faults of others, let us extract the essence from the discoveries which we make of our own errors and then administer that as a helpful medicine to those who are around us.

This holy woman must have spoken with a good deal of power. Her tone must have been peculiarly forcible and her manner must have made a great impression upon the servants, for you notice that they did exactly what she told them. It is not every servant who will let a guest come into the house and set up to be mistress. But so it was when she spoke to those servants, with her deep, earnest tones, as a woman who had learned something that she could not tell, but who, yet, out of that experience, had extracted a lesson for others. She must have spoken with a wonderful melting force when she said to them, Whatever He says unto you, do it. And they were all looking on with awe after she had spoken, drinking in her message to them as she had drunk in the message of the Lord.

Now I want, tonight, to try to teach that lesson to myself and to you. I think that our own experience goes to show us that our highest wisdom, our very best prosperity, will lie in our cautiously keeping behind Christ and never running before Him, never forcing His hand, never tempting Him as they did who tempted God in the wildernessprescribing to Him to do this or thatbut, in holy, humble obedience, taking these words as our life motto henceforth, Whatever He says unto you, do it. I will handle my text in this wayFirst, What? Secondly, Why? Thirdly, What then?

I. WHAT IS IT THAT WE ARE HERE TOLD TO DO? In a word, it is to obey. You who belong to Christ and are His disciples, take heed to this word of exhortation, Whatever He says unto you, do it.

I want you to notice, first of all, that these words were spoken, not to the disciples of Christ, but to the servants who, in the Greek, are here called diakonois, the persons who were brought in to wait at the table and to serve the guests. I know not whether they were paid servants, or whether they were friends who kindly volunteered their services, but they were the waiters at the feast. They were not told to leave their master. They were not told to give up their avocation as waiters. They were servants and they were to continue servants, but still, for all that, they were to acknowledge Christ as their Master without casting off their obedience to the governor of the feast. Mary does not say to these people, Put down those pots. Leave off carrying those dishes. But while they continue to do what they were doing, she says to them, Whatever He says unto you, do it. I thought that point was well worthy of our notice, that these servants, still abiding as they were, yet were to render obedience to Christ.

That obedience, in the first place, would be prepared obedience. Mary came to get their minds ready to do what Christ should bid them. No man will obey Christ on a sudden and keep on doing so. There must be a weighing, a considering. There must be a thoughtful, careful knowledge of what His will isand a preparedness of heartthat whatever that will may be, as it is known, so it shall be done! At first these servants did nothing. The guests needed wine but the servants did not go to Jesus and say, Master, wine is needed. No, but they waited until He bade them fill the waterpots with waterand then they filled them to the brim. But they did nothing till He bade them. A great part of obedience lies in not doing. I believe that in the anxiety of many a trembling heart, the very best faith will be seen in not doing anything. When you do not know what to do, do nothing, and, doing nothing, my Brothers and Sisters, will be found to be, sometimes, the very hardest work of all. In the case of a man in business who has come into a difficulty, or of a Sister with a sick child, or a sick husband, you know the impulse is to do something or other. If not the first thing that comes to hand, yet we feel that we must do something. And many a person has aggravated his sorrow by doing something, when, if he had bravely left it alone, believingly left it in Gods hands, it would have been infinitely better for him.

Whatever He says unto you, do it. But do not do what every whim or fancy in your poor brain urges you to do! Do not run before you are sent. They who run before Gods cloud will have to come back, againand they will be very happy if they find the way back! Where Scripture is silent, be you silent! If there is no command, you had better wait till you can find some guidance. Blunder not on with a headlong anxiety lest you tumble into the ditch! Whatever He says unto you, do that. But until He speaks, sit still. My Soul, be patient before God and wait until you know His bidding!

This prepared obedience was to be the obedience of the spirit, for obedience lies mainly there. True obedience is not always seen in what we do, or do not do, but it is manifest in the perfect submission to the will of Godand the strong resolve that saturates the spirit through and throughthat what He bids us, we will do!

Let your obedience, in the next place, be perfect obedience. Whatever He says unto you, do it. It is disobedience, and not obedience which prompts us to select from the commands of Christ which ones we care to obey. If you say, I will do what Christ bids me as far as I choose, you have, in fact, said, I will not do what Christ bids me, but I will do what I please to do. That obedience is not true which is not universal! Imagine a soldier in the army who, instead of obeying every command of his captain, omits this and that, and says that he cannot help it, or that he even means to omit certain things. Beloved, take heed of throwing any precept of your Lord upon the dunghill! Every Word that He has spoken to you is more precious than a diamond! Prize it! Store it up. Wear it. Let it be your ornament and your beauty. Whatever He says unto you, do it, whether it relates to the Church of God and its ordinances, or to your walk out of doors among your fellow men, or to your relationship in the family, or to your own private service for the Lord. Whatever. See, there are to be no trimmings, here, no cutting off of certain thingsWhatever He says unto you, do it. Breathe this prayer at the present moment, Lord, help me to do whatever You have said! May I have no choice! May I never let my own will come in to interfere, but if You have told me do anything, enable me to do it, whatever it may be!

This obedience, then, being prepared and perfect, is to also be practical obedienceWhatever He says unto you, do it. Do not think about it, especially for a very long time, and then wait until it is more impressed upon you, or till there is a convenient season. Whatever He says unto you, do it. One of the great evils of the times is that of deliberating about a plain command of Christ and asking, What will be the result of it? What have you to do with

results? But if I follow Christ in all things, I may lose my job! What have you to do with that? When a soldier is told to go up to the cannons mouth, he is very likely to lose his job and something elsebut he is bound to do it! Oh, but I might lose my opportunities of usefulness! What do you mean? That you are going to do evil that good may come? That is what it comes to. Will you really, before God, look that matter in the face? Whatever He says unto you, do it. At any expense, at any risk, do it!

I have heard some say, Well, I do not like doing things in a hurry. Very well, but what says David? I made haste, and delayed notto keep Your Commandments. Remember that we sin every moment that we delay to do anything commanded by Christ. Whether every moment of delay is a fresh sin, I cannot say, but if we neglect any command of His, we are living in a condition of perpetual sinning against Himand that is not a desirable position for any of Christs disciples to live in! Beloved, whatever He says unto you, do it. Do not argue against it and try to find some reason for not doing it. I have known some Believers who have not liked to have certain passages of Scripture read at the family altar because they have rather troubled their consciences. If there is anything in the Bible that quarrels with you, you are wrongthe Bible is not! Come to terms with it at once and the only terms will be obey, obey, obey your Lords will! I am not holding this up to you as a way of salvationyou know I would never think of doing that! I am speaking to those of you who are saved! You are Christs servantsHis saved ones! And now you have come to the holy discipline of His house and this is the rule of it, Whatever He says unto you, do it.

Do it practically. Have we not been talking too much about what should be done by our friends, or observing what others do not do? Oh, that the Spirit of God would come upon us that our own walk might be close with God, our own obedience be precise and exact, our own love to Christ be proved by our continual following in His steps! Ours should be practical obedience.

It must also be personal obedienceWhatever He says unto you, do it. You know how much there is done by proxy, nowadays. Charity is done so. A is in a great deal of need. B hears of it and is very sorry, indeed. And so he asks C to come and help A. And then B goes to bed and feels that he has done a good thing! Or else when A has told his story to B, B looks out to see if there is some Society that will help him, although he never subscribes to the Society because he does not think of doing that! His part is just to pass A on to C, or to the Society and, having done that, he feels satisfied. Do you wish the Savior to say, in the Last Great Day, I was hungry, and you sent Me to somebody else, or, I was thirsty and you directed Me to the parish pump for a drink? Nothing of the kind! We must do something personally for Christ.

So is it in the matter of endeavoring to win souls to Christ. There is nothing like personally speaking to people, button-holing them, looking them in the eyes, talking your own personal experience over with them and pleading with them to fly to Christ for refuge! Personal obedience is what is needed. If one of these persons who were waiting had said, when the command had come from Christ to fill the waterpots, John, you go and do it. William, you go and do ithe would not have followed out Marys command, Whatever He says unto you, do it. Do I touch the conscience of anybody here? Well, if so, from this time forth cease to be a servant of God by proxy lest you be saved by proxyand to be saved by proxy will be to be lost! But trust Christ for yourself and then serve Him for yourself, by His own mighty GraceWhatever He says unto you, do it.

It must also be prompt obedience. Do it at oncedelay will take the bloom from the obedience. Whatever He says unto you, stand ready to obey. The moment that the command, March, is given to the soldier, he marches. The moment a command comes to your heart and you see it to be really in the Word of God, do it! Oh, the murdered resolutions that lie round about most mens lives! What they would have done! What they could have done, if they had but done it! But they have been building castles in the air, imagining lives they would like to lead and not actually doing Christs commands. Oh, for a prompt, personal, practical service to the Lord Jesus Christ!

And in our case it is to be perpetual obedience. Mary said to these waiters, Whatever He says unto you, do it. Keep on doing it. Not only the first thing He says, but whatever He says unto you. As long as this feast lasts and He is here, do what my Son commands you. So, Beloved, as long as we are in this world, until lifes last hour, may the Holy Spirit enable us to do just what Jesus bids us do! Can you say, my Brothers and Sisters

*Jesus, I my cross have taken,*

*All to leave, and follow You?*   
Is it your wish that until you enter into His rest, you should always bear His yoke and follow His footsteps? Temporary Christians are not Christians! Those who ask for furlough from this Divine service have never entered it. We have put on our uniform to never take it off. As certain old knights in times of war slept in their armor and had the lance and shield always ready to hand, so must the Christian be, from this time forth and forever. Ours not to reason why, ours not to delay when the command comes, but ours, while there is breath in our body, and life in our spirit, to serve Him who has redeemed us with His precious blood!

Thus I have feebly set before you what it is that we are called to do that is, to obey Christs orders.   
II. Now for a few minutes let us ask, WHY IS THIS TO BE DONE? Beloved, why were these men to do what Jesus told them? Let that melt into, Why are you and I to do what Jesus tells us?   
First, Christ is, by Nature, worthy of obedience. I count it an honor to serve Christ. Oh, what is He? Perfect Man, rising nobly above us all! Perfect God, infinitely majestic in His two Natures. Why, it seems to me as if we ought to love to do His bidding and long to be conformed to His image! Here is the rest for our aspiring spirit. Here are the glory and the honor and the immortality for which we pant! By the glory of Christ, whom you adore unseen, Whatever He says unto you, do it.   
Beside that, Christ is our only hope. All our prospects for the future depend upon Him. Glory be to His blessed name! There is none like He. If He were gone from us and we could not trust in Him, life would be an endless darkness, an abyss of woe! By all the glory of His Nature and all that we owe to Him, and all that we look for from Him, I charge you, beloved Friends, Whatever He says unto you, do it.   
More than that, He is All-Wise, and so fit to lead. Who but He could get these people out of their trouble at the feast when they needed wine? He knew the way out of it alla way that would manifest His own Glory, make His disciples believe in Him and make everybody round about happy. But if He did not show the way, nobody could. So let us obey Him, for His commands are so wise. He never has made a mistake and He never will. Let us commit our way unto His keeping and whatever He says unto us, let us do it!   
Besides, Beloved, Christ has rewarded our obedience before. Did you ever act rightly and, after all, find it a mistake? Some of us have had to do very grievous things in our time that have gone sorely against the grain. Would we do them again? Yes, that we would, if they cost 10 times as much! No man has ever, in looking back, regretted that he followed the voice of conscience and the dictates of Gods Wordand he never will, though he should even go to prison and to death for Christs sake! You may lose for Christ, but you shall never lose by Christ! When all comes to be added up, you shall be a greater gainer because of the apparent loss. He has never deceived you and never misled you. Obedience to Him has always brought you real solid peace. Therefore, whatever He says unto you, do it.  
Yet once more, Christ is our Master and we must obey Him. I hope, Beloved, that there is no one among us here who would call Him, Master, and yet not do the things that He says. We do not talk about Him as one who was once great, but who is gone away and whose influence is now upon the wane because He is not up to the spirit of the age. No, but He still lives and we still commune with Him. He is our Master and Lord! When we were baptized into His death, it was no mere matter of formbut we were dead to the world and we lived to Him. When we took His sacred name upon us and were called Christians, it was no shamwe meant that He should be Captain, King and Master of our spirits! He is no Baali, that is, domineering lord but He is Ishi, our Man, our Husband and, in His husbandly relationship He is Lord and Governor of every thought and every motion of our nature! Jesus, Jesus, Your yoke is easy and your burden is light! It is joyous to bear it! To get away from it would be misery, indeed, and that is one reason why I say to you, tonight, Whatever He says unto you, do it, because if you do not, you cast off your allegiance to Himand what are you going to do, then?   
To whom will you go if you turn away from Him? Every man must have a master. Will you be your own master? You cannot have a greater tyrant! Will you let the world be your master? Are you going to be a servant of society? There are no worse slaves than these! Are you going to live for self, for honor, for what is called, pleasure? Ah, me, you may as well go down to Egypt, to the iron furnace, at once! To whom can we go? Jesus, to whom can we go, if we go away from You? You have the words of eternal life! Bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar. Throw another bond of love about me, another cord of sweet constraint and let me never ever think of parting with You! Let me be crucified to the world and the world to me!

Do not your hearts pray after that fashion? Oh, to be wholly Christs, entirely Christs, forever Christs! Yes, yes, we will listen to the command, Whatever He says unto you, do it. I have given you the reason why we should obey Christs orders.   
III. And now, Beloved, let me occupy the last few minutes in answering this question, WHAT WILL FOLLOW FROM THIS OBEDIENCE? Suppose we do whatever Christ commands us, what then? I will tell you what then.   
The first thing is, that you will feel free from responsibility. The servant who has done what his master has told him, may, in his own mind, fear that some dreadful consequences may follow, but he says to himself, It will be no fault of mine. I did what I was told to do. Now, Beloved, if you want to get rid of the whole burden of life, by faith do whatever Christ commands you! Then, if the heavens should seem about to fall, it would be no business of yours to shore them up. You have not to mend Gods work and keep it right. I remember what Mr. John Wesley said to his preachersNow, Brothers, I do not want you to mend my rules. I want you to obey them. That is pretty strong from John Wesley, but from our Lord Jesus Christ it comes most suitably. He does not want us to get to altering, mending, touching up and looking at consequences. No! Do exactly what He tells you and you have nothing to do with the consequences! You may have to bear them, but He will give you Grace to do thatand it shall be your joy to bear all ill consequences that come of firm obedience to Christ.   
This kind of doctrine does not suit the year 1889. If you go over to Scotland and see where the Covenanters graves are, anybody who thinks according to the spirit of this age will say that they were just a lot of fools to have been so stubborn and so strict about doctrine as to die for it. Why, really, there is not anything in the new philosophy that is worth dying for! I wonder whether there is any modern thought doctrine that would be worth the purchase of a cats life? According to the teaching of the broad school, what is supposed to be true, today, may not be true tomorrow, so it is not worth dying for. We may as well put off the dying till the thing is alteredand if we wait a month, it will be altered and thus, at the last, you may get the old creed back again! The Lord send it and send us yet a race of men who will obey what He bids them, do what He tells them, believe what He teaches them and lay their own wills down in complete obedience to their Lord and Master! Such a people will feel free from responsibility.   
Then you shall feel a sweet flow of love to Christ. The disobedient childwell, he will not be turned out of the house because he will not do the bidding of his mother and father. But when he does not submit to the rule of the house, he has a hard time of it and he ought to have. There is that evening kiss, it is not as warm as it would have been. And that morning greeting, after long disobedience, has no happiness in it. And, indeed, the more kind father and mother are, the more unhappy he is! And the sweet love of Christ is such that it makes us unhappy in disobedience. You cannot walk contrary to Christ and yet enjoy fellowship with Him. And the more dear and near He is to you, so much the wider does the gap seem to be when you are not doing His bidding.   
Besides, there is no carrying out your faith except by doing as He bids you. That faith which lies only in a creed, or in a little pious book is not good for much. Faith does what Christ bids it do and it delights to do so! It rejoices to run risks, it delights to put off from the land and get out to sea. It is glad to sacrifice itself when Jesus calls for it because faith cannot be satisfied without bearing fruitand the fruit of faith is obedience to Him in whom we believe.   
Beloved, I also think that if we will obey Christ in what He says, we shall be learning to be leaders. Wellington used to say that no man is fit to command until he has learned to obeyand I am sure that it is so. We shall never see a race of really first-rate men unless our boys and girls are made to obey their parents in their childhood. The essential glory of manhood is lost when disobedience is tolerated and, certainly, in the Church of God, the Lord does put His leading servants through very severe ordeals. The best place for the books of a minister is not his library, but very often a sick-bed. Affliction is our school and before we can deal with others, God must deal with us. If you will not obey, you shall not be set to command.   
And lastly, I do believe that learning to obey is one of the preparatives for the enjoyments of Heaven. Why, in Heaven, they have no will but Gods will! Their will is to serve Him and delight themselves in Him. And if you and I do not learn, here below, what obedience to God is, and practice it, and carry it out, how can we hope to be happy in the midst of obedient spirits? Dear Hearers, if you have never learned to trust Christ and obey Him, how can you go to Heaven? You would be so unhappy there that you would ask God to let you run to Hell for shelter, for nothing would strike you with more horror than to be in the midst of perfectly holy people who find their delight in the service of God! May the Lord bring us to this complete obedience to Christ! Then this world will be an inclined plane, or a ladder such as Jacob saw, up which we shall trip with holy gladness till we come to the top and find our Heaven in perfect obedience to God!   
It is not Mary who speaks to you, tonight, but it is the Church of God, the mother of all who truly love Christ, and she says to you, Whatever He says unto you, do it, and if you will do it, He will turn the water into wine for you. He will make your love more glad and happy than it ever would have been without obeying Him and He will provide for you. Obey Him and He will comfort you. Obey Him and He will perfect you. Be with Him in the ways of duty and you shall be with Him in the home of Glory!   
The Lord grant this, of His infinite Grace, giving to us to know the will of Christ, and then working in us to will and to do of His own good pleasure! Amen and Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON. **JOHN 2:1-11.**

Our Savior had lived on the earth for 30 years and had worked no miracle. There was the hiding of His power. He had been subject to His parents and had lived in obscurity. Now He has broken through the obscurity and He begins His public ministry by working a miracle.

Verse 1. And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee. The third day. John keeps a kind of diary for Christ. In those first days there was something for every day and they were a specimen of the whole life of the Savior. He could never say, like Titus, I have lost a day. Every day had its deedglorifying to God and blessed to men. Let us also try to labor for Christ every daylet there be no day without its mark. May God grant that there may be something to make every day memorable! And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee. The first miracle of our Lord was not worked at Jerusalem, but away there in the back settlements, in Galilee of the Gentiles. It was necessary for Him to be seen and to work miracles which might be seen, but He began in an obscure region, among a despised people.

1. And the mother of Jesus was there. This expression leads to the belief that there was some kind of kinship between the bridegroom or the bride and the mother of Jesus, for it is not said that she was invited to be there, but that she was there.

2. And both Jesus was called and His disciples to the marriage. Happy marriage, where Christ is invited to be present! Where Christ goes, His disciples go. If they suffer with Him, they also rejoice with Him. If He goes to a feast, they must go, tooBoth Jesus was called and His disciples. They were only five, but five is a large number to add to a poor familys wedding party. It shows the generosity of their heart that they invited Jesus to come and bring His disciples. And He went to put honor upon marriage, especially as He foresaw that the day would come when the apostate church of Rome would reckon marriage to be dishonorable and not permit one who was married to officiate as a minister.

3. And when they needed wine, the mother of Jesus said unto Him, They have no wine. I notice that John calls Mary the mother of Jesus. I suppose he had in his mind the dying words of Christ, Behold your mother! Such things make a deep impression upon us and we are apt, when writing, to use the phrases that have been burnt into the memory. The mother of Jesus. Because she has been too much exalted in the Romish church, I fear that we run to the other extreme, and think too little of this woman to whom the angel Gabriel said, Hail, you that are highly favored, the Lord is with you: blessed are you among women. They needed wine. They had not been long married before there was need in the house. Even in the brightest days of life, they needed something more. And when the mother of Jesus saw that they were in need and that the marriage festival would be dishonored, so she went to her Son and she said, They have no wine. I fear she spoke a little like an ordinary mother addressing her son, but the time had come when that discipline was to end. Mary was not His mother as the Son of God. He was about to work a miracle and He would have her and all His relatives know that He would not use His miraculous powers merely for their advantage, but for the Glory of God and the instruction of men.

4. Jesus said unto her, Woman, what have I to do with you? My hour is not yet come. It was a very difficult position for Him to be into act the part of a loving and obedient son as far as His Manhood was concerned, and yet, as the Son of God, by no means to compromise His Divine Character, but to stand out there as being under no influence of the flesh. Just as we are not to know Christ after the flesh, so He no longer knew mother, or brother, or friend, according to earthly relationship. And when Mary intruded her motherhood upon Him, it was but right and fitting that He should say, What have I to do with you? My hour is not yet come. The Savior had an hour for

everythingan hour for suffering and an hour for working. And He did everything punctually, promptly to the minute. That was one of the beauties of His lifeMy hour is not yet come. Perhaps He meant, My hour to work this miracle is not yet come and He would not be hurried by anybody. Beloved, it is not easy to be familiar with Christ, as I trust we are, and yet always to maintain humble deference to His sacred will. Never let us pray as if we were dictators, or His equals. We must keep our place, however near we come to the dear bosom of our Lord. He is still in Heaven and we are upon earth. He is the Master, we are the servantsand if we are as favored as His mother was, we must not go too far, as she did.

5. His mother said unto the servants, Whatever He says unto you, do it.

This holy woman took the rebuke in silence. She said nothing. She felt the force of Christs wordsshe proved that she did by now fully believing that He would do something or other. Had He not said, My hour is not yet come? Did not that mean that the hour would come and that He would do something, by-and-by? So she quietly accepted His reproof. Oh, you who are in great trouble, you feel as if you could force the hand of Christ, but you must not think of doing that! Even if you could have power over Him, you would be very foolish to use it. Let Him alone! He knows best how and when to show His Grace towards you. Keep silence before Him and in patience commit your way unto Him.

6. And there were set there six waterpots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece. I admire the accuracy of the Holy Spirit. John does not know exactly how much these vessels held. They were not made to measure things in, so he writes, containing two or three firkins apiece. Let us always speak correctly. Sometimes, almost, or, thereabouts, will be words that will save our truthfulness. Let us not speak positively when we do not know! And when the accuracy of a statement is necessary and we cannot give it in terms that are definite, let us give it in words like these, containing two or three firkins apiece. These were great waterpots of stone. Stone will not, as a rule, hold the flavor of anything that has been in it, like an earthen vessel would do. So these pots, which had contained nothing else but water, could not be suspected of having any lees of wine concealed therein, or any flavoring material that would make the water taste like wine. No, they were genuine stone waterpots!

7. Jesus said unto them, Fill the waterpots with water. And they filled them up to the brim. There was no fear of anything but water being there They filled them up to the brim. They obeyed Christ to the letter. If Christ says to you, Fill the waterpots with water, fill them up to the brim! Never cut down His commandmentscarry them out as far as the largest interpretation can go. When you are told to believe in Him, believe in Him up to the brim! When you are told to love Him, love Him up to the brim! When you are commanded to serve Him, serve Him up to the brim!

8. And He said unto them, Draw some out, now, and take it to the governor of the feast. And they took it. Draw some out, now. Now. He had not turned the water into wine by any incantation. He simply willed it and it was done! He said, Draw some out, now. He did not need to leave it unnoticed because He had not worked a miracle beforeand He could not really say whether this was one. He was sure it was, so He said to the servants, when they had filled the waterpots with water, Draw some out, now. Do not bring it to Me for Me to taste it. I know what it is. Take it to the chairman of the festival, to Him who sits at the head of the table and is the judge of the wine. And they took it. The holy confidence of Christ is admirable. May we be able, by faith, so to work, with a calm consciousness of Divine help! But notice this. Whenever the Lord fills any of you with a blessing, think that you hear Him say, Draw some out, now. He does not fill these pots that they may be kept full. Draw some out, now. Did you have a good time last Monday night at the Prayer Meeting? Some of us had. Draw some out, now. Have you lived near to God of late, and are you very happy? Draw some out, now. If He has filled you up to the brim, draw some out, now, for, if you try to store it up, it will become useless. Selfishness will poison it all!

9. When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not from where it came, (but the servants which drew the water knew), the governor of the feast called the bridegroom. There was no collusion, for the governor, who tasted it, did not know where it came from. And the servants, who knew where it came from, did not taste it, so that they did not know what it was like. If anybody objects to the Savior making wine, I think that the best reply is that all the wine which is made of water will do nobody any hurtand the more of it the better! And this was so made, certainly. They say that there is a devil in every grape. There were no grapes, here! And I am afraid that there is not much of them in most of the wine that is made, nowadaysthere is something worse than devil in that.

10. And said unto him, Every man at the beginning does set forth good wine, and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse, but you have kept the good wine until now. That the governor of the feast did not understand, but he admired it and here is a picture of what our Lord always does. He gives His people the best, last. At first, the wine of the Kingdom is mingled with much bitternesssalt tears of sorrow flow into it. But it improves as we go on and when we shall drink it with Him, in the Kingdom of God, what will it be like? The joy of Christs love on earth is Heaven, but when we get to Heaven and drink it fresh from the everlasting spring, what will that joy be? Oh, the blessedness laid up for the people of God! We pluck some of the fruit from the trees and eat it, but the fruits laid up in the fruit-chamber, to get ripe, by-and-by, are the very pick of the fruit of the Tree of Life! You who live for the world have already had your best, but, as for our feast with Christ, we go from good to better and from better to the best!

11. This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth His Glory. Moses turned water into blood. Christ turned water into wine. One brought a curse upon the common things of daily life. The other put an added sweetness and blessing into them.

11. And His disciples believed on Him. They believed on Him before, but now they had an ocular demonstration of His Divine Power and Godhead, and they believed as they had not believed before! May you and I often make distinct progress in faith, so that it may be said of us, also, His disciples believed on Him!

Adapted from The C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307 Sermon #1556 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

THE WATERPOTS AT CANA   
NO. 1556

DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**Jesus said unto them, Fill the waterpots with water. And they filled them up to the brim.   
John 2:7.**

You know the narrative. Jesus was at a wedding feast and when the wine ran short, He provided for it right bountifully. I do not think that I should do any good if I were to enter upon the discussion as to what sort of wine our Lord Jesus made on this occasion. It was wine and I am sure it was very good wine, for He would produce nothing but the best. Was it wine such as men understand by that word now? It was wine, but there are very few people in this country who ever see, much less drink, any of that beverage. That which goes under the name of wine is not true wine, but a fiery, brandied concoction of which I feel sure Jesus would not have tasted a drop. The fire-waters and blazing spirits of modern wine manufacturers are very different articles from the mildly exhilarating juice of the grape which was the usual wine of more sober centuries.

As to the wine such as is commonly used in the East, a person must drink inordinately before he would become intoxicated with it. It would be possible, for there were cases in which men were intoxicated with wine, but, as a rule, intoxication was a rare vice in the Saviors times and in the preceding ages. Had our great Exemplar lived under our present circumstances, surrounded by a sea of deadly drink which is ruining tens of thousands, I know how He would have acted. I am sure He would not have contributed by word or deed to the rivers of poisonous beverages in which bodies and souls are now being wholesale destroyed. The kind of wine which He made was such that, if there had been no stronger drink in the world, nobody might have thought it necessary to enter any protest against drinking it. It would have done nobody any harm, be sure of that, or else Jesus, our loving Savior, would not have made it.

Some have raised a question about the great quantity of wine, for I suppose there must have been no less than 120 gallons and probably more. They did not need all that, says one, and even of the weakest kind of wine it would be a deal too much. But you are thinking of an ordinary wedding here, are you not, where there are 10 or a dozen, or a score or two, met together in a parlor? An Oriental wedding is quite another affair. Even if it is only a village, like Cana of Galilee, everybody comes to eat and drink and the feast lasts on for a week or a fortnight. Hundreds of people must be fed, for often open house is kept. Nobody is refused and, consequently, a great quantity of provision is required. Besides, they may not have consumed all the wine at once.

When the Lord multiplied loaves and fishes, they had to eat the loaves and fishes directly or else the bread would grow moldy and the fish would be putrid. But wine could be stored and used months afterwards. I have no doubt that such wine as Jesus Christ made was as good for keeping as it was for using. And why not set the family up with a store in hand? They were not very rich people. They might sell it if they liked. At any rate, that is not my subject and I do not intend getting into hot water over the question of cold water! I abstain, myself, from alcoholic drink in every form and I think others would be wise to do the samebut of this, each one must be a guide unto himself.

Jesus Christ commenced the Gospel dispensation, not with a miracle of vengeance, like that of Moses who turned water into blood, but with a miracle of liberality, turning water into wine! He does not only supply necessities, but gives luxuriesand this is highly significant of the kingdom of His Grace. Here He not only gives sinners enough to save them, but He gives abundantly, Grace upon Grace. The gifts of the Covenant are not stinted or stuntedthey are neither small in quantity nor in quality. He gives to men not only the Water of Life that they may drink and be refreshed, but wines on the lees well-refined that they may rejoice exceedingly! And He gives like a king, who gives lavishly, without counting the cups and bottles. As to 120 gallons, how little is that in comparison with the rivers of love and mercy which He is pleased to bestow freely out of His bountiful heart upon the most needy souls. You may forget all about the wine question and all about winebad, good, or indifferentthe less we have to do with it the better, I am quite sure.

And now let us think about our Lords mercy and let the wine stand as a type of His Grace and the abundance of it as the type of the abundance of His Grace which He does so liberally bestow. Now, concerning this miracle, it may well be remarked how simple and unostentatious it was. One might have expected that when the great Lord of All came here in human form He would commence His miraculous career by summoning the scribes and Pharisees, at least, if not the kings and princes of the earth, to see the marks of His calling and the guarantees and warrants of His commission. Gathering them all together to work some miracle before them, as Moses and Aaron did before Pharaoh, they might be convinced of His Messiahship.

He does nothing of the kind. He goes to a simple wedding among poor people and there, in the simplest and most natural way, He displays His Glory. When the water is to be turned into wine; when He selects that as the first miracle, He does not call, even, for the master of the feast, or for the bridegroom or for any of the guests and begin to say, You clearly perceive that your wine is all gone. Now, I am about to show you a great marvel, to turn water into wine. No, He does it quietly with the servantsHe tells them to fill the waterpots. He uses the bathsHe does not ask for any new vessels, but uses what was there, making no fuss or commotion. He uses water, too, of which they had abundance and works the miracle, if I may so speak, in the most commonplace and natural styleand that is just the style of Jesus Christ.

Now, if it had been a Roman Catholic miracle, it would have been done in a very mysterious, theatrical, sensational way with no end of paraphernalia! But, being a genuine miracle, it is done just as nearly after the course of Nature as the Supernatural can go. Jesus does not have the waterpots emptied and then fill them with wine, but He goes as far with Nature as Nature will go and uses water to make the wine from it, therein following the processes of His Providences which are at work every day. When the water drops from Heaven and flows into the earth to the roots of the vine and so swells out the clusters with ruddy juice, it is through water that wine is produced. There is only a difference as to time whether the wine is created in the cluster, or in the waterpots.

Our Lord does not call for any strangers to do it, but the ordinary servants shall bring ordinary waterand while they are drawing out the water, or what appears to them to be waterthe servants shall perceive that the water has been turned into wine. Now, whenever you try to serve Jesus Christ, do not make a fuss about it because He never made any fuss in what He did, even when He was working amazing miracles! If you want to do a good thing, go and do it as naturally as you can. Be simplehearted and simple-minded. Be yourself. Do not be affected in your piety, as if you were going to walk to Heaven on stiltswalk on your own feet and bring religion to your own door and to your own fireside.

If you have a grand work to do, do it with that genuine simplicity which is next akin to sublimity, for affectation and everything that is gaudy and ostentatious, is, after all, mean and beggarly. Nothing but simple naturalness has about it a genuine beauty. And such a beauty there is about this miracle of the Savior. Let all these remarks stand as a kind of preface, for now I need to draw out the principles which are hidden in my text. And then, secondly, when I have displayed those principles, I need to show how they should be carried out.

I. Jesus said unto them, Fill the waterpots with water. WHAT ARE THE PRINCIPLES INVOLVED IN OUR LORDS MODE OF PROCEDURE? First, that as a rule, when Christ is about to bestow a blessing, He gives a command. This is a fact which your memories will help you to establish in a moment. It is not always so, but, as a general rule, a word of command goes before a word of power, or else with it. He is about to give wine and the process does not consist in saying, Let wine be, but it begins by a command addressed to menFill the waterpots with water. Here is a blind manChrist is about to give him sight. He puts clay on his eyes and then says, Go to the pool of Siloam and wash.

There is a man with his arm swinging at his side, uselessChrist is going to restore it and He says, Stretch forth your hand. Yes, and the principle goes so far that it holds good in cases where it would seem to be quite inapplicable, for if it is a child that is dead, He says, Maid, arise! Or if it is Lazarus, who by this time stinks, being four days buried, yet He cries, Lazarus, come forth! And thus He bestows a benefit by a command. Gospel benefits come with a Gospel precept. Do you wonder that this principle which is seen in the miracles is seen in the wonders of His Divine Grace? Here is a sinner to be saved. What does Christ say to that sinner? Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved. Can he believe of himself? Is he not dead in sin? Brothers and Sisters, raise no such questions, but learn that Jesus Christ has bid men believe and has commissioned His disciples to cry, Repent, for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand.

The times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commands all men everywhere to repent. And He bids us go and preach this Word of GodBelieve in the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved. But why command them? It is His will to do so and that should be enough for you who call yourself His disciples. It was so even in the olden times, when the Lord set forth in vision His way of dealing with a dead nation. There lay the dry bones of the valley, exceedingly many and exceedingly dryand Ezekiel was sent to prophesy to them! What said the Prophet? O you dry bones, hear the Word of the Lord. Is that His way of making them alive? Yes, by a command to heara thing which dry bones cannot do. He issues His command to the dead, the dry, the helpless and, by its power, life comes. I pray you, be not disobedient to the Gospel, for faith is a duty, or we should not read of the obedience of faith.

Jesus Christ, when He is about to bless, challenges mens obedience by issuing His royal orders. The same thing is true when we come away from the unconverted to Believers. When God means to bless His people and make them blessings it is by issuing a command to them. We have been praying to the Lord that He would arise and make bare His arm. His answer is, Awake, awake, O Zion. We ask that the world may be brought to His feet and His reply is, All power is given unto Me in Heaven and in earth. Go you therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them. The command is, to us, the vehicle of the blessing! If we are to have the blessing of converts multiplied and Churches built up, Christ must give us the gift it is altogether His gift, as much as it was His to turn the water into wineyet, first of all, He says to us, Go and proclaim My salvation unto the ends of the earth, for thus are we to fill the waterpots with water. If we are obedient to His command, we shall see how He will workhow mightily He will be with us and how our prayers shall be heard!

That is the first principle that I see hereChrist issues commands to those whom He will bless. Secondly, Christs commands are not to be questioned, but to be obeyed. The people need wine and Christ says, Fill the waterpots with water. Well, now, if these servants had been of the mind of the captious critics of modern times, they would have looked at our Lord a long while and objected boldlyWe do not need any water! It is not the Feast of Purifications, it is a wedding feast! We do not require water at a wedding! We shall need water when we are going up to the synagogue, or to the Temple, that we may purify our hands according to our custombut we do not need water just nowthe hour, the occasion and the fitness of things call for wine.

But Marys advice to them was soundWhatever He says to you, do it. Thus, too, let us neither question nor quibble, but do His bidding straight away. It may sometimes seem that Christs command is not pertinent to the point in hand. The sinner, for instance, says, Lord, save me! Conquer my sin in me. Our Lord cries, Believe, and the sinner cannot see how believing in Jesus will enable Him to get the mastery over a besetting sin! There does not, at first sight, appear to be any connection between the simple trusting of the Savior and the conquest of a bad temper, or the getting rid of a bad habit such as intemperance, passion, covetousness, or lying. There is such a connection, but remember, whether you can see the connection or not, it is yours, not to reason why, but yours to do what Jesus bids you do, for it is by way of the command that the miracle of mercy will be worked!

Fill the waterpots with water, though what you need is wine! Christ sees a connection between the water and the wine, though you do not. He has a reason for the pots being filled with water, which reason, as yet, you do not knowit is not yours to ask an explanation, but to yield obedience! You are, in the first instance, to just do

what Jesus bids you, as He bids you, how He bids you and because He bids you! And you shall find that His commandments are not grievous and in the keeping of them there is a great reward.

Sometimes these commands may even seem to be trivial. They may look as if He trifled with us. The family was in need of wine. Jesus says, Fill the waterpots with water. The servants might have said, This is clearly a mere putting off of us and playing with us. Why, we would be better employed in going round to these poor peoples friends and asking them to contribute another skin of wine! We would be much better employed in looking for some shop where we could purchase moreto send us to the well to fill those huge waterpots that hold so much water seems altogether a piece of childs play.

I know, Brothers and Sisters, that sometimes the path of duty seems as if it could not lead to the desired result. We want to be doing something morethat something more might be wrong, but it looks as if we could, thereby, complete our design more easily and directly and so we hanker after this uncommanded and, perhaps, forbidden course. And I know that many a troubled conscience thinks that simply to believe in Jesus is too little a thing. The deceitful heart suggests a course which looks to be more effectual. Do some penance! Feel some bitterness! Weep a certain amount of tears! Goad your mind, or break your heart! So cries carnal self! Jesus simply commands, Believe. It does appear to be too little a thing to be done, as if it could not be that eternal life would be given upon putting your trust in Jesus Christbut this is the principle we need to teach youthat when Jesus Christ is about to give a blessing, He issues a command which is not to be questioned, but to be obeyed at once. If you will not believe, neither shall you be established, but if you are willing and obedient, you shall eat the good of the land. Whatever He says unto you, do it.

The third principle is thiswhenever we get a command from Christ it is always wisdom to carry it out zealously. He said, Fill the waterpots with water, and they filled them up to the brim. You know there is a way of filling a waterpot and there is another way of filling it. It is full and you cannot heap it up, but still, you can fill it up till it begins almost to run overuntil the liquid trembles as if it must surely fall in a crystal cascade! It is a filling fullness. In fulfilling Christs commands, my dear Brothers and Sisters, let us go to their widest extent. Let us fill them up to the brim! If it is, Believe, oh, believe Him with all your might! Trust Him with your whole heart! If it is, Preach the Gospel, to you men, preach it in season and out of season and preach the Gospelthe whole of it. Fill it up to the brim! Do not give the people a half Gospel. Give them a brimmingover Gospel! Fill the vessels up to the very brim.

If you are to repent, ask to have a hearty and a deep repentancefull to the brim. If you are to believe, ask to have an intense, absolute, childlike dependence, that your faith may be full to the brim. If you are bid to pray, pray mightily fill the vessel of prayer up to the brim! If you are to search the Scriptures for blessing, search them from end to end! Fill the Biblereading vessel up to the brim! Christs commands are never meant to be done in a half-hearted manner. Let us throw our whole soul into whatever He commands us, even though, as yet, we cannot see the reason why He has given us the task. Christs commands should be fulfilled with enthusiasm and carried out to the extreme, if extreme is possible.

The fourth principle is that our earnest action in obedience to Christ is not contrary to our dependence upon Him, but it is necessary to our dependence upon Him. I will show you that in a moment. There are some Brothers, I know, who say, Ha! You hold what you call revival services and you try to arouse men by earnest appeals and exciting addresses. Do you not see that God will do His own work? These efforts are just your trying to take the work out of Gods hands. The proper way is to trust in Him and do nothing! All right, Brother. We have your word for itthat you trust in Him and do nothing. I take the liberty not to be so very certain that you trust Him, for if I remember who you are and I think I have been to your houseyou are about the most miserable, desponding, unbelieving person that I know! You do not even know whether you are saved, yourself, nine times out of ten!

Well now, I think you should hardly come and cry yourself up for your faith. If you had such a wonderfully great faith, there is no doubt, whatever, that according to your faith it would be unto you. How many have been added to your Church through your doing nothing this yearthat blessed Church of yours where you exercise this blessed faith without works? How many have been brought in? Well, we do not have very many additions. No, and I think you are not likely to have! If you go about the extension of the Redeemers Kingdom by inaction, I do not think that you go the way to work which Jesus Christ approves!

But we dare to say to you that we who go in for working for Christ with all our heart and soul, using any means within our reach to bring men in to hear the Gospel, feel as much as you do that we cannot do anything at all in the matter apart from the Holy Spirit and we trust in God, I think, almost as much as you do, because our faith has produced rather more results than yours has done! I should not wonder if it turns out that your faith without works is dead, being alone, and that our faith, having works with it, has been living faith, after all.

I will put the case thusJesus Christ says, Fill the waterpots with water. The orthodox servant says, My Lord, I fully believe that You can make wine for these people without any water and, by Your leave, I will bring no water. I am not going to interfere with the work of God. I am quite certain that You do not need our help, gracious Lord. You can make these waterpots be full of wine without our bringing a single bucket of water and so we will not rob You of the Glory of it. We will just stand back and wait for You. When the wine is made, we will drink some of it and bless Your name. But meanwhile we pray You excuse us, for pails are heavy carrying and a good many must be brought to fill all those waterpots. It would be interfering with the Divine work and so we would rather take our ease.

Do you not think that servants who talked so would prove that they had no faith in Jesus at all? We will not say that it would prove their unbelief, but we will say that it looks very much like it. But look at the servant there who, as soon as Jesus commands, Fill the waterpots with water, says, I do not know what He is doing. I do not see the connection between fetching this water and providing the feast with wine, but I am off to the well. Here, hand me a couple of pails. Come along, Brother. Come along and help fill the baths. There they go and soon come joyfully back with the water, pouring it into the troughs till they are full up to the brim! Those seem to me to be the believing servants who obey the command not understanding it, but expecting that, somehow or other, Jesus Christ knows the way to work His own miracle! By our earnest exertions we are not interfering with Him, dear Friends! Far from it. We are proving our faith in Him if we work for Him as He bids us work and trust in Him, alone, with undivided faith.

The next principle I must lay equal stress upon is thisour action, alone, is not sufficient. That we know, but let me remind you of it again. There are these waterpots, these troughs, these bathsthey are full and could not be fuller. What a spilling of water there is! You see that in their trying to fill them the water runs over here and there. Well, all these six great baths are full of water. Is there any more wine, for all that? Not a drop. It is water that they brought, nothing but water and it remains water, still. Suppose that they should take that water into the feast? I am half afraid that the guests would not have thought cold water quite the proper liquid to drink at a wedding!

They ought to have done so, but I am afraid they were not educated in the school of total abstinence. They would have said to the master of the feast, You have given us good wine and water is a poor finish for the feast. I am sure it would not have done. And yet water it was, depend upon it! And nothing else but water when the servants poured it into the pots. Even so, after all that sinners can do and all that saints can do, there is nothing in any human effort which can avail for the saving of a soul till Christ speaks the Word of Power. When Paul has planted and Apollos watered, there is no increase till God gives it! Preach the Gospel, labor with souls, persuade, entreat, exhortbut there is no power in anything that you do until Jesus Christ displays His Divine might. His Presence is our power! Blessed be His name, He will come and if we fill the waterpots with water, He will turn it into wine! Only He can do it and those servants who show the most alacrity in filling up the waterpots are among the first to confess that it is He, alone, who can perform the deed!

And now the last principle here is that although human action, in itself, falls short of the desired end, yet it has its place and God has made it necessary by His appointment. Why did our Lord have these waterpots filled with water? I do not say that it was necessary that it should have been done. It was not absolutely necessary in itself, but in order that the miracle might be all open and above board it was necessary, for suppose He had said, Go to those waterpots and draw out wine? Those who watched Him might have said that there was wine there, already, and that no miracle was worked. When our Lord had them filled up with water, there remained no room for any wine to be hidden away. It was just the same as with Elijah, when, in order to prove that there was no concealed fire upon the altar at Carmel, he bade them go down to the sea and bring water and pour it upon the altar and upon the victim till the trenches were filled.

He said, Do it a second time, and they did it a second time. And he said, Do it a third time, and they did it a third time and no possibility of deception remained. And so, when the Lord Jesus bade the servants fill the waterpots with water, He put it beyond all possibility that He should be charged with deceptionand thus we see why it was necessary that they should be filled with water. Moreover, it was necessary because it was so instructive to the servants. Did you notice, when I was reading it, that the master of the feast, when he tasted the good wine, did not know where it came from? He could not make it out and he uttered an expression which showed his surprise, mingled with his ignorance. But it is written, The servants which drew the water knew.

Now, when souls are converted in a Church, it happens much in the same way with certain of the members who are good people, but they do not know much about the conversion of sinners. They do not feel much joy in revivals. In fact, like the elder brother, they are rather suspicious of these wild characters being brought inthey consider themselves to be very respectable and they would rather not have the lowest of people sitting in the pew with them. They feel awkward in coming so near them. They know little about what is going on. But the servants which drew the water knewthat is to say, the earnest Believers who do the work and try to fill the waterpots know all about it! Jesus bade them fill the vessels with water on purpose so that the men who drew the water might know that it was a miracle.

I guarantee you if you bring souls to Christ, you will know His power! It will make you leap for joy to hear the cry of the penitent and mark the bright flash of delight that passes over the new-born Believers face when his sins are washed away and he feels himself renewed! If you want to know Jesus Christs miraculous power, you must go andnot work miraclesbut just draw the water and fill the waterpots. Do the ordinary duties of Christian men and womenthings in which there is no power of themselves, but which Jesus Christ makes to be connected with His Divine working and it shall be for your instruction and your comfort that you had such work to do! The servants which drew the water knew. I think that I have said enough upon the principles which lie concealed within my text.

II. You must have patience with me while I try to apply these principles to practical purposes. LET US SEE HOW TO CARRY OUT THIS DIVINE COMMAND, Fill the waterpots with water. First, use in the service of Christ such abilities as you have. There stood the water potssix of them and Jesus used what He found ready to His hand. There was water in the wellour Lord also used that. Our Lord is accustomed to employ His own people and such abilities as they have rather than angels or a novel class of beings created fresh for the purpose.

Now, dear Brothers and Sisters, if you have no golden chalices, fill your earthen vessels. If you cannot consider yourselves to be goblets of rarest workmanship in silver, or if you could not liken yourselves to the best Sevres ware, it does not matterfill the vessels which you have. If you cannot, with Elijah, bring fire from Heaven, and if you cannot work miracles with the Apostles, do what you can! If you have no silver and gold, yet such as you have, dedicate to Christ. Bring water at His bidding and it will be better than wine! The most common gifts can be made to serve Christs purpose. Just as He took a few loaves and fishes and fed the crowd with them, so will He take your six waterpots and the water and do His wine-making! Thus, you see, they improved what they had, for the waterpots were empty and they filled them.

There are a good many Brothers here from the College tonight and they are trying to improve their gifts and their abilities. I think you do right, my Brothers. But I have heard some people say, The Lord Jesus does not need your learning. No, it is very likely that He does not, any more than He needed the water. But then He certainly does not need your stupidity and your ignorance and He does not need your rough, uncultivated ways of speaking! He did not seek for empty pitchers on this occasionHe would have them full and the servants did well to fill them. Our Lord today does not need empty heads in His ministers, nor empty hearts. So, my Brothers, fill your waterpots with water! Work away and study away and learn all you can and fill the waterpots with water.

Oh, somebody will say, but how are such studies to lead to the conversion of men? Conversion is like wine and all that these young fellows will learn will be like water. You are right! But still, I bid these students fill the waterpots with water and expect the Lord Jesus to turn the water into wine. He can sanctify human knowledge so that it shall be useful to the setting forth of the knowledge of Jesus Christ. I hope that the day has gone by when it is so much as dreamed that ignorance and coarseness are helpful to the Kingdom of Christ. The great Teacher would have His people know all that they can know and especially know Himself and the Scriptures that they may set Him forth and proclaim His Gospel. Fill the waterpots with water.

Next, to apply this principle, let us all use such means of blessing as God appoints. What are they? First, there is the reading of the Scriptures. Search the Scriptures. Search them all you can. Try to understand them. But if I know the Bible, shall I be, therefore, saved. No, you must know Christ Himself by the Spirit. Still, fill the waterpots with water. While you are studying the Scriptures you may expect the Savior will bless His own Word and turn the water into wine. Then there is attendance upon the means of Grace and hearing a Gospel ministry. Mind you, fill that waterpot with water. But I may hear thousands of sermons and not be saved. I know it is so, but your business is to fill this waterpot with water and while you are listening to the Gospel, God will bless it, for, faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. Take care to use the means which God appoints.

Since our Lord has appointed to save men by the preaching of the Word, I pray that He will raise up those who will preach without ceasing, in season and out of season, indoors and in the streets. But they wont be saved by our preaching. I know that. Preaching is the waterand while we are preaching, God will bless it and turn the water into wine. Let us distribute religious books and tracts. Oh, but people wont be saved by reading them. Very likely not, but while they are reading them, God may bring His Truth to remembrance and impress their hearts. Fill the waterpots with water. Give away abundance of tracts! Scatter religious literature everywhere. Fill the waterpots with water, and the Lord will turn the water into wine.

Remember the Prayer Meeting. What a blessed means of Grace it is, for it brings down power for all the works of the Churchfill that waterpot with water! I have not to complain of your attendance at Prayer Meetings, but oh, keep it up, dear Brothers and Sisters! You can pray. Blessed be His name, you have the spirit of prayer. Pray on! Fill the waterpots with water and in answer to prayer, Jesus will turn it into wine. Sunday school teachers, do not neglect your blessed means of usefulness. Fill the waterpots with water. Work the Sunday school system with all your might. But it will not save the children merely to get them together and teach them of Jesus. We cannot give them new hearts. Who said that you could? Fill the waterpots with water. Jesus Christ knows how to turn it into wine and He does not fail to do it when we are obedient to His commands.   
Use all the means, but take care that you use those means right heartily! I come back to that part of the textAnd they filled them up to the brim. When you teach the young ones in the Sunday school, teach them well. Fill them to the brim! When you preach, dear Sir, do not preach as if you were only half awakestir yourself upfill your ministry to the brim! When you are trying to evangelize the community, do not attempt it in a half-hearted way, as if you did not care whether their souls were saved or notfill them to the brimpreach the Gospel with all your might and beg for power from on high! Fill every vessel to the brim! Whatever is worth doing is worth doing well.

Nobody ever yet served Christ too well. I have heard that in some services there may be too much zeal, but in the service of Christ you may have as much zeal as you will and yet not exceed, if prudence is joined with it. Fill the waterpots with water and sincere work and it shall be for your instruction and your comfort that you had such work to do! The servants which drew the water knew. Fill the waterpots with water and fill them to the brim. Go in for doing good with all your heart and soul and strength!

Further, in order to apply this principle, be sure to remember, when you have done all that you can do, that there is a great deficiency in all that you have done! It is well to come away from tract-distributing and Sunday school teaching and preaching and go home and get on your knees and cry, Lord, I have done all that You have commanded me and yet there is nothing done unless You give the finishing touch! Lord, I have filled the waterpots and though I could only fill them with water, yet I have filled them to the brim. Lord, to the best of my ability I have sought to win men for You! There cannot be a soul saved, a child converted, or any Glory brought to Your name by anything I have done, in and of myselfbut, my Blessed Master, speak the miracle-working Word and let the water which fills the vessels blush into wine! You can do it, though I cannot. I cast the burden upon You.

And this leads me to the last application of the principle, which is trust in your Lord to do the work. You see, there are two ways of filling waterpots. Suppose these people had never been commanded to fill the waterpots and their doing it had had no reference to Christ whatever? Suppose that it had been a freak of their own imagination and they had said, These people have no wine, but they shall have a bath if they like and so we will fill the six waterpots with water? Nothing would have come of such a proceeding. There would have stood the water. The Eton schoolboy said, The conscious water saw its God and blusheda truly poetic expressionbut the conscious water would have seen the servants and would

not have blushed. It would have reflected their faces upon its shining surface and nothing more would have happened.

Jesus Christ Himself must come and, in present power must work the miracle. It was because He had commanded the servants to fill the waterpots with water that, therefore, He was bound, if I may use such an expression of our free Kingbound to turn it into wine, for otherwise He would have been making fools of them and they, also, might have turned round and said, Why did You give us such a command as this? If, after we have filled the waterpots with water, Jesus does not work by us, we shall have done what He bade us and, if we believe in Him, I make bold to say that He is bound to come through for, though we should be losers and dreadful losers, too, if He did not display His power, we would have to lament, I have labored in vain and spent my strength for nothing. Yet we should not be such losers as He would be, for straightway the world would affirm that Christs commands are empty, fruitless, idle!

It would be declared that obedience to His Word brings no result. The world would say, You have filled the waterpots with water because He told you to do it. You expected Him to turn the water into wine, but He did not do it. Your faith is vain! Your whole obedience is vain and He is not a fit Master to be served. We should be losers, but He would be a greater loser, for He would lose His Glory. For my part, I do not believe that a good word for Christ is ever spoken in vain. I am sure that no sermon with Christ in it is ever preached without results. Something will come of itif not tonight, or tomorrowsomething will come of it. When I have printed a sermon and seen it in the volume, I have, before long, been delighted to hear of souls saved by its means. And when I have not printed, but only preached a discourse, I have still thought something will come of it.

I preached Christ. I put His saving Truth into that sermon and that Seed cannot die! If it shall lie in the volume for years, like the grains of wheat in the mummys hand, it will live and grow and bear fruit! For instance, I have heard, but lately, of a soul brought to Christ by a sermon that I preached 25 years ago! I hear almost every week of souls having been brought to Christ by sermons preached at Park Street and Exeter Hall and the Surrey Gardens and, therefore, I feel that God will not let a single faithful testimony fall to the ground. Go on, Brothers! Go on filling the waterpots with water! Do not believe that you are doing much when you have done your utmost. Do not begin to congratulate yourselves on your past success. All must come from Christand it will come from Christ!

Do not go to the Prayer Meeting and say, Paul may plant and Apollos may water, butand so on. That is not how the passage runs! It says just the contrary and runs thusPaul plants, Apollos waters, but God gives the increase. The increase is surely given by God where the planting and sowing are rightly done! The servants fill the water potsthe Master turns the water into wine. The Lord grant us Grace to be obedient to His commandsespecially to that command, Believe and live! and may we meet Him in the marriage feast above to drink of the new wine with Him forever and ever. Amen and amen!

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SATANS BANQUET   
NO. 225

**DELIVERED OF SABBATH MORNING, NOVEMBER 28, 1858, BY THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE MUSIC HALL, ROYAL SURREY GARDENS.

**The governor of the feast called the bridegroom and said unto him, every man at the beginning does set forth good wine. And when men have well drunk, then that which is worse. But you have kept the good wine until now.   
John 2:9, 10.**

THE governor of the feast said more than he intended to say, or rather, there is more truth in what he said than he himself imagined. This is the established rule all the world overthe good wine first and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse. It is the rule with men and have not hundreds of disappointed hearts bewailed it? Friendship first the oily tongue, the words softer than butter and afterwards the drawn sword. Ahithophel first presents the lordly dish of love and kindness to David, then afterwards that which is worse, for he forsakes his master and becomes the counselor of his rebel son. Judas presents first of all the dish of fair speech and of kindness, the Savior partook thereof, he walked to the House of God in company with Him and took sweet counsel with Him. But afterwards there came the dregs of the wineHe that eats bread with Me has lifted up his heel against Me. Judas the thief betrayed his Master, bringing forth afterwards that which is worse.

You have found it so with many whom you thought your friends. In the heyday of prosperity, when the sun was shining and the birds were singing and all was fair and gay and cheerful with you, they brought forth the good wine. But there came a chilling frost and nipped your flowers and the leaves fell from the trees and your streams were frosted with the ice and then they brought forth that which is worsethey forsook you and fled. They left you in your hour of peril and taught you that great truth, that Cursed is he that trusts in man and makes flesh his arm. And this is the way all the world overI say it once againnot merely with men,

but with nature, too *Alas, for us, if you were all,*

*And nothing beyond O earth,*   
for does not this world serve us just the same? In our youth it brings forth the best wine. Then we have the sparkling eye and the ear attuned to music. Then the blood flows swiftly through the veins and the pulse beats joyously.

But wait a little and there shall come forth afterwards that which is worse, for the keepers of the house shall tremble and the strong men shall bow themselves. The grinders shall fail because they are few, they that look out of the windows shall be darkened, all the daughters of music shall be brought low. Then shall the strong man totterthe grasshopper shall be a burden and desire shall failthe mourners shall go about the streets. First there is the flowing cup of youth and afterwards the stagnant waters of old age, unless God shall cast into those dregs a fresh flood of His loving kindness and tender mercy, so that once again, as it always happens to the Christian, the cup shall run over and again sparkle with delight. O Christian, trust not in men, rely not upon the things of this

present time, for this is evermore the rule with men and with the world the good wine first and when we have well drunk, then that which is worse.

This morning, however, I am about to introduce you to two houses of feasting. First, I shall bid you look within the doors of the devils house and you will find he is true to this rule. He brings forth first the good wine and when men have well drunk and their brains are muddled therewith, then he brings forth that which is worse. Having bid you look there and tremble and take heed to the warning, I shall then attempt to enter with you into the banqueting house of our Beloved Lord and Master Jesus Christ and of Him we shall be able to say, as the governor of the feast said to the bridegroom, You have kept the good wine until now. Your feasts grow better and not worseYour wines grow richer, Your viands are daintier far and Your gifts more precious than before. You have kept the good wine until now.

I. First, we are to take a warning glance at the HOUSE OF FEASTING WHICH SATAN HAS BUILTfor as wisdom has built her house and hewn out her seven pillars, so has folly its temple and its tavern of feasting, into which it continually tempts the unwary. Look within the banqueting house and I will show you four tables and the guests that sit there and as you look at those tables you shall see the courses brought in. You shall see the wine cups brought and you shall see them vanish one after another and you shall mark that the rule holds good at all four tablesfirst the good wine and afterwards that which is worseyes, I shall go furtherafterwards, that which is worst of all.

1. At the first table to which I shall invite your attention, though I beseech you never to sit down and drink there, sits the PROFLIGATE. The table of the profligate is a gay table. It is covered over with a gaudy crimson and all the vessels upon it look exceedingly bright and glistening. Many there are that sit there. But they know not that they are the guests of Hell and that the end of all the feast shall be in the depths of perdition. See now the great governor of the feast, as he comes in? He has a bland smile upon his face. His garments are not black, but he is girded with a robe of many colors. He has a honeyed word on his lip and a tempting witchery in the sparkle of his eye. He brings in the cup and says, Hey, young man, drink here, it sparkled in the cup, it moves itself aright. Do you see it? It is the wine cup of pleasure.

This is the first cup at the banqueting house of Satan. The young man takes it and sips the liquor. At first it is a cautious sip. It is but a little he will take and then he will restrain himself. He does not intend to indulge much in lust, he means not to plunge headlong into perdition. There is a flower there on the edge of that cliffhe will reach forward a little and pluck it, but it is not his intention to dash himself from that beetling crag and destroy himself. Not he! He thinks it easy to put away the cup when he has tested its flavor! He has no design to abandon himself to its intoxication. He takes a shallow draught. But O, how sweet it is! How it makes his blood tingle within him. What a fool I was not to have tasted this before! he thinks. Was ever joy like this? Could it be thought that bodies could be capable of such ecstasy as this? He drinks again. This time he takes a deeper draught and the wine is hot in his veins.

Oh, how blest he thinks he is! What would he not say now in the praise of Bacchus, or Venus, or whatever shape Beelzebub chooses to assume? He becomes a very orator in praise of sin! It is fair, it is pleasant, the deep damnation of lust appears as joyous as the transports of Heaven. He drinks, he drinks, he drinks again, till his brain begins to reel with the intoxication of his sinful delight. This is the first course. Drink, O you drunkards of Ephraim and bind the crown of pride about your head and call us fools because we put your cup from usdrink with the harlot and sup with the lustfulyou may think yourselves wise for so doing, but we know that after these things there comes something worse, for your vine is of the vine of Sodom and of the fields of Gomorrahyour grapes are grapes of gall, the clusters are bitter. Your wine is the poison of dragons and the cruel venom of asps.

Now with a leer upon his brow, the subtle governor of the feast rises from his seat. His victim has had enough of the best wine. He takes away that cup and he brings in another, not quite so sparkling. Look into the liquor. It is not beaded over with the sparkling bubbles of rapture. It is all flat and dull and insipid, it is called the cup of satiety. The man has had enough of pleasure and like a dog he vomits, and like a dog he will return to his vomit again. Who has woe? Who has redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine. I am now speaking figuratively of wine, as well as literally. The wine of lust brings the same redness of the eyes. The profligate soon discovers that all the rounds of pleasure end in satiety. What? says he, What more can I do? There! I have committed every wickedness that can be imagined and I have drained every cup of pleasure. Give me something fresh! I have tried the theaters all roundthere! I dont care so much as one single farthing for them all. I have gone to every kind of pleasure that I can conceive. It is all over. Gaiety itself grows flat and dull. What am I to do?

And this is the devils second coursethe course of satietya fitful drowsiness, the result of the previous excess. Thousands there are who are drinking of the tasteless cup of satiety every day and some novel invention whereby they may kill time, some new discovery whereby they may give a fresh vent to their iniquity would be a wonderful thing to them. And if some man should rise up who could find out for them some new fashion of wickednesssome deeper depths in the deeps of the nethermost Hell of lasciviousnessthey would bless his namefor having given them something fresh to excite them. That is the devils second course. And do you see them partaking of it? There are some of you that are having a deep draught of it this morning. You are the jaded horses of the fiend of lust, the disappointed followers of the will-o-the-wisp of pleasure. God knows, if you were to speak your heart out you would be obliged to say, There! I have tried pleasure and I do not find it pleasure. I have gone the round and I am just like the blind horse at the mill, I have to go round again. I am spellbound to the sin, but I cannot take delight in it now as I once did, for all the glory of it is as a fading flower and as the hasty fruit before the summer.

And while the feaster remains in the putrid sea of his infatuation, another scene is opening. The governor of the feast commands another liquor to be broached. This time the fiend bears a black goblet and he presents it with eyes full of hellfire, flashing with fierce damnation. Drink of that, Sir, says he and the man sips it and starts back and shrieks, O

God! That ever I must come to this! You must drink, Sir! He that quaffs the first cup, must drink the second and the third. Drink, though it is like fire down your throat! Drink it, though it is as the lava of Etna in your bowels! Drink! You must drink! He that sins must suffer. He that is a profligate in his youth must have rottenness in his bones and disease within his loins. He who rebels against the Laws of God must reap the harvest in his own body here.

Oh, there are some dreadful things that I might tell you of this third course. Satans house has a front chamber full of everything that is enticing to the eye and bewitching to the sensual taste. But there is a back chamber and no one knows, no one has seen the whole of its horrors. There is a secret chamber where he shovels out the creatures whom he has himself destroyeda chamber beneath whose floor is the blazing of Hell and above whose boards the heat of that horrible pit is felt. It may be a physicians place, rather than mine, to tell of the horrors that some have to suffer as the result of their iniquity.

I leave that. But let me tell the profligate spendthrift that the poverty which he will endure is the result of his sin of extravagance. Let him know, also, that the remorse of conscience that will overtake him is not an accidental thing that drops by chance from Heavenit is the result of his own iniquity. Depend upon it, Brothers and Sisters, sin carries an infant misery in its bowels and sooner or later it must be delivered of its terrible child. If we sow the seed we must reap the harvest. Thus the law of Hells house standsfirst, the good wine, then, afterwards, that which is worse.

The last course remains to be presented. And now, you strong men who mock at the warning which I would deliver to you with a brothers voice and with an affectionate heart, though with rough language, come here and drink of this last cup. The sinner has at the end brought himself to the grave. His hopes and joys were like gold put into a bag full of holes and they have all vanishedvanished forever. And now he has come to the last. His sins haunt him, his transgressions perplex him. He is taken like a bull in a net and how shall he escape? He dies and descends from disease to damnation. Shall mortal language attempt to tell you the horrors of that last tremendous cup of which the profligate must drink and drink forever?

Look at ityou cannot see its depthsbut cast an eye upon its seething surface. I hear the noise of rushing to and fro and a sound as of gnashing of teeth and the wailing of despairing souls. I look into that cup and I hear a voice coming up from its depthsThese shall go away into everlasting punishment. Tophet is prepared of old, the pile thereof is wood and much smoke, the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, shall kindle it.

And what do you say to this last course of Satan? Who among us shall dwell with devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings? Profligate! I beseech you, in the name of God, start from this table! Oh, be not so careless at your cups. Be not so asleep, secure in the peace which you now enjoy! Man, death is at the door and at his heels is swift destruction! As for you, who as yet have been restrained by a careful father and the watchfulness of an anxious mother, I beseech you shun the house of sin and folly. Let the wise mans words be written on your heart and be you mindful of them in the hour of temptationRemove your way far from her and come not near the door of her housefor the lips of a strange woman drop as an honeycomb and her mouth is smoother than oilbut her end is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword. Her feet go down to death. Her steps take hold on Hell.

2. Do you see that other table yonder in the middle of the palace? Ah, good easy souls! Many of you had thought that you never went to the feast of Hell at all. But there is a table for you, too. It is covered over with a fair white cloth and all the vessels upon the table are most clean and comely. The wine looks not like the wine of Gomorrah, it moves aright, like the wine from the grapes of Eshcol. It seems to have no intoxication in it. It is like the ancient wine which they pressed from the grape into the cup, having in it no deadly poison. Do you see the men who sit at this table? How self-contented they are! Ask the white fiends who wait at it and they will tell you, This is the table of the self-righteousthe Pharisee sits there. You may know him. He has his phylactery between his eyes. The hem of his garment is made exceeding broad. He is one of the best of the best professors. Ah, said Satan, as he draws the curtain and shuts off the table where the profligates are carousing, be quiet, dont make too much noise, lest these sanctimonious hypocrites should guess what company they are in. Those self-righteous people are my guests quite as much as you, and I have them quite as safely.

So Satan, like an angel of light, brings forth a gilded goblet, looking like the chalice of the table of communion. And what wine is that? It seems to be the very wine of the sacred Eucharist. It is called the wine of selfsatisfaction and around the brim you may see the bubbles of pride. Look at the swelling froth upon the bowlGod, I thank You that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. You know that cup, my self-deceiving Hearers. Oh, that you knew the deadly hemlock which is mixed therein. Sin as other men do? Not you not at all. You are not going to submit yourself to the righteousness of Christwhat need you? You are as good as your neighbors. If you are not saved, you ought to be, you think. Dont you pay everybody twentyshillings in the pound? Did you ever rob anybody in your life? You do your neighbors a good turn. You are as good as other people.

Very good! That is the first cup the devil gives and the good wine makes you swell with self-important dignity, as its fumes enter your heart and puff it up with an accursed pride. Yes! I see you sitting in the room so cleanly swept and so neatly garnished and I see the crowds of your admirers standing around the table, even many of Gods own children, who say, Oh that I were half as good as he. While the very humility of the righteous provides you with provender for your pride. Wait awhile, you unctuous hypocrite, wait awhile, for there is a second course to come. Satan looks with quite as self-satisfied an air upon his guests this time as he did upon the troop of rioters. Ah, says he, I cheated those gay fellows with the cup of pleasureI gave them, afterwards, the dull cup of satiety and I have cheated you, too. You think yourselves all right, but I have deceived you twice, I have befooled you, indeed.

So he brings in a cup which sometimes, he himself does not like to serve. It is called the cup of discontent and unquietness of mind and many there are that have to drink this after all their self-satisfaction. Do you not find, you that are very good in your own esteem, but have no interest in Christ, that when you are alone and begin to turn over your accounts for eternity, that they do not square somehowthat you cannot

strike the balance exactly to your own side after all, as you thought you could? Have not you sometimes found that when you thought you were standing on a rock, there was a quivering beneath your feet? You heard the Christian sing boldly

*Bold shall I stand in that great day,   
For who anything to my charge shall lay?   
While, through Your blood, absolved I am   
From sins tremendous curse and shame.*

And you have said, Well, I cannot sing that. I have been as good a Churchman as ever lived, I never missed going to my Church all these years, but I cannot say I have a solid confidence.

You had once a hope of self-satisfaction, but now the second course has come in and you are not quite so contented. Well, says another, I have been to my Chapel and I have been baptized and made a profession of religion, though I was never brought to know the Lord in sincerity and in truth and I once thought it was all well with me, but I want a something which I cannot find. Now comes a shaking in the heart. It is not quite so delightful as one supposed, to build on ones own righteousness. Ah, that is the second course. Wait awhile and perhaps in this world, but certainly in the hour of death, the devil will bring in the third cup of dismay at the discovery of your lost condition. How many a man who has been self-righteous all his life, has, at the last discovered that the thing whereon he placed his hope had failed him? I have heard of an army, who, being defeated in battle, endeavored to make good a retreat. With all their might the soldiers fled to a certain river, where they expected to find a bridge across which they could retreat and be in safety, but when they came to the stream, there was heard a shriek of terrorThe bridge is broken, the bridge is broken! All in vain was that cry, for the multitude hurrying on behind, pressed upon those that were before and forced them into the river, until the stream was glutted with the bodies of drowned men.

Such must be the fate of the self-righteous. You thought there was a bridge of ceremonies. That Baptism, Confirmation and the Lords Supper made up the solid arches of a bridge of good works and duties. But when you come to die, there shall be heard the cryThe bridge is broken, the bridge is broken! It will be in vain for you to turn round then. Death is close behind you. He forces you onward and you discover what it is to perish, through having neglected the great salvation and attempting to save yourself through your own good works. This is the last course but one. And your last course of all, the worst wine, your everlasting portion must be the same as that of the profligate. Good as you thought yourself to be, inasmuch as you proudly rejected Christ, you must drink the wine cup. The wrath of God. That cup which is full of trembling. The wicked of the earth shall wring out the dregs of that cup and drink them. And you also must drink of it as deep as they. Oh, beware in time! Put away your high looks and humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved.

3. Some of you have as yet escaped the lash, but there is a third table crowded with most honorable guests. I believe there have been more princes and kings, mayors and aldermen and great merchants sitting at this table, than at any other. It is called the table of worldliness. Humph, says a man, Well, I dislike the profligatetheres my eldest sonIve been hard at work saving up money all my life and theres that young fellow, he will not stick to businesshe has become a real profligate, I am very glad the minister spoke so sharp about that. As for me there now. I dont care about your self-righteous people a single farthing. To me it is of no account at all. I dont care at all about religion in the slightest degree. I like to know whether the funds rise or fall, or whether there is an opportunity of making a good bargain. Thats about all I care for. Ah, worldling, I have read of a friend of yours who was clothed in scarlet and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day. Do you know what became of him? You should remember it, for the same end awaits yourself. The end of his feast must be the end of yours.

If your God is this world, depend upon it you shall find that your way is full of bitterness. Now see that table of the worldly manthe mere worldlingwho lives for gain. Satan brings him in a flowing cupThere, says he, Young man, you are starting in business. You need not care about the conventionalities of honesty or about the ordinary old-fashioned fancies of religionget rich as quick as ever you can. Get moneyget moneyhonestly if you can, but, if not, get it anyhow, says the devil. And down he puts his tankard. There, says he, is a foaming draught for you. Yes, says the young man, I have abundance now. My hopes are indeed realized. Here, then, you see the first and best wine of the worldlings feast and many of you are tempted to envy this man. Oh, that I had such a prospect in business, says one. Im not half so sharp as he is, I could not deal as he deals. My religion would not let me. But how fast he gets rich! O that I could prosper as he does. Come, my Brother, judge not before the time, theres a second course to come, the thick and nauseous draught of care.

The man has got his money but they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare. Wealth ill-gotten, or ill-used, or hoarded, brings canker with itthat does not canker the gold and silverbut cankers the mans heart and a cankered heart is one of the most awful things a man can have. Ah, see this money-lover and mark the care which sits upon his heart. There is a poor old woman that lives near his lodge gate. She has but a pittance a week, but she says, Bless the Lord, I have enough! She never asks how she is to live, or how she is to die, or how she is to be buried, but sleeps sweetly on the pillow of contentment and faith. And here is this poor fool with untold gold. He is miserable because he happened to drop a sixpence as he walked along the streets, or because he had an extra call upon his charity to which the presence of some friend compelled him to yield. Or perhaps he groans because his coat wears out too soon.

After this comes avarice. Many have had to drink of that cupmay God save any of us from its fiery drops. A great American preacher has said, Covetousness breeds misery. The sight of houses better than our own, of dress beyond our means, of jewels costlier than we may wear, of stately equipage and rare curiosities beyond our reachthese hatch the viper brood of covetous thoughtsvexing the poor, who would be rich tormenting the rich, who would be richer. The covetous man pines to see pleasure. He is sad in the presence of cheerfulness. And the joy of the world is his sorrow because all the happiness of others is not his. I do not wonder that God abhors him. He inspects his heart as he would a cave full of noisome birds, or a nest of rattling reptiles and loathes the sight of its crawling tenants. To the covetous man life is a nightmare and God lets him wrestle with it as best he may. Mammon might build its palace on

such a heart and Pleasure bring all its revelry there, Honor all its garlandsit would be like pleasures in a sepulcher and garlands on a tomb. When a man becomes avaricious, all he has is nothing to him. More, more, more! says he, like some poor creatures in a terrible fever, who cry, Drink, drink, drink! and you give them drink, but after they have it, their thirst increases. Like the horseleech they cry, Give, give, give! Ava

rice is a raving madness which seeks to grasp the world in its arms and yet despises the plenty it has already. This is a curse of which many have died. And some have died with the bag of gold in their hands and with misery upon their brow because they could not take it with them into their coffin and could not carry it into another world. Well, then, there comes the next course.

Baxter and those terrible old preachers used to picture the miser and the man who lived only to make gold, in the middle of Hell. And they imagined Mammon pouring melted gold down his throat, There, say the mocking devils that is what you wanted, you have got it now. Drink, drink, drink! and the molten gold is poured down. I shall not, however indulge in any such terrible imaginations. But this much I know, he that lives to himself here, must perishhe who sets his affections upon things on earth, has not dug deephe has built his house upon the sands and when the rain descends and the floods come, down must come his house and great must be the fall. It is the best wine first, however. it is the respectable manrespectable and respectedeverybody honors himand afterwards that which is worse, when meanness has beggared his wealth and covetousness has maddened his brain. It is sure to come, as sure as ever you give yourself up to worldliness.

4. The fourth table is set in a very secluded corner, in a very private part of Satans palace. There is the table set for secret sinners and here the old rule is observed. At that table, in a room well darkened, I see a young man sitting today and Satan is the servitor, stepping in so noiselessly, that no one would hear him. He brings in the first cupand O how sweet it is! It is the cup of secret sin. Stolen waters are sweet and bread eaten in secret is pleasant. How sweet that morsel, eaten all alone! Was there ever one that rolled so delicately under the tongue? That is the first. After that, he brings in anotherthe wine of an unquiet conscience. The mans eyes are opened. He says, What have I done? What have I been doing? Ah, cries this Achan, the first cup you brought me I saw sparkling in that a wedge of gold and a goodly Babylon garment. And I thought, Oh, I must have that. But now my thought is, What shall I do to bide this, where shall I put it? I must dig. Yes, I must dig deep as Hell before I shall hide it, for sure enough it will be discovered.

The grim governor of the feast is bringing in a massive bowl, filled with a black mixture. The secret sinner drinks and is confoundedhe fears his sin will find him out. He has no peace, no happiness, he is full of uneasy fear. He is afraid that he shall be detected. He dreams at night that there is someone after him. There is a voice in his ear telling him, I know all about it. I will tell it. He thinks, perhaps, that the sin which he has committed in secret will break out to his friends. The father will know it, the mother will know it. Yes, it may be even the physician will tell the tale and blab out the wretched secret. For such a man there is no rest. He is always in dread of arrest. He is like the debtor I have read of, who, owing a great deal of money, was afraid the bailiffs were after himand happening one day to catch his sleeve on the top of a palisade, said, There, let me go. Im in a hurry. I will pay you tomorrow, imagining that some one was laying hold of him.

Such is the position in which the man places himself by partaking of the hidden things of dishonesty and sin. Thus he finds no rest for the sole of his foot for fear of discovery. At last the discovery comesit is the last cup. Often it comes on earth. For be sure your sin will find you out and it will generally find you out here. What frightful exhibitions are to be seen at our police courts of men that are made to drink that last black draught of discovery. The man who presided at religious meetings, the man who was honored as a saint, is at last unmasked. And what said the judge and what said the world of him? He is a jest and a reproach and a rebuke everywhere. But, suppose he should be so crafty that he passes through life without discoverythough I think it is almost impossiblewhat a cup he must drink when he stands at last before the bar of God! Bring him forth, jailor! Dread keeper of the dungeon of Hell, lead forth the prisoner. He comes! The whole world is assembled. Stand up, Sir! Did you not make a profession of religion? Did not everybody think you a saint? He is speechless. But many there are in that vast crowd who cry, We thought him so. The book is open, his deeds are readtransgression after transgression all laid bare.

Do you hear that hiss? The righteous, moved to indignation, are lifting up their voices against the man who deceived them and dwelt among them as a wolf in sheeps clothing. Oh, how fearful it must be to bear the scorn of the universe! The good can bear the scorn of the wicked but for the wicked to bear the shame and everlasting contempt which righteous indignation will heap upon them! Oh that will be one of the most frightful things, next to the eternal endurance of the wrath of the Most High, which, I need not add, is the last cup of the devils terrible feast with which the secret sinner must be filled, forever and ever.

I pause now, but it is just to gather up my strength to beg that anything I may have said, that shall have the slightest personal bearing upon any of my Hearers, may not be forgotten. I beseech you, Brothers and Sisters, if now you are eating the fat and drinking the sweet of Hells banquet, pause and reflect what shall the end be? He that sows to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption. He that sows to the spirit, shall of the spirit reap life everlasting. I cannot spare more time for that, most assuredly.

II. But you must pardon me while I occupy only a few minutes in taking you into the HOUSE OF THE SAVIOR, where He feasts His Beloved. Come and sit with us at Christs table of outward providences. He does not feast His children after the fashion of the Prince of Darknessfor the first cup that Christ brings to them is very often a cup of bitterness. There are His own Beloved children, His own redeemedwho have but sorry cheer. Jesus brings in the cup of poverty and affliction and He makes His own children drink of it, till they say, You have made me drunk with wormwood and You have filled me with bitterness. This is the way Christ begins. The worst wine first. When the sergeant begins with a young recruit, he gives him a shilling and then afterwards come the march and the battle. But Christ never takes His recruits so. They must count the cost, lest they should begin to build and not be able to relish. He seeks to have no disciples who are dazzled with first appearances. He begins roughly

with them and many have been His children who have found that the first course of the Redeemers table has been affliction, sorrow, poverty and want.

In the olden time, when the best of Gods people were at the table, He used to serve them worst, for they wandered about in sheep-skins and goat-skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormentedof whom the world was not worthy and they kept on drinking of these bitter cups for many a day. But let me tell you afterwards He brought out sweeter cups for them and you that have been troubled have found it so. After the cup of affliction, comes the cup of consolation and, oh, how sweet is that! It has been the privilege of these lips to drink that cup after sickness and pain. And I can bear witness, that I said of my Master, You have kept the best wine until now. It was so luscious that the taste did take away every taste of the bitterness of sorrow. And I said, Surely the bitterness of this sickness is all past, for the Lord has manifested Himself to me and given me His best wine.

But, Beloved, the best wine is to come last. Gods people will find it so outwardly. The poor saint comes to die. The Master has given him the cup of poverty, but now no more he drinks thereof, he is rich to all the intents of bliss. He has had the cup of sickness. He shall drink of that no more. He has had the cup of persecution but now he is glorified, together with his Master and made to sit upon His Throne. The best things have come last to him in outward circumstances. There were two martyrs once burned at Stratford-le-Bow. One of them was lame and the other blind and when they were tied to the stake, the lame man took his crutch and threw it down and said to the other, Cheer up, Brother, this is the sharp medicine that shall heal us. I shall not be lame within an hour of this time nor shall you be blind.

No, the best things were to come last. But I have often thought that the child of God is very much like the crusaders. The crusaders started off on their journey and they had to fight their way through many miles of enemies and to march through leagues of danger. You remember, perhaps, in history, the story that when the armies of the Duke of Bouillon came in sight of Jerusalem, they sprang from their horses, clapped their hands and cried, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, Jerusalem. They forgot all their toils, all the weariness of the journey and all their wounds, for there was Jerusalem in their sight. And how will the saint at last cry, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, when all sorrow and all poverty and sickness are past and he is blest with immortality! The bad winebad did I say? No, the bitter wine is taken away and the best wine is brought out and the saint sees himself glorified forever with Christ Jesus.

And now, we will sit down at the table of inward experience. The first cup that Christ brings to His children, when they sit at that table, is one so bitter that, perhaps, no tongue can ever describe itit is the cup of conviction. It is a black cup, full of the most intense bitterness. The Apostle Paul once drank a little of it but it was so strong that it made him blind for three days. The conviction of his sin overpowered him totally. He could only give his soul to fasting and to prayer and it was only when he drank of the next cup that the scales fell from off his eyes.

I have drank of it, Children of God and I thought that Jesus was unkind, but, in a little while, He brought me forth a sweeter cup, the cup of His forgiving love, filled with the rich crimson of His precious blood. Oh, the taste of that wine is in my mouth this very hour, for the taste thereof is as the wine of Lebanon, that abides in the cask for many a day. Do you not remember, when, after you had drunk the cup of sorrow, Jesus came and showed you His hands and His side and said, Sinner, I have died for you and given Myself for you. Believe on Me. Do you not remember how you believed and sipped the cup and you have believed again and took a deeper draught and said, Blessed be the name of God from this time forth and forever. And let the whole earth say, Amen, for He has broken the gates of brass and cut the bars of iron in sunder and let the captives go free? Since then the glorious Master has said to you, Friend, come up higher! and He has taken you to upper seats in the best rooms and He has given you sweeter things.

I will not tell you, today, of the wines you have drunk. The spouse in Solomons Song may supply the deficiency of my sermon this morning. She drank of the spiced wine of His pomegranate. And so have you, in those high and happy moments when you had fellowship with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ. But tarry awhile, He has kept the best wine yet. You shall soon come near the banks of the Jordan and then you shall begin to drink of the old wine of the kingdom that has been barreled up since the foundation of the world. The vintage of the Saviors agony. The vintage of Gethsemane shall soon be broached for youthe old wine of the kingdom. You are come into the land Beulah, and you begin to taste the full flavor of the wines on the lees well refined. You know how Bunyan describes the state which borders on the vale of death. It was a land flowing with milk and honey. A land where the angels often came to visit the saints and to bring bundles of myrrh from the land of spices.

And now the high step is taken, the Lord puts His finger upon your eyelids and kisses your soul out at your lips. Where are you now? In a sea of love and life and bliss and immortality. O Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, you have indeed kept the best wine until now! My Master! I have seen You on the Sabbath, but this is an everlasting Sabbath. I have met You in the congregation, but this is a congregation that shall never break up. O my Master! I have seen the promises, but this is the fulfillment. I have blessed You for gracious providences, but this is something more than all these You did give me grace, but now You have given me gloryYou were once my shield, but You are now my sun. I am at Your right hand, where there is fullness of joy forever. You have kept Your best wine until now. All I ever had before was as nothing compared with this.

And, lastly, for only time fails me, I could preach a week upon this subject. The Table of Communion is one at which Godly children must sit. And the first thing they must drink of there is the cup of communion with Christ in His sufferings. If you would come to the Table of Communion with Christ, you must first of all drink of the wine of Calvary. Christian, your head must be crowned with thorns, your hands must be piercedI mean not with nails, but, spiritually you must be crucified with Christ. We must suffer with Him, or else we cannot reign with Him. We must labor with Him first, we must sup of the wine which His Father gave Him to drink, or else we cannot expect to come to the better part of the feast. After drinking of the wine of His sufferings and continuing to drink of it, we must drink of the cup of His labors, we must be baptized with His Baptism, we must labor after souls and sympathize with Him in that ambition of His heartthe salvation of sinners. And after that He will give us to

drink of the cup of His anticipated honors.   
Here on earth we shall have good wine in communion with Christ in   
His resurrection, in His triumphs and His victories. But the best wine is to   
come at last. O chambers of communion, your gates have been opened to  
me. But I have only been able to glance within them. But the day is coming when on your diamond hinges you shall turn and stand wide open   
forever and ever. And I shall enter into the kings palace and go no more  
out. O Christian! You shall soon see the King in His beauty. Your head  
shall soon be on His bosom. You shall soon sit at His feet with Mary. You   
shall soon do as the spouse did, you shall kiss Him with the kisses of His   
lips and feel that His love is better than wine. I can conceive you, Brothers   
and Sisters, in the very last moment of your life, or rather, in the first   
moment of your life, saying, He has kept the best wine until now. When you begin to see Him face to facewhen you enter into the closest fellowshipwith nothing to disturb or to distract you, then shall you   
say The best wine is kept until now.   
A saint was once dying and another who sat by him saidFarewell,  
Brother, I shall never see you again in the land of the living. Oh, said   
the dying man, I shall see you again in the land of the living that is up   
yonder, where I am going. This is the land of the dying. Oh Brothers and   
Sisters, if we should never meet again in the land of the dying, we have a   
hope that we shall meet in the land of the living and drink the best wine  
at last!

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THE FEAST OF THE LORD   
NO. 226

**DELIVERED ON SABBATH EVENING, NOVEMBER 28, 1858, BY THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT NEW PARK STREET CHAPEL, SOUTHWARK.

**The governor of the feast called the bridegroom and said unto him, every man at the beginning does set forth good wine and when men have well drunk, then that   
which is worse. But you have kept**

**the good wine until now   
John 2:9, 10.**

I HAD exhausted my time this morning by describing the feast of Satanhow at the four tables, where the profligate sat, the self-righteous, the worldly and the secretly sinful. The course of Satan, was always on this wisefirst the good wine and when men had well drunk, that which was worse. His feast diminished in its value as it proceeded and went from the bright crackling of the thorn under the pot to the blackness of darkness forever. I had then in my second point to show that the rule of Christs banquet is just the very reversethat Christ does always give the best wine lastthat He does save the good things until the end of the feast. Not that sometimes the first cups at the table of Christ are full of wormwood and gall and are exceedingly bitter, but that if we tarry at the feast, they will grow sweeter and sweeter and sweeter, until at last, when we shall come into the land Beulah and especially when we shall enter into the city of our God, we shall be compelled to say, You have kept the good wine until now.

Now, my dear Friends, this is a great fact, that Christs feast increases in sweetness. When first the Lord Jesus Christ proclaimed a feast for the sons of men, the first cup He set upon the table was but a very little one and it had in it but few words of consolation. You remember the inscription upon that ancient vessel, the first cup of consolation that was ever held to the sons of menThe seed of the woman shall bruise the serpents head. There was to them but little sweetness theremuch to us, because we can understand it better and some to them, because Gods Spirit might help them to understand it, but still in the revelation of it there seemed but little promise. As the world went on, there were greater cups of precious wine brought forth, whereof Patriarchs and ancient saints did drink. But Beloved, all the wine they ever had under the Old Testament dispensation was far behind that of which we drink. He that is least in the kingdom of Heaven is more highly favored than he who is

chief under the Old Testament dispensation.   
Our fathers ate manna, but we eat the Bread that came down from   
Heaven. They drank of water in the wilderness, but we drink of that Living  
Water whereof if a man drinks he shall never thirst. It is true they had   
much sweetness. The cups of the ancient tabernacle had precious wine in   
them. There was in the outward symbol the sign and the shadowmuch   
that was delightful to the faith of the true Believer. But we must remember that we are drinking today of that wine which Prophets and kings desired to drink, but died without a taste. They guessed its sweetness. They  
could by faith foresee what it would be. But lo, we are allowed to sit at the   
table and quaff full draughts of wines on the lees well refined, which God   
has given to us in this mountain, wherein He has made a feast of fat  
things for all people.   
But, Beloved, the text still stands true of usthere is better wine to   
come. We are in our privileges superior to Patriarchs and kings and   
Prophets. God has given us a brighter and a clearer day than they had;  
theirs was but the twilight of the morning, compared with the noonday   
which we enjoy. But think not that we are come to the best wine yet.   
There are more noble banquets for Gods Church. Who knows how long  
before the best of the precious wine shall be broached? Do you not know  
that the King of Heaven is coming again upon this earth? Jesus Christ,   
who came once and broached His heart for us on Calvary, is coming   
again, to flood the earth with glory. He came once with a sin-offering in   
His handbehold, He comes no more with a sin-offering, but with the cup   
of salvation and of thanksgiving, to call upon the name of the Lord and   
joyously to take unto Himself the throne of His father David. You and I, if   
we are alive and remain, shall yet set that cup to our lips. And if we die,  
we have this privilege, this happy consolation, that we shall not be behind   
hand, for the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall drink of that millennial wine which Christ our Savior has reserved to the last.   
Saints! You cannot tell what golden goblets those are of which you shall  
drink in the thousand years of the Redeemers triumph. You cannot tell   
what wine, sparkling and red, that shall be, which shall come from the   
vintage of the hills of glory, when he whose garments are red with treading  
the wine-press shall descend in the great day and stand upon the earth.  
Why, the very thought of this cheered Job. I know that my Redeemer  
lives and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earthand though  
after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God.   
Let this rejoice and cheer you, Christian, that the good wine is kept even  
unto that time.   
And now, having shown that this is the rule of Christ in the great dispensation which He uses to all His Church I shall come to the subject of this evening, which is thisFirst, the fact that the Believer shall find that Christ keeps for him the best wine till the last. Secondly, the reason of Christ for so doing. And thirdly, the lesson which we ought to learn from   
there.   
I. First, THE FACT THAT CHRIST KEEPS HIS GOOD WINE TILL LAST. I   
was thinking as I rode here how very true this is of some of Gods people.  
Why there are some of Gods best Beloved who have their names upon the   
breastplate of the great High Priest, who are purchased with His blood   
and are very dear to his soul. And yet they who have not known from their   
youth up what it is to get out of the depths of poverty. They have to live   
from hand to mouth, not knowing one day where another meal shall  
come. How many more there are of Gods people that are lying on beds of  
affliction? Some of the most precious of Gods diamonds are lying on the  
dunghill of disease. You may go and climb to many a chamber where you   
shall see the victims of all kinds of diseases, loathsome, protracted and   
painful and you shall see Gods dear ones languishing out a dying life. I might point you to others of Gods servants, whose days are spent in   
toil. There is needed for the human body and especially for the soul, a little rest and a little of the food of knowledge. But these have had so little   
instruction that they cannot get mental food ready for themselves. If they  
read they can scarce understand and they have hard bondage in this life,   
which makes their life bitter and hinders them from knowledge. They have   
to work from morning to night, with scarce a moments rest. Oh, Beloved,  
will it not be true of them, when death shall give them their discharge,   
when they shall leave this world, which has been to them, with an emphasis, a vale of tears? Will not they have to sayYou have kept the good   
wine until now?   
Oh, what a change for her who has come limping along these many   
Sabbath days to the sanctuary! For there she shall go no more up to the   
Lords house limping and lame, but the lame man shall leap like the   
hart, and like Miriam, she shall dance with the daughters of Israel. Ah,   
you may have had to suffer sickness and sorrow and pain, blindness and   
deafness and a thousand of this worlds illswhat a change for you, when   
you find them all gone! No racking pains, no pining want, no anxious   
care. You shall not have to cry for the sunlight to penetrate your abodes,  
or weep because your sight is failing through incessant labor with that   
murderous needle. No, you shall see the light of God, brighter than the   
light of the sun and you shall rejoice in the beams that proceed from His   
countenance.   
You shall have no more infirmitiesimmortality shall have covered and swallowed them upthat which was sown in weakness shall be raised in power. That which was sown disordered, full of pain and sorrow and disjointed and full of agony, shall be raised full of delectable delights, no more capable of anguish, quivering with joy and bliss unspeakable. You shall no more be poor. You shall be rich, richer than the misers dream. You shall no more have to labor, there shall you rest upon your beds, each one of you walking in your uprightness. You shall no more suffer from neglect and scorn and ignominy and persecution. You shall be glorified with Christ, in the day when He shall come to be admired of them that love Him. What a change for such! The best wine, indeed, is kept to the last, in their case, for they have never had any good wine here to the eyes of men, though secretly they have had many a drink from the bottle of Jesus. He has often put His cordial cup to their lips. They have been like the ewe lamb that belonged to the man in Nathans parablethey have drunk out of Christs own cup on the earth, but still even sweeter

than that cup shall be the draught which they shall receive at the last. But, my dear Friends, although I put these first, as especially feeling  
the change, because we can see the difference, yet will it be true of the   
most favored of Gods children, all of them shall say, The best wine is  
kept till now. Of all the men whom I might envy, I think I should first of  
all envy the Apostle Paul. What a man! How highly favored! How greatly  
gifted! How much blessed! Ah, Paul, you could talk of revelations and of  
visions from on high. He heard things which it was unlawful for a man to   
utter,   
and he saw that which few eyes have ever seen. He was caught up into the   
third Heaven. What draughts of joy the Apostle Paul must have had! What  
looking into the deep things of God! What soaring into the heights of  
Heaven! Perhaps there was never a man who was more favored of God. To   
have his mind expanded and then to have it filled full with the wisdom   
and the revelation of the knowledge of the Most High.   
But ask the Apostle Paul whether he believes there is anything better to   
come and he tells you, Now we see through a glass darkly, but then shall   
we see face to face. Now we know in part, but then shall we know even as   
we are known. He was evidently expecting something more than he had   
received. And, Brethren, he was not disappointed. There was a Heaven as  
much above all the enjoyments of Paul, as the enjoyments of Paul were   
above the depressions of his spirit, when he said, O wretched man that I   
am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? There are children   
of God who have all that they can need of this worlds goods. They seem to   
be free from earthly care and they have faith enough to trust their God   
with regard to the future. Their faith is firm and strong. They have much love to the Redeemer. They are engaged in some delightful work and the Holy Spirit attends that work with great success. Their days follow steadily one after another, like the waves of the still calm sea. God is with them and they are greatly blessed. They spread out their roots by the river, their leaf also does not wither and whatsoever they do, they prosper. Whichever way they turn their hand the Lord their God is with them. In whatsoever land they put their feet they are like Joshua, that land is given to them to   
be an inheritance to them forever.   
But, Beloved, even these shall see greater things than they have as yet   
beheld. High as their Master has taken them into the house of banqueting, lofty though the room is in which they now feast, the Master shall say  
to them, Come up higher. They shall know more, enjoy more, feel more,   
do more, possess more. They shall be nearer to Christ. They shall have   
richer enjoyments and sweeter employments than they have had. And   
they shall feel that their Master has kept his good wine even until now. Entering into particulars for a moment, very briefly, I must just observe   
that there are many aspects under which we may regard the heavenly  
state. And in each of these we shall have to say that Christ has kept the   
good wine until then. Here on earth the Believer esters into rest by faith  
the Christian enjoys rest even in the wilderness. The promise is fulfilled  
they shall dwell safely in the wilderness and sleep in the woods. God   
gives to His Beloved sleep. There is a peace that passes all understanding,   
which we may enjoy even in this land of turmoil, strife and alarmsa   
peace which the worldling knows not of, nor can he guess it *A holy calm within the heart,   
The pledge of glorious rest.   
Which for the Church of God remains,   
The end of cares, the end of pain.*   
But, Beloved, drink as we may of the cup of peace, the good wine is   
kept until a future time. The peace we drink today is dashed with drops of  
bitter. There are disturbing thoughts, the cares of this world will come,  
doubts will ariselive as we may in this world, we must have disquietudes, thorns in the flesh must come. But, oh, the rest that remains for the   
people of God! What good wine shall that be! God has a sun without a   
spot, a sky without a cloud, a day without a night, a sea without a wave, a   
world without a tear. Happy are they who, having passed through this   
world, have entered into rest and ceased from their own works, as God did   
from His, bathing their weary souls in seas of heavenly rest. View Heaven under another aspect. It is a place of holy company. In   
this world we have had some good wine of sweet company. We can tell of   
many of the precious sons of Zion with whom we have taken sweet counsel. Blessed be the Lordthe righteous have not all failed from among men. Some of you can remember golden names that were very dear to you in the days of your youthof men and women with whom you used to go up to Gods House and take sweet counsel. Ah, what words used to drop from their lips and what sweet balm you had in the days of your sorrow when they comforted and consoled you. And you have friends still left to whom you look up with some degree of reverence, while they look upon you with intense affection. There are some men that are comforters to your soul and when you talk to them you feel that their heart answers to   
your heart and that you can enjoy union and communion with them. But Beloved, the good wine is kept till the last. All the fellowship with   
the saints that we have had here is as nothing compared with what we are   
to enjoy in the world to come. How sweet it is for us to recollect that in   
Heaven we shall be in the company of the best men, the noblest men, the   
most mighty men, the most honorable and the most renowned. We shall  
sit with Moses and talk with him of all his life of wonders. We shall walk  
with Joseph and we shall hear from him of the Grace that kept him in his   
hour of Peril. I doubt not you and I shall have the privilege of sitting by  
the side of David and hearing him recount the perils and the deliverances   
through which he passed. The saints of Heaven make but one communion. They are not divided into separate classes. We shall be allowed to   
walk through all the glorious ranks and hold fellowship with all of them.  
Nor need we doubt but that we shall be able to know them all. There are   
many reasons which I could not now enumerate, for it would occupy too   
much time, that seem to my mind to settle the point that in Heaven we  
shall know even as we are known and shall perfectly know each other and   
that, indeed, makes us long to be there. The general assembly and   
Church of the first-born, whose names are written in Heaven. Oh, to get away from this poor Church here, that is full of strifes and   
divisions and bickering and jealousies and animositiesto get away from   
the society of men that are full of infirmities, although they have much  
Grace and to get into a place where there shall be no infirmities in those   
with whom we talkno hasty temperswhere we cannot possibly strike a   
chord that would make a jarring notewhen it shall not be in our power  
to raise among those holy birds of Paradise a cause of strifewhen we   
shall walk in the midst of them all and see love beaming from every eye   
and feel that deep affection is seated in every heart. Oh, that will be the   
best wine! Are you not longing to drink of it?to enter into that great   
Church fellowship and attend those glorious Church meetings? *Where all the chosen race   
Shall meet around the Throne,   
To bless the conduct of His Grace,   
And make His wonders known.*

Againlook at Heaven, if you will, in the point of knowledge. We know very much on earth that makes us happy. Jesus Christ has taught us many things that give us joy and gladness. It is a world of ignorance, but still through Grace we have entered into the school of the Gospel and we have learned some sweet truths. It is true we are very much like the boy who is beginning to write. We had to make many ugly pothooks and hangers and we have not yet learned to write the sweet running hand of joy. But nevertheless, the Lord has taught us some great truths to fill our heart with joythe great doctrine of election, the knowledge of our redemption, the fact of our security in Christ. These great but simple doctrines have filled our hearts with bliss. But, Brethren, the best wine is kept till the last, when the Lord Jesus Christ shall take the book and break the seals thereof and permit us to read it all. Then shall we rejoice indeed, for the best wine will be at our lips. There are old cases of knowledge that contain the richest wine and Christ shall stave them in and we shall drink of them to the full. It is not fit that we should know all things nowwe could not bear many things and therefore Christ keeps them back. But

*There shall you see and hear and know   
All you desired or wished below,   
And every power find sweet employ   
In that eternal world of joy.*

You may, if you please, look at Heaven in another senseas a place of manifestations and of joys. Now this world is a place of manifestations to the Believer. Shall I venture for a moment, or even for a second, to talk of manifestations of Himself which Christ is pleased to afford to His poor children on earth? No, Beloved, your own experience shall supply my lack. I will only say that there are times when the Lord Jesus said unto His Beloved, Come, my Beloved, let us go forth into the field. Let us lodge in the villages. Let us get up early to the vineyards. Let us see if the vines flourish, whether the tender grape appears and the pomegranates bud forth there will I give you My loaves. But what must be the fellowship of Heaven? I fail tonight in attempting to talk to you of the best wine for this simple reasonI believe there are very few men that can preach of Heaven so as to interest you much, for you feel that all we can say is so far behind the reality, that we might as well have let it alone.

Baxter might write a Saints Rest, but I am no Baxterwould God I were! The day may come perhaps when I may talk more copiously of these blessings. But at present, in my own soul, when I begin to talk of the communion of Heaven, I seem overcome, I cannot imagine it. For the next thought that always succeeds my first attempt to think of it, is a thought of overwhelming gratitude, coupled with a kind of fear that this is too good for such an unworthy worm as I. It was a privilege for John to put his

head on the Masters bosom, but that is nothing compared with the privilege of lying in His embrace forever. Oh, we must wait until we get there and as one of old said, In five minutes you shall know more of Heaven than I could tell you in all my life. It needs but that we should see our Lord, that we should fly into His arms, that we should feel His embrace, that we should fall at His feet and, was I about to say, weep for joy? No, that were impossible, but lie there, as it were dissolved away in ecstasy to feel that we at least have arrived in that dear place which He has spoken to us of when He saidLet not your heart be troubled, you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Fathers house there are many mansions. If it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. Truly He has kept the best wine until the last.

II. And now, WHAT IS OUR LORDS REASON FOR DOING THIS? That was the second point. Very briefly. The Lord might have given us the best wine last, but He will not act as the devil does. He will always make a broad distinction between His dealings and the dealings of Satan.

AgainHe will not give us the best wine first, because that is not His good pleasure. Fear not, little flock, it is your Fathers good pleasure to give you the kingdom. That is the only reason why you will get it at all. And the reason why you do not receive it now is because it is not your Fathers good pleasure that you should have it just yet. Again. Your Father does not give you the good wine now, because He is giving you an appetite for it. At the old feasts of the Romans men used to drink bitter things and all kinds of singular and noxious mixtures, to make them thirsty. Now, in this world, God is, as it were, making His children thirsty, that they may take deeper draughts of Heaven. I cannot think that Heaven would be so sweet to me if I had not first to dwell on earth. Who knows best the sweet of rest? Is it not the laborer? Who understands best the joy of peace? Is it not the man who has dwelt in the land of war? Who knows most the sweetness of joy? Is it not the man who has passed through a world of sorrow? You are having your appetites sharpened by these trials. You are being made ready to receive the fullness of joy that is at the presence of God forever.

Againthe Lord has this also in view. He is making you fit for the best wine, that He may be glorified by the trial of your faith. If it were in my power to go to Heaven tonight and I could enter there, yet if I should have a suspicion that there was more to do or more to suffer here, I would infinitely prefer to wait my Fathers time, because, methinks, in Heaven we shall bless God for all we have suffered. When it is all over, how sweet it will be to talk of it! When you and I shall meet each other in the streets of Heavenand there are some of you that have had but few trials, but few doubts and fears and tribulations and conflictsyou will talk of how God delivered you. But you will not be able to talk as some of the tried saints will. Ah, what sweet stories some of them will tell! I should like to go by the side of Jonah and hear how he went down to the bottom of the mountains and how he thought the earth with her bars was about him forever.

And JeremiahI often think what a deal we shall get out of Jeremiah in eternitywhat he will have to tell, who took such plunges into the sea of sorrow! And David, too, the sweet Psalmist, so full of experience he will never have done talking of what the Lord has done for him! And I think you and I, when we get to Heaven, will have enough to think of. As a poor woman once said, when she was in great doubt and fear whether she should be saved at allshe said in her prayer, Lord, if You will save me, only one thing I can promise You. If You will take me to Heaven You shall never hear the last of it, for I will praise You while immortality lasts and I will tell the angels that You saved ME. And this is the constant burden of Heaven. They are each one amazed that he is there. Beloved, if we did not have to pass through these trials and troubles and these soul conflicts and such like we should have very little to talk about in Heaven. I have no doubt that the babes in paradise are as happy as the rest, but I do not wish to be a babe in paradise. I bless God I did not go to Heaven when an infantI shall have the more to praise God for, when I shall look back through a life of mercies, a life of trials and yet a life of sustaining Grace there will be a louder song, because the deeper have been our troubles. These, I think, are some of Gods reasons.

III. And now, dear Brothers and Sisters, what shall I say about the LESSON WE ARE TO LEARN FROM THIS FACT of Christ keeping the best wine until now? Going home the other night I noticed the difference between the horses pace in coming here and going home and I thought to myself, Ah, the horse goes well, because he is going home. And the thought struck me, How well a Christian ought to go, because he is going home. You know, if we were going from home, every rough stone in the road might check us and we might need a good deal of whip to make us go. But it is going home. Bless God, every step we take is going home. It may be knee-deep in trouble, but it is all on the road. We may be ankledeep in fear, but it is going home. I may stumble, but I always stumble homewards. All my afflictions and griefs, when they cast me down, but cast me onwards towards Heaven. The mariner does not mind the waves, if every wave sends him nearer his haven and he does not care how loudly the winds howl, if they only blow him nearer port. That is the Christians happy lothe is going homeward. Let that cheer you, Christian, and make you travel on joyfully, not needing the whip to urge you to duty, but always going on with alacrity through duty and through trial, because you

are going homeward.

Againif we have the best things to come, dear Friends, do not let us be discontented. Let us put up with a few of the bad things now, for they only seem to be so. A traveler who is on a journey in a hurry, if he has to stay for a night at an inn, he may grumble a little at the want of accommodation, but he does not say very much, because he is off tomorrowhe is only stopping a short time at the inn. He says, I shall get home tomorrow night, and then he thinks of the joys of home and does not care about the discomforts of his hard journey. You and I are travelers. It will soon be over. We may have had but a very few shillings a week compared with our neighbor, but we shall be equal with him when we get there. He may have had a large house, with a great many rooms, while we had, it may be, only one upper room. Ah, we shall have as large a mansion as he in Paradise.

We shall soon be at the journeys end and then the road will not matter. Come! Let us put up with these few inconveniences on the road, for the best wine is coming. Let us pour away all the vinegar of murmuring, for the best wine shall come. Once more, if the Christian has the best wine to come, why should he envy the worldling? David didhe was discontented when he saw the prosperity of the wicked and you and I are often tempted to do it. But you know what we ought to say when we see the wicked prosper, when we see them happy and full of delights of sinful pleasure? We ought to say, Ah, my good wine is to come, I can bear that you should have your turnmy turn will come afterwards. I can be put off with these things and lie with Lazarus at the gate, while the dogs lick my sores. My turn is to come, when the angels shall carry me into Abrahams bosom and your turn is to come too, when in Hell you lift up your eyes, being in torments.

Christian, what more shall I say to you? Though there are a thousand lessons to learn from this, that the best wine is kept to the lastTake heed to yourself, that you also keep your good wine until the last. The further you go on the road, seek to bring to your Savior the more acceptable sacrifice. You had little faith years agoMan, bring out the good wine now! Seek to have more faith. Your Master is better to you every day and you shall see Him to be the best of all masters and friends. Seek to be better to your Master every day. Be more generous to His cause, more active to labor for Him, more kind to His people, more diligent in prayer. And take heed that as you grow in years, you grow in Grace, so that when you come at last to the river Jordan and the Master shall give you the best wine, you may also give to Him the best wine and praise Him most loudly when the battle shall just be over and when the whirlwind is dying away into the everlasting peace of Paradise.

And now, dear Friends, I am conscious that I have totally failed in endeavoring to bring forth this good wine. But it is written that God has revealed it unto us by His Spirit, but that ear has not heard it. Now, if I had told it to you tonight and your ear would have heard it, then the text would not have been true. And as I have unwittingly proved the truth of this Scripture, I cannot be very sorry at having helped to witness the truth of my Masters word. Only this I saythe nearer you live to Christ the nearer you will be to Heavenfor if there is one place next door to Pisgah it is Calvary. It may seem strange but if you live much on Calvary you live very near Nebo. For although Moses may have seen Canaan from Nebo, I have never seen Heaven anywhere but close to Calvary.

When I have seen my Savior crucified, then I have seen Him glorified. When I have read my name written in His blood, then I have seen afterwards my mansion which He has prepared for me. When I have seen my sins washed away, then I have seen the white robe that I am to wear forever. Live near to the Savior, Brothers and Sisters, and you shall not be very far off Heaven. Remember, after all, it is not far to Heaven. It is only one gentle sigh and we are there. We talk of it as a land very far off, but close it is and who knows but that the spirits of the just are here tonight? Heaven is close to us. We cannot tell where it is, but this we know, that it is

not a far off land. It is so near, that, swifter than thought, we shall be there, emancipated from our care and woe and blessed forever.

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REGENERATION   
NO. 130

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON SABBATH MORNING, MAY 3, 1857, BY THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE MUSIC HALL, ROYAL SURREY GARDENS.

**Unless one is born-again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God. John 3:3.**

In daily life our thoughts are most occupied with things that are most necessary for our existence. No one murmured that the subject of the price of bread was frequently on the lips of men at a time of scarcity because they felt that the subject was one of vital importance to the mass of the population and, therefore, they murmured notthough they listened to continual declamatory speeches and read perpetual articles in the newspapers concerning it. I must offer the same excuse, then, for bringing before you, this morning, the subject of regeneration. It is one of absolute and vital importance. It is the hinge of the Gospel! It is the point upon which most Christians are agreed, yes, all who are Christians in sincerity and truth. It is a subject which lies at the very basis of salvation. It is the very groundwork of our hopes for Heaven and as we ought to be very careful of the basement of our structure, so should we be very diligent to take heed that we are really born-again and that we have made sure work of it for eternity. There are many who fancy they are born-again who are not. It well becomes us, then, to frequently examine ourselves. And it is the ministers duty to bring forward those subjects which lead to self-examination and have a tendency to search the heart and try the reins of the children of men.

To proceed at once, I shall first make some remarks upon the new birth. Secondly I shall note what is meant by not being able to see the Kingdom of God if we are not born-again. Then I shall go further on to note why it is that Unless we are born-again we cannot see the Kingdom of God. Then I will expostulate with men as Gods ambassador before I close.

I. First, then, THE MATTER OF REGENERATION. In endeavoring to explain it, I must have you notice, first of all, the figure that is employed. It is said a man must be born-again. I cannot illustrate this better than by supposing a case. Suppose that in England there should be a law passed that admission to royal courts, preference in office and any privileges that might belong to the nation could only be given to persons who were born in England? Suppose that birth in this land was made a sine qua non and it was definitely declared that whatever men might do or be, unless they were native-born subjects of England, they could not enter into her Majestys presence! Nor could they enjoy any of the emoluments or offices of the State nor any of the privileges of citizens. I think if you suppose such a case, I shall be able to illustrate the difference between any changes and reforms that men make in themselves and the real work of being born-again. We will suppose, then, that some manan American Indian for instanceshould come to this country and should endeavor to obtain the privileges of citizenship, well knowing that the rule is absolute and cannot be alteredthat a man must be a born subjector else he cannot enjoy them. Suppose he says, I will change my name, I will take up the name of an EnglishmanI have been called by my high sounding title among the Sioux. I have been called the son of the Great West Wind, or some such name, but I will take an English name. I will be called a Christian man, an English subject. Will that admit him? You see him coming to the palace gates and asking for admission. He says, I have taken an English name. But are you an Englishman born and bred? I am not, he says. Then the gates must be shut against you, for the law is absolute. And though you may have the name of even the royal family, itself, upon you, because you have not been born here, you must be shut out. That illustration will apply to all of us who are here present. At least, nearly the whole of us bear the professing Christian name. Living in England, you would think it a disgrace to you if you were not called Christian. You are not heathen, you are not infidel. You are neither Muslim nor Jew. You think that the name, Christian, is a creditable one to you and you have taken it. Be you quite assured that the name of a Christian is not the nature of a Christian and that your being born in a Christian land and being recognized as professing the Christian religion is of no use whatever unless there is something more added to itthe being born-again as a subject of Jesus Christ!

But, says this American Indian, I am prepared to renounce my dress and to become an Englishman in fashion. In fact, I will go to the very top of the fashion! You shall not see me in anything differing from the accepted style of the present day. May I not, when I am arrayed in court dress and have decorated myself as etiquette demands, come in before her Majesty? See, Ill take off this plume, I will not shake this tomahawk, I renounce these garments. The moccasin I cast away forever. I am an Englishman in dress, as well as name! He comes to the gate, dressed out like one of our own countrymen, but the gates are still shut in his face because the law requires that he must be born in this country. And without that, whatever his dress might be, he could not enter the palace. How many are there of you who barely take the Christian name upon you, but have adopted Christian manners? You go to your churches and your chapels, you attend the House of Godyou take care that there is some form of religion observed in your familyyour children are not left without hearing the name of Jesus! So far, so good. God forbid that I should say a word against it! But remember, it is bad because you do not go further. All this is of no use whatever for admitting you into the Kingdom of Heavenunless this is also complied withthe being born-again! Oh, dress yourselves ever so grandly with the clothes of godliness. Put the chaplet of benevolence upon your brow and gird your loins with integrity. Put on your feet the shoes of perseverance and walk through the earth an honest and upright man. You are not a Christian, remember, unless you are born-again! That which is of the flesh is flesh, and you, not having the operations of the Spirit in you, still have Heavens gates shut against you because you are not born-again!

Well, says this Indian, I will not only adopt the dress but I will learn the language. I will put away, far away from my lips, my brogue and my language that I once spoke in the wild prairie or in the woods. I shall not talk of the Shu-Shuh-Gah and of the strange names wherewith I have called my wild fowl and my deer, but I will speak as you speak and act as you act! I will not only have your dress but precisely your manners. I will talk in just the same fashion. I will adopt your brogue. I will take care that it shall be grammatically correct. Will you not then admit me? I have became thoroughly Anglicized. May I not then be received? No, says the keeper of the door, there is no admittance, for unless a man is born in this country, he cannot be admitted. So with some of youyou talk just like Christians! Perhaps you have a little too much cant about you. You have begun so strictly to imitate what you think to be a godly man that you go a little beyond the mark and you gloss it so much that we are able to detect the counterfeit! Still you pass current among most men as being a right down sort of Christian! You have studied biographies and sometimes you tell long tales about Divine experience. You have borrowed them from the biographies of good men. You have been with Christians and know how to talk as they do. You have even adopted a Puritanical twang, perhaps! You go through the world just like professors do. And if you were to be observed, no one would detect you. You are a member of the Church. You have been baptized. You take the Lords Supper. Perhaps you are a deacon, or an Elder. You pass the sacramental cup around. You are all that a Christian can beexcept that you are without a Christian heartyou are whitewashed sepulchers, still full of rottenness within, though fairly garnished on the outside! Well, take heed, take heed! It is an astonishing thing, how near the painter can go to the expression of life and yet the canvas is dead and motionless. And it is equally astonishing how near a man may go to a Christian and yet, through not being born-again, the absolute rule shuts him out of Heaven! And with all his profession, with all the trappings of his professed godliness and with all the gorgeous plumes of experiencehe must be borne away from Heavens gates.

You are uncharitable, Mr. Spurgeon. I do not care what you say about thatI never wish to be more charitable than Christ. I did not say thisChrist said it. If you have any quarrel with Him, settle it there. I am not the maker of this Truth but simply the speaker of it. I find it written, Unless a man is born-again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God. If your footman should go to the door and deliver your message correctly, the man at the door might abuse him ever so much, but the footman would say, Sir, do not abuse me, I cannot help it. I can only tell you what my Master told me. I am not the originator of it. So if you think me uncharitableremember you do not accuse meyou accuse Christ! You are not finding fault with the messenger, you are finding fault with the Message. Christ has said itUnless a man is born-again. I cannot dispute with you and shall not try. That is simply Gods Word. Reject it at your peril! Believe it and receive it, I entreat you, because it comes from the lips of the Most High!

But now note the manner in which this regeneration is obtained. I think I have none here so profoundly stupid as to be Puseyites. I can scarcely believe that I have been the means of attracting one person here so utterly devoid of every remnant of brain as to believe the doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration. Yet I must just hint at it. There are some who teach that by a few drops of water sprinkled on an infants brow, the infant becomes regenerate! Well, granted. And now I will find out your regenerate ones 20 years afterwards! The champion of the prize ring is a regenerated man. Oh, yes, he was regenerated, because in infancy he was baptized and, therefore, if all infants in Baptism are regenerated, the prize fighter is a regenerate man! Take hold of him and receive him as your Brother in the Lord. Do you hear that man swearing and blaspheming God? He is regenerate, believe me, he is regenerate! The priest put a few drops of water on his brow and he is a regenerated man. Do you see the drunkard reeling down the street, the pest of the neighborhood, fighting everybody and beating his wife, worse than a brute? Well, he is regenerate, he is one of those Puseyite regeneratesoh, goodly regenerate! Do you see the crowd assembled in the streets? The gallows is erected. Palmer is about to be executed, the man whose name should be execrated through all eternity for his villainy! He is one of those Puseyite regenerates! Yes, he is regenerate because he was baptized in infancy! Regenerate while he mixes his strychnine! Regenerate while he slowly administers his poison that he may cause death and infinite pain all the while he is causing it! Regenerate, indeed! If that is regeneration, such regeneration is not worth havingif that is the thing that makes us part of the Kingdom of Heaven, verily, the Gospel is, indeed, a licentious Gospel! We can say nothing about it. If that is the Gospelthat all such men are regenerate and will be savedwe can only say that it would be the duty of every man in the world to ignore that Gospel, because it is so inconsistent with the most common principles of morality that it could not possibly be of God, but of the devil!

But some say all are regenerate when they are baptized. Well, if you think so, stick to your own thoughts. I cannot help it. Simon Magus was certainly one exceptionhe was baptized on a profession of his faith, but so far from being regenerated by his baptism, we find Paul saying, I perceive that you are in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity. And yet he was one of those regenerates because he had been baptized? Ah, that doctrine only needs to be stated to sensible men and they will at once reject it! Gentlemen that are fond of a filigree religion and like ornament and showgentlemen of the high Beau Brummel schoolwill very likely prefer this religion because they have cultivated their taste at the expense of their brain and have forgotten that what is inconsistent with the sound judgment of a man cannot be consistent with the Word of God! So much for the first point.

Neither is a man regenerated, we say, in the next place, by his own exertions. A man may reform himself very much and that is well and good. Let all do that! A man may cast away many vices and forsake many lusts in which he indulged and conquer evil habits. But no man in the world can make himself to be born of God! Though he should struggle ever so much, he could never accomplish what is beyond his power. And, mark you, if he could make himself to be born-again, he would still not enter Heaven because there is another point in the condition which he would have violatedunless a man is born of the Spirit, he cannot see the Kingdom of God. So that the best exertions of the flesh do not reach this high pointthe being born-again of the Spirit of God!

And now we must say that regeneration consists in thisGod the Holy Spirit, in a supernatural manner. Mark, by the word, supernatural, I mean just what it strictly meanssupernatural, more than natural works upon the hearts of men and then they, by the operations of the Divine Spirit, become regenerate men. But without the Spirit, they never can be regenerated. And unless God the Holy Spirit, who, works in us to will and to do, should operate upon the will and the conscience regeneration is an absolute impossibility and, therefore, so is salvation! What? says one, Do you mean to say that God absolutely interposes in the salvation of every man to make him regenerate? I do indeed! In the salvation of every person, there is an actual putting forth of Divine Power whereby the dead sinner is quickened, the unwilling sinner is made willing and the desperately hard sinner has his conscience made tender and he who rejected God and despised Christ is brought to cast himself down at the feet of Jesus! Maybe this is called fanatical Doctrinethat we cannot helpit is a Scriptural Doctrinethat is enough for us! Unless a man is born of the Spirit, he cannot see the Kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. If you like it not, quarrel with my Master, not with me! I do but simply declare His own Revelation that there must be in your heart something more than you can ever work there. There must be a Divine operation! Call it a miraculous operation if you please. There must be a Divine interposition, a Divine working, a Divine influence, or else, do what you may, without that you perish and are undoneFor Unless a man is born-again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God. The change is radical. It gives us new natures, makes us love what we hated and hate what we loved. It sets us on a new road, makes our habits different, our thoughts differentmakes us different in private and different in public! So that being in Christ, it is fulfilledIf any man is in Christ, he is a new creature. Old things are passed away, behold all things are become new.

II. And now I must come to the second point. I trust I have explained regeneration so that all may see what it is. Now WHAT DOES THE EXPRESSION, SEEING THE KINGDOM OF GOD, MEAN? It means two things. To see the Kingdom of God on earth is to be a member of the mystical Churchit is to enjoy the privileges and liberty of the child of God. To see the Kingdom of Heaven means to have power in prayer, to have communion with Christ, to have fellowship with the Holy Spirit and to bring forth and produce all those joyous and blessed fruits which are the effect of regeneration. In a higher sense, to see the Kingdom of God, means to be admitted into Heaven. Unless a man is born-again, he cannot know about heavenly things on earth and he cannot enjoy heavenly blessings foreverhe cannot see the Kingdom of God.

III. I think I may just pass over the second point without remark and proceed to notice in the third place, WHY IT IS THAT, UNLESS A MAN IS BORN-AGAIN, HE CANNOT SEE THE KINGDOM OF GOD? And I will confine my remarks to the Kingdom of God in the world to come.

Why, he cannot see the Kingdom of God because he would be out of place in Heaven! A man that is not born-again could not enjoy Heaven! There is an actual impossibility in his nature which prevents him from enjoying any of the bliss of Paradise. You think, maybe, that Heaven consists in those walls of jewels, in those pearly gates and gates of gold? Not so. That is the habitation of Heaven! Heaven dwells there, but that is not Heaven. Heaven is a state that is made here, that is made in the heart, made by Gods Spirit within us and unless God the Spirit has renewed us and caused us to be born-again, we cannot enjoy the things of Heaven! Why, it is a physical impossibility that ever a swine should deliver a lecture on astronomy. Every man will clearly perceive that it must be impossible that a snail should build a city. And there is just as much impossibility that a sinner could enjoy Heaven. Why, there would be nothing there for him to enjoy! If he could be put into the place where Heaven is, he would be miserable. He would cry, Let me go, let me go! Let me out of this miserable place! I appeal to yourselves. Very often a sermon is too long for you. The singing of Gods praises is dull dry work. You think that going up to Gods House is very tedious. What will you do where they praise God day and night? If just a short discourse, here, is very wearying, what will you think of the eternal talking of the redeemed through all ages of the wonders of redeeming love? If the company of the righteous is very irksome to you, what will be their company throughout eternity? I think many of you are free to confess that Psalm singing is not a bit to your taste, that you care nothing about any spiritual things! Give you your bottle of wine and set you down at your easethat is Heaven for you! Well, there is no such a Heaven yet made! And, therefore, there is no Heaven for you. The only Heaven there is, is the Heaven of spiritual men and women, the Heaven of praise, the Heaven of delight in God, the Heaven of acceptance in the Beloved, the Heaven of communion with Christ! Now, you do not understand anything about this. You could not enjoy it if you were to have it! You have not the capabilities for doing so. You, yourselves, from the very fact of your not being born-again, are your own barrier to Heavenand if God were to open the gate wide and say, Come in, you could not enjoy Heaven if you were admittedfor unless a man is born-again, there is an impossibility, a moral impossibility, of his seeing the Kingdom of God! Suppose there are some persons here who are entirely deaf, who have never heard sounds. Well, I say they cannot hear singing. Do I, when I say it, say a cruel thing? It is their disability that prevents them. So when God says you cannot see the Kingdom of Heaven, He means it is your disability of not being born-again that prevents you ever entering there.

But there are some other reasons. There are reasons why *Those holy gates forever bar   
Pollution, sin and shame.*

There are reasons, besides those in yourself, why you cannot see the Kingdom of God unless you are born-again. Ask yon spirits before the Throne of GodAngels, principalities and powers, would you be willing that men who do not love God, who believe not in Christ, who have not been born-again, should dwell here? I see them, as they look down upon us and hear them answering, No! Once we fought the dragon and expelled him because he tempted us to sin! We must not and we will not have the wicked here! These alabaster walls must not be soiled with sinblack and lustful fingers. The white pavement of Heaven must not be stained and rendered filthy by the unholy feet of ungodly men. No! I see a thousand spears bristling and the fiery faces of a myriad seraphs thrust over the walls of Paradise. No, while these arms have strength and these wings have power, no sin shall ever enter here. I address myself moreover to the saints in Heaven redeemed by Sovereign Grace Children of God, are you willing that the wicked should enter Heaven as they are, without being born-again? You love men. Say, are you willing that they should be admitted as they are? I see Lot rise up and he cries, Admit them into Heaven! No! What? Must I be vexed by the conversation of Sodomites again, as once I was? I see Abraham. And he comes forward and he says, No. I cannot have them here. I had enough of them while I was with them on earththeir jests and jeers, their silly talk, their vain conversation vexed and grieved us. We dont want them here. And, heavenly though they are, and loving as their spirits are, yet there is not a saint in Heaven who would not resent, with the utmost indignation, the approach of anyone of you to the gates of Paradise if you are still unholy and have not been born-again!

But all that were nothing. We might, perhaps, scale the ramparts of Heaven, if they were only protected by angels, and burst the gates of Paradise open, if only the saints defended them. But there is another reason than thatGod has said it HimselfUnless a man is born-again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God. What? Sinner! Will you scale the battlements of Paradise when God is ready to thrust you down to Hell? Will you, with impudent face, brazen Him out? God has said it! God has said it with a voice of thunder, You shall not see the Kingdom of Heaven! Can you wrestle with the Almighty? Can you overthrow Omnipotence? Can you grapple with the Most High? Worm of the dust! Can you overcome your Maker? Trembling insect of an hour, shaken by the lightning when far overhead they flash far across the sky, will you dare the hand of God? Will you venture to defy Him to His face? Ah, He would laugh at you! As the snow melts before the sun, as wax runs at the fierceness of the fireso would youif His fury should once lay hold of you! Think not that you can overcome Him. He has sealed the gates of Paradise against you and there is no entrance. The God of Justice says, I will not reward the wicked with the righteous. I will not suffer my goodly, godly Paradise to be stained by wicked ungodly men. If they turn I will have mercy upon them, but if they turn not, as I live, I will tear them in pieces and there shall be none to deliver. Now, Sinner, can you brazen it out against Him? Will you rush upon the thick bosses of Jehovahs shields? Will you try to scale His Heaven when His arrow is stringed upon the bow to reach your heart? What? When the glittering sword is at your neck and ready to slay you, will you endeavor to strive against your Maker? No, Potsherd, no! Contend with your fellow potsherd! Go, crawling Grasshopper. Go, fight with your brothers! Strive with them, but come not against the Almighty! He has said it and you never shall, you never shall enter Heaven unless you are born-again!

Again, I say quarrel not with me. I have but delivered my Masters message. Take it, disbelieve it if you dare. But if you believe it, rail not at me, for it is Gods message and I speak it in love to your soul, lest, lacking it, you should perish in the dark and walk blindfolded to your everlasting punishment!

IV. Now, my Friends, A LITTLE EXPOSTULATION WITH YOU. And then farewell. I hear one man say, Well, well, well, I see it. I will hope that I shall be born-again after I am dead. Oh, Sir, believe me, you will be a miserable fool for your pains! When men die their state is fixed

*Fixed is their everlasting state,   
Could they repent, tis now too late.*   
Our life is like that wax melting in the flame. Death puts its stamp on

it and then it cools and the impression never can be changed. Today you are like the burning metal running forth from the cauldron into the mold. Death cools you in your mold and you are cast in that shape throughout eternity! The voice of doom cries over the dead, He that is holy, let him be holy still. He that is unjust, let him be unjust still. He that is filthy, let him be filthy still. The damned are lost forever! They cannot be bornagain! They go on cursing, ever being cursed, ever fighting against God and ever being trampled beneath His feet. They go on ever mocking, ever being laughed at for their mockery, ever rebelling and ever being tortured with the whips of conscience because they are ever sinning. They cannot be regenerated because they are dead!

Well, says another, I will take care that I am regenerated just before I die. Sir, I repeat again, you are a fool in talking thus! How do you know that you shall live? Have you taken a lease of your life, as you have of your house? Can you ensure the breath within your nostrils? Can you say in certainty that another ray of light shall ever reach your eyes? Can you be sure that as your heart is beating a funeral march to the grave, you will not soon beat the last note and so you shall die where you stand or now sit? Oh, Man, if your bones were iron and your sinews brass and your lungs steel, then you might say, I shall live. But you are made of dust! You are like the flower of the fieldyou may die right now! Lo! I see Death standing yonder, moving to and fro! The stone of time upon his scythe, to sharpen it. Today, today, for some of you, he grasps the scytheand away, away, he mows the fields and you fall, one by one! You must not and you cannot live. God carries us away as a flood, like a ship in a whirlpoollike a log in a current dashed onward to the waterfall. There is no stopping any one of uswe are all dying! And yet you say you will be regenerated before you die? Yes, Sirs, but are you regenerated now? For if not, it may be too late to hope for tomorrow! Tomorrow you may be in Hell, sealed up forever by adamantine destiny which never can be moved.

Well, cries another, I do not care much about it. For I see very little in being shut out of Paradise. Ah, Sir, it is because you do not understand it! You smile at it now, but there will be a day when your conscience will be tender, when your memory will be strong, when your judgment will be enlightened and when you will think very differently from what you do now. Sinners in Hell are not the fools they were on earth! In Hell they do not laugh at everlasting fires. In the pit of Hell they do not despise the words, eternal fire. The worm that never dies, when it is gnawing, gnaws out all jokes and laughter. You may despise God, now, and despise me, now, for what I say, but death will change your tune! Oh my Hearers, if that were all, I would be willing. You may despise me, yes, you may. But oh, I beseech you, do not despise yourselves! Oh be not so foolhardy as to go whistling to Hell and laughing to the Pit. For when you are there, Sirs, you will find it a different thing from what you dream it to be now. When you see the gates of Paradise shut against youyou will find it to be a more important matter than you judge of now. You came to hear me preach, today, as you would have gone to the opera or playhouse. You thought I would amuse you. Ah, that is not my aim! God is my witness, I came here solemnly in earnest to wash my hands of your blood! If you are damned, any one of you, it shall not be because I did not warn you! Men and women, if you perish, my hands are washed in innocence. I have told you of your doom. I again cryREPENT, REPENT, REPENTfor, unless you repent you shall all likewise perish. I came here determined this morning if I must use rough words to use themto speak right out against men and for men, too. For the things we say against you, now, are really for your good. We do but warn you, lest you perish!

But ah, I hear one of you saying, I do not understand this mystery, pray explain it to me. Fool, fool that you are! Do you see that fire? We are startled up from our beds, the light is at the window. We rush downstairs. People are hurrying to and fro. The street is trampled thick with crowdsthey are rushing towards the house which is in a burst of flame. The firemen are at their work. A stream of water is pouring upon the house. But hark! Hark! There is a man upstairsthere is a man in the top room! There is just time for him to escape, but barely. A shout is raisedAho! Fire! Fire! Fire! Aho!but the man does not make his appearance at the window. Look, the ladder is placed against the walls. It is up to the window silla strong hand dashes in the easement! Where is the man? What? Is he tied down in his bed? Is he a cripple? Has some fiend got hold of him and nailed him to the floor? No, no, nohe feels the boards getting hot beneath his feet, the smoke is stifling him, the flame is burning all around, he knows there is but one way of escapeby that ladder! What is he doing? He is sitting downno! You cannot believe me! He is sitting down and saying, The origin of this fire is very mysterious. I wonder how it is to be discovered? How shall we understand it? Why, you laugh at him! You are laughing at yourselves! You are seeking to have this question and that question answeredwhen your soul is in peril of eternal fire! Oh, when you are saved, it will then be time to ask questions. But while you are now in the burning house and in danger of destruction, it is not your time to be puzzling yourselves about free will, fixed fate, absolute predestination. All these questions are good and well enough afterwards, for those who are saved. Let the man on shore try to find out the cause of the storm. Your only business, now, is to ask, What must I do to be saved? And how can I escape from the great damnation that awaits me?

But ah, my Friends, I cannot speak as I wish. I think I feel, this morning, something like Dante, when he wrote his Il inferno. Men said of him that he had been in Hell. He looked like it. He had thought of it so long that they said, He has been in Hell. He spoke with such an awful earnestness. Ah, if I could, I would speak like that, too! It is only a few days more and I shall meet you face to face. I can look over the lapse of a few years, when you and I shall stand face to face before Gods bar. Watchman, Watchman, asks a voice, did you warn them? Did you warn them? Will any of you then say I did not? No, even the most abandoned of you will, at that day, say, We laughed, we scoffed at it, we cared not for it, but, O Lord, we are obliged to speak the truth. The man was in earnest about it. He told us of our doom and he is clear. Will you say so? I know you will!

But yet this one more remarkto be cast out of Heaven is an awful thing. Some of you have parents there. You have dear friends there. They grasped your hands in death and said, Farewell, until we meet again. But if you never see the Kingdom of God, you can never see them again! My mother, says one, sleeps in the graveyard. I often go to the tomb and put some flowers upon it, in remembrance of her who nursed me. But must I never see her again? No, never again! No, never, unless you are born-again! Mothers, you have had infants that have gone to Heaven. You would like to see your family all around the Throne of Godbut you will never see your children again unless you are born-again! Will you bid adieu this day to the immortal? Will you say farewell this hour to your glorified friends in Paradise? You must say so, or else be converted! You must fly to Christ and trust in Him and His Spirit must renew you, or else you must look up to Heaven and say, Choir of the blessed, I shall never hear you sing! Parents of my youth, guardians of my infancy, I love you but between you and myself there is a great gulf fixed. I am cast away and you are saved.

Oh, I beseech you, think on these matters! And when you go away, let it not be to forget what I have said. If you are at all impressed, this morning, put not away the impression. It may be your last warning. It will be a sorrowful thing to be lost with the notes of the Gospel in your ears and to perish under the ministry of Truth. May it, by the Grace of God, never be so. Amen and Amen.

Adapted from The C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Version 1.0, Ages Software.   
PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #2155 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

THE BEGINNING OF MIRACLES WHICH JESUS DID   
NO. 2155

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, JULY 20, 1890, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth His Glory; and His disciples believed on Him. John 2:11.**

AT this time I shall not consider the relation of this miracle to total abstinence. The wine which Jesus made was good wine and it was made of waterwe are not likely to meet with anything of the kind in this country where the wine is seldom made from the pure juice of the grapeand where it is not known who made it, or of what it is made. What is now called wine is a very different liquid from that which our Lord Divinely produced. We use our Christian liberty to abstain from wine and we judge that our Savior would approve of our avoiding that which, in these days, makes our brother to offend. We who quit the intoxicating cup of today have our ways of viewing our Masters action in this instance and we do not find it difficult to see wisdom and holiness in it. But even if we could not so interpret what He did, we should not dare to question Him. Where others quibble, we adore.

Even this is more than I meant to have said, for my object, this morning, is far removed from this controversy. I pursue a spiritual theme and pray for help from on high to treat it aright. We find this miracle only in John. Neither Matthew, nor Mark, nor Luke has a word of it. How did John come to know of it? In part it was because of his being present. But the preface in reference to the mother of Jesus came to him in another way, we think. Remember our Lords words to John from the Cross and how it is written, From that hour that disciple took her unto his own home? I believe that no one heard the words of Jesus to His mother but Mary herself. It was after the manner of His delicacy to utter a reproof to her when she was alone.

But when John and the honored mother conversed together, she, in all probability, reminded him of the miracle and told him of her mistake. Saints gain precious things from Gods poor and tried servantsand those who entertain the widow and the fatherless shall not go without reward. If my conjecture is correct, I see the holy modesty of the mother of Jesusthat she narrated her own fault and did not forbid John to mention it. The Holy Spirit moved the Evangelist to chronicle not only the miracle, but the error of Mary. It was wise, for it is a conclusive argument against the notion that the mother of Jesus can intercede for us with her Son and use authority with Him. It is evident from this narrative that our

Lord would tolerate no such idea, either in her mind or in ours. Woman, what have I to do with you? is a sentence which rings the   
death knell of any idea of our Lords being moved by relationships according to the flesh. With all loving respect He yet very decidedly shuts out all  
interference from Maryfor His kingdom was to be according to the spirit  
and not after the flesh. I delight in believing, concerning the mother of Jesus, that though she fell into a natural mistake, yet she did not for an instant persist in it. Neither did she hide it from John, but probably took   
care to tell it to him that no others should ever fall into similar error by   
thinking of her in an unfitting manner.   
Let it never be forgotten that the mother of Jesus had a very firm and   
practical faith in her Son, concerning whom angels and Prophets had   
borne witness to her. She had seen Him in His infancy and watched Him   
as a Childand it could not have been easy to believe in the Divinity of  
One whom you have held as an Infant to be nourished at your breast.   
From His marvelous birth she believed in Him and now that she receives a   
kind of rebuff from Him, her faith does not fail her, but she calmly turns   
to the servants and bids them stand ready to obey His commands, whatever they might be. She felt that He was quite certain to do the kind and   
necessary thing. Even from His words, My hour is not yet come, she   
probably gathered that His hour to work would arrive.   
Her faith was accompanied with imperfection, but yet it was of the right   
kind. It persevered under difficulty and in the end it was triumphant, for   
the wine which had failed became plentiful again and that which He provided was of surpassing quality. May we have a faith which will outlive a   
rebuke! May we, like Mary, sing, My spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior   
and may Jesus be to us, as He was to hera trusted and beloved One  
upon whom our soul has learned to wait with confidence.   
With that end in view I have taken this subject for discourse. Oh, that   
His disciples may trust Him more and more! John said, in another place,  
concerning the doings of our Lord, These are written that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you   
might have life through His name. Truly, I can say this sermon is  
preached that my beloved hearers may believe on the Lord Jesus and be   
saved! We shall consider three things in connection with the text. First,   
the significance of this beginning of miracles. Read signs instead of  
miracles and you will be nearer the meaning of the original. This beginning of miracles was intended, like all that followed it, to be an instructive sign.   
Secondly, let us observe its specialty as a manifestation And manifested forth His glory. And then, thirdly, its sufficiency as a confirmation  
of faith And His disciples believed on Him. It was calculated to establish their faith and it did so.   
I. To begin with, let us think upon THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS BEGINNING OF SIGNS. May the Holy Spirit graciously assist our thoughts  
and warm our hearts! The first sign-wonder that Christ worked was the turning of water into wine at the wedding at Cana of Galilee and as we may often judge of a mans course by its beginningand the beginning is often the key of all that followsso we may learn the whole tenor of our Lords miracles from this one. Note, first, that this miracle displayed His self-denial. Our Lord had been a few days before in the wilderness and after 40 days fasting He was hungry. It was in His power to have commanded the stones to become breadand had He done so the beginning   
of signs would have been a miracle worked for His own necessities. But such a beginning would not have been like His life-course and especially would it have been wide apart from the conclusion of His life   
when it was said of Him, He saved others; Himself He cannot save. He  
would not make bread for Himself, but He will make wine for others. And   
the fact that it was wine and not bread that he made, makes the miracle   
all the more remarkable. He did not merely make bread for men, which is  
a necessity, but He even went further and made wine for them, which is a   
luxury, though He would not make even bread for Himself. You see the   
sharp contrast between His refusal to help Himself, even to a crust of   
bread, and His readiness to give to men not only what might be necessary  
for life, but that which was only necessary for their joy.   
When the wine failed, the only danger was that the bride and bridegroom would be pained and the wedding dishonoredand this our Lord  
prevents. He would not allow the humble festival of two villagers to come   
to an untimely end when they had so kindly invited Himself and His disciples. He repaid their courtesy by His spontaneous bounty. How greatly   
is our Divine Lord to be admired and beloved by us! Behold His kindness!   
He has no selfishness about Him. We can each one cry, He loved me and   
gave Himself for me. He laid down His life for menHe gave His all to   
others. No selfish aim ever tinctured that consecrated life of His! For Himself He reserved no measure or degree of powerfor others He used that  
power without stint. This beginning of miracles is a display of unselfish   
working. Thoughtfulness for others shone in that miracle like the sun in  
the heavens.   
Next, observe that this miracle was marked with beneficence. It was   
the beginning of miracles and the first is the keynote for the resthappy   
are we that the first miracle is full of blessing! Moses commenced his work   
in Egypt with a miracle of judgment. He cast down a rod and it became a   
serpentand he turned water into bloodbut Jesus overcomes the serpent with the rod of Scripture and turns water into wine! He works no   
plagues but heals our sicknesses. Blessed Master   
*Your hand no thunder bears,   
No terror clothes Your brow,   
No bolts to drive our guilty souls   
To fiercer flames below.*   
The mission of Jesus is a happy one and so it opens at a marriage feast. It   
is intended to bring joy and gladness to heavy hearts and so it begins with  
a deed of royal bounty. At the coronation of kings the conduit in Cheapside has run with wine and here the water pots are filled with it to the   
brim!   
The after-miracles were all beneficent. True, He withered a fruitless fig   
tree, but it was a beneficent act to wither a tree which drew men out of  
their way by false promises of fruit and so caused bitter pangs of disappointment to hungry and fainting wayfarers. It was a good thing to teach  
us all a practical lesson of sincerity at so small an expense as the withering of a good-for-nothing tree. All our Lords actions towards men are full  
of royal benevolence and Grace. There will be a day when the Lamb will be   
angry and, as a Judge, He will condemn the ungodlybut while this dispensation lasts, He is to us all mercy, love, kindness and bounty. If you,   
my Hearer, will come to Him, you will find that His heart will go out to you   
and He will freely bless you with life, rest, peace and joy. The Lord will   
bless you and remove the curse far from you.   
This beginning of miracles was worked at a wedding to show great beneficence. Marriage was the last relic of paradise left among men and Jesus hastened to honor it with His first miracle. Marriage is His Fathers   
ordinance, for He it was that brought Eve to Adamand our Lord worked   
in harmony with the Father. He symbolically touched the very springs of  
manhood and gave His sanction to that ordinance whereby the race is   
perpetuated. Jesus comes to a marriage and gives His blessing that we  
may know that our family life is under His care. How much we owe to the   
joys of our domestic relationships! Thereby life is raised from water into   
wine. We have sometimes thought it was almost a proof of the Divinity of  
Christianity that there could be homes so happy as some of our homes  
have been made by the Presence of our dear Lord whom we invited to our   
wedding feastand who has never gone awaybut has stayed with us all   
these happy years! It was a miracle which, by honoring marriage, confirmed an institution fraught with happiness to our race.   
But, next, it was a miracle most compassionate. Our Lords miracles   
were worked, in each case, to meet a need. The wine had failed at the   
wedding feast and our Lord had come in at the time of the pinch, when   
the bridegroom was fearful of being made ashamed. That need was a great   
blessing. If there had been sufficient wine for the feast, Jesus had not   
worked this miracle and they had never tasted this purest and best of

wine! It is a blessed need which makes room for Jesus to come in with   
miracles of love. It is good to run short that we may be driven to the Lord  
by our necessity, for He will more than supply it.   
My dear Hearer, if you have no need, Christ will not come to you. But if  
you are in dire necessity, His hands shall be stretched out to you. If your  
needs stand before you like huge empty water pots, or if your soul is as  
full of grief as those same pots were filled with water up to the brim, Jesus  
can, by His sweet will, turn all the water into winethe sighing into singing! Be glad to be very weak, that the power of God may rest upon you! As  
for me, I am more and more dependent upon the Lord for every particle of   
strength. My deacons and elders know how often on a Sunday morning,   
before coming into the pulpit, I have thanked God that it is so. I am glad to be entirely dependent upon the Lord and to have such a failure as to all my natural wine of ability that there may be occasion for my Lord to   
come in and supply wine of strength, of another and more Divine quality. We are likely to do our work best when we feel most our insufficiency  
and are driven to God for help. If we go blundering to our service, we shall   
fail. But if we go tremblingly as to ourselves, by confidently looking up to   
the Lord, we shall be more than conquerors! If we have a great need. If   
something essential has given out. If we are likely to be despised for failurelet us in faith expect the Lord Jesus to come for our deliverance! I   
gather from this miracle that our Lord looks to mans necessities and not  
to his possessions. He has an eye to our failures and needsand He   
makes our distress the platform upon which He manifests His Glory by  
supplying all our needs.   
Further, I cannot help noticing how condescending was this miracle! We   
are told, twice, that it was performed at Cana in Galilee. Twice is this   
mentioned so that we may observe it well. Our Lord did not choose the   
high places of Jerusalem, nor any of the notable cities of Palestine as the   
scene of His first miracleHe went to a quiet village in Galilee, Galilee of   
the Gentiles, a district much despisedand there He worked His first   
miracle at the city of rushes and canes, even Cana in Galilee. He worked  
the sign, not on a spiritual and sacred occasion, nor before ecclesiastics   
and scientists. Some seem to fancy that all our Lord does must be done in  
churches or cathedrals. No, no! This miracle was in a private house and   
that not at a Prayer Meeting or a Bible reading, but at the marriage of a   
couple of poor peasants, names unknown.  
See how Jesus condescends to the common places of life and sheds a   
blessing upon the secular side of our existence! Those who gave that feast   
were people of slender means. The wine would not have been so soon exhausted if they had been very rich. It is true that seven more came to the   
wedding than they had expected, but still, if they had been wealthy people   
they would have had more than enough to satisfy seven extra guests, for   
Easterns kept open house for almost everybody during the marriage week.   
They were by no means an aristocratic party, or a set of Israels notables.  
Why did not our Lord begin His miracles before the king, or the governor,   
or at least in the presence of the high priest and the scribes and doctors of  
the Law? Our Lord chose not to make His first appeal to the great and  
dignified.   
I feel much comfort in this factthat He comes to commonplace individuals is bliss to me! You and I may, in station and in wealth, be low  
down in the scale, but Jesus stoops to men of mean estate. To common  
spots like this Newington, on the south side of the Thames, the Lord has   
come to visit His people! Here, also, has He worked His transformations   
and many a watery life has been made rich and full through His Grace!   
My dear Hearer, Jesus can come to you, though you are only a laborer or  
a servant, or a poor tradesman, or the wife of an artisan! Our Lord loves   
the poor! He is a great frequenter of cottages. He stops not for grand occasions, but He makes His abode with the lowly. He is full of condescension.

This first of miracles was most munificent . He did not, at the wedding, multiply the breadHe dealt with a luxury and rejoiced their hearts with that which was as the pure blood of the grape. When our Lord fed the multitudes in the wilderness, He might have given them each a bit of bread to keep them from famishing. But He never does things in a beggarly, workhouse style and therefore He added fish to be a relish with their bread. Our Lord not only gives existence, but happy existence which is truly life. He does not give to men just enough for their necessity, but He gives up to the higher degree which we call enjoyment. Here He turns good wholesome water into a sweeter, richer, more nourishing beverage perhaps we little know how truly good and sustaining that God-made drink was to those who were privileged to taste it.

Our dear Master will give to all those who are His followers a joy unspeakable and full of glory. They shall not only have enough Grace to live by so as barely to hope and serve, but they shall drink of wines on the lees well-refined and shall have Grace to sing with, Grace to rejoice with, Grace to fill them with assurance and cause them to overflow with delight. Our Beloved has not only brought us to the house of bread, but to the banquet of wine! We have Heaven here below. Jesus does not measure out Grace by the drop, as chemists do their medicinesHe gives liberallyHis vessels are filled to the brim. And the quality is as notable as the quantityHe gives the best of the bestjoys, raptures and ecstasies.

O my Soul, at what a royal table do you sit! He daily loads you with benefits. What a gracious miracle it was! How free! How unconstrained! He did not need pressing to do it. Mary must not interfere. Stand back, good woman, for the Lord knows what need there is without your telling Him! Dear Friend, you think, perhaps, that you must pray up to a certain quantity, but the Lord is much more ready to give than you are to pray. It is not your prayer that will make Him willing to bless you, for He is willing, even now, to do for you exceeding abundantly above what you ask or even think! To obtain the supply of wine it is noteworthy that nothing was required from men but what was very simple and easy. Hasten, you obedient servants, to fetch waterjust draw it from the well and pour it into those large water potsthat is all you have to do!

The Lord Jesus does not come to us with hard conditions and exacting terms. Dream not that to be saved you have to do or feel some great thing. As you are you may believe in Jesus to eternal life! Have faith enough to draw out at the Lords bidding and, to your own amazement, there will be wine where before there was only water! The Lord, by His Spirit, can come and change your heart and renew your spirit so that where only a little natural thought has been, there will be spiritual life and feeling! He will do this without pressing and persuading. Grace is free! Jesus has a tender heart towards needy sinnersthe spear has laid it opena prayer will touch it.

The first miracle was prophetic. At a wedding our Lord begins His signs. To a marriage feast He invites us now. At a glorious marriage supper all will end. The story of our Bible ends like all well-told tales, withthey were married and lived happy ever afterwardsfor proof read the Book of the Revelation. Our Lord will come to celebrate a wedding between Himself and His Church and all the wine they will drink at that high festival will be of His own providing and all the joy and bliss will be of His own giving! He is the sun of Heavens day! He is the glory of the glorified! He will take care that throughout the millennial age, yes, and throughout eternity, the joy of His chosen shall never fail but they shall joy in God and in Himself without measure and without bound.

Our Lord began with this special miracle as if to show us that He had come here to transform and transfigure all thingsto fulfill the Law and its typesputting into it substance and reality. He began with this special miracle to take man and lift him up from a fallen creature into a Heavenborn son and heir! Jesus has come to rid this planet of her mists and to array it in garments of glory and beauty. Soon shall we see new heavens and a new earth! The new Jerusalem will come down out of Heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband! Jesus has come to elevate and to fulfilland He gives the token of this in this beginning of signs.

II. Secondly, I want you to notice in this miracle ITS SPECIALTY AS A MANIFESTATION. This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth His glory. I believe that there is a very clear connection between the first chapter of this Gospel and the passage before us. John, in the first chapter, said, And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His Glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of Grace and truth. Here you have an unveiling of that Grace and Glory. Observe that He manifested forth His Glory. Truly, He glorified the Father, for that was His great end and aim, but yet He manifested forth His own Glory in that very act.

Notice that it was His own Glory which was manifested. This was never said of any Prophet or saint. Moses, Samuel, David, Elijahnone of these ever manifested their own gloryindeed, they had no glory to manifest! Here is One greater than a Prophet! Here is One greater than the holiest of men! He manifested His own Gloryit could not be otherwise. I feel that I must adore my Lord Jesus while I read these words. Jesus revealed His own Glory as God and Man. During all those former years it had been veiled. He had been a Boy obedient at home, a young Man industrious as a carpenter at Nazareththen His Glory was a spring shut up, a fountain sealedbut now it began to flow forth in the ruddy stream of this great miracle!

If you will think of it, you will see more clearly what Glory it was. He was a Man like other men and yet at will He turned water into wine! He was a Man with a motherHis mother was there as if to remind us that He was born of woman. He was a Man with a mother and yet He was so truly God over all that He created, by His will, an abundance of wine. He was but one among many wedding guests with His six humble followers, but yet He acted the Creators part! He sat not arrayed in high priests garments, nor did He wear the Pharisees phylacteries, nor any other form of ornament betokening ecclesiastical office or professionyet He did

greater wonders than they could attempt. He was simply a Man among men and yet He was God among men! His wish was Law in the world of matter so that water received the qualities of wine. Adore Him, Brothers and Sisters! Adore Him reverently! Bow low before Him who was a Man, a real Man and yet worked as only Jehovah Himself can work! Worship Him who counts it not robbery to be equal with God and yet is found among the guests at a lowly marriage, manifesting His Glory even there!

Observe, He manifested His Glory by operating beyond the power of Nature. Nature does not in an instant turn water into wineif this is done it must be by the direct hand of the Lord. It is true there are processes by which the dewdrop enters the berry of the grape and is gradually, by secret arrangements, turned into refreshing juice. But by what power could water be taken from an earthen vessel and be transmuted into wine while being carried to the table? None but God Himself could do this and as Jesus did it, He therein displayed His Godhead. By doing this He showed that He had all power on earth. He can do as He wills and by His one act of creation, or transformation, He makes manifest the glory of His power.

He did this by partly operating without any instrument . When Moses sweetened the bitter water it was by a tree which the Lord showed to him. When Elisha purged the springs he threw salt into the water. We have no instrumentality here. Whenever our Lord did use visible means He took care to select such as in themselves were evidently insufficient for the purpose, if not opposed to His design as, for instance, when He healed the blind man by making clay with spittle and putting it on his eyesa thing to blind him, rather than to open his eyes. Here, however, our Lord had no instrument whatever. He did not even speak a word and say, Water, blush into wine. No, He simply willed and it was done! How divinely does He manifest His Glory in this respect!

And He operated so easily and so majestically that He therein reminds us of the method and way of the great God. He simply says, Fill the water pots, and the servants do His bidding with enthusiasm, for He is Master of all minds. Draw out now, He says, and in the process of bearing it to the ruler of the feast the water is turned into wine! Here is no effort, no breathing as of one gathering up his strength to perform a feat. The earth revolves, but the wheel of Nature never grinds upon its axle. God acts by His Laws in a perfectly natural and unconstrained manner. Creation and Providence abide in that majestic silence which comes of Omnipotence. All goes easily where God is. With His own will He can do all things for us and in a moment turn the waters of our grief into joy.

Our Lord manifested His Glory by operating naturally and without display. I really believe that if you could have worked this wonder you would have said to the ruler of the feast, Call upon all the guests to remark that the wine has failed and I am about to create a new supply. See this huge water pot? Mark how I have it filled with water that you may know that there is no wine in it. Observe me while I work the transformation. Then you would have spoken aloud, or you would have gone through a series of performances. Jesus did nothing of the kind! He hates display. He will not have His kingdom come with observation. He shuns pomp, noise and ceremony. He but acts like a God whose wonders are too many to be made matters of note to Himself. It was God-like on our Lords part to perform so great a work without appearing to be doing anything uncommon.

That He did literally perform the miracle was certified by impartial witnesses. John, or Philip, or the whole six might have said, Master, we will fill the water pots with water. But this must not be so, lest there should be a suspicion of collusion between the Master and the disciples. The ordinary servants must fill the water pots with water. Again, the disciples would have been very pleased to bear the wine to the ruler of the feast, saying, Here is the wine which our great and good Master has made for you. No, the servants shall bring in the wine and say nothing at all about from where it cameand the chief witness that what they bring is really wine, and wine of the best quality, shall be the master of the ceremonies a gentleman not at all spiritually-minded, but one who has been at many such feasts and knows the custom of them and has a proverb ready to set it forth.

He was evidently a man who was a judge of the quality of wine and we may safely accept his verdictYou have kept the best wine until now. The less spiritual the man in this case, the better the witness to the reality of the miracle! If he had been a follower of Jesus he might have been suspected of being in the swim with Him and His disciples. But you can see he is a man of another mold altogether. Gods work is fact, not fictionit appeals to faith, not to imagination. God does His transforming work in such a way that He will have witnesses ready to attest it. As when Christ rose from the dead there were appointed witnesses to certify itso His first miracle is certified beyond all question as real and true by the best of witnesses.

There was a special reason for this. Oh, my beloved Hearers, if you come to Christ He will not deceive you! His blessings are not dreams! If you will come and trust in Jesus, the work He will do for you will be as real as what He did at Cana! Even the ungodly shall be obliged to see that God has made a change in you. When they see your new life, they will say, Here is something good, the likes of which we never saw in him before. Come, I pray you, and take Christ to be your All in All and He will be, in very truth, all that you need! Trust Him with your sins and He will bring real pardon. Trust Him with your troublesHe will give you perfect rest! Trust Him with your evil natureHe will renew you! He is no pretender to deeds which He does not perform. He did by the witness of everybody at the marriage actually turn water into wine of special qualityand so He can now transform your character and make it such as Nature, when best educated, can never produce!

I say again, the specialty of this manifestation lies in the fact that it revealed the Lord Jesus, by His own Almighty power, uplifting everything He touched, transforming men, things and facts into nobler ones than they were before, or could ever have become. This is the specialty of the manifestation of ChristHe says, Behold, I make all things new. He brings

forth the best last! He raises the poor from hunger to feasting! He lifts up fallen humanity into something so glorious that it stands, in His Person, near to the Throne of God! In all this Christ is revealed and His name is glorified!

III. And now, lastly, I think we have here A REASON FOR THE CONFIRMING OF FAITH. It is said, And His disciples believed on Him. Brothers and Sisters, notice something here. How did John know that the disciples believed on Him? Why, because he was one of them and he himself believed on Him. The best witness is that of one who has a share in the fact. When you feel a thing yourself, you have a full assurance of it. John knew that the other five disciples believed on Jesus by what they said to him, for their feelings coincided with his own. Let us see to it that we, also, share in the faith which the marvels of our Lord are designed to produce.

Note that the guests at that feast all partook of the wine but the disciples at that feast had something far betterthey had an increase of faith. An increase of faith is better, far, than all the dainties of a feast. Others ate and drank but these men saw God in Christ Jesus manifesting His Glory! Our enquiry is, What was there in this miracle which would tend to confirm their faith? Notice that I say to confirm their faith. It did not originate their faith, but it established it. Their faith had been originated by the Word of the Lord preached by John the Baptistthey had believed in Jesus as the Lamb of God which takes away the sin of the world.

Secondly, they had enjoyed personal communion with Jesus, by going to Him and dwelling with Him. This had greatly strengthened their faith. And now they begin to taste of the benefit of being associated with Jesus and to see for themselves what Jesus was able to do. Thus their faith grew. His disciples believed on Him already, but this miracle confirmed their confidence. The miracle abundantly justified the disciples in implicitly believing in Jesus for it is manifest that one miracle proves the power to work every miracle. If Christ can turn water into wine by His will, He can do anything and everything. If Jesus has once exercised a power beyond Nature, we may readily believe that He can do it againthere is no limit to His powerHe is God and with God all things are possible. Thus, the first miracle rightly confirmed their faith.

But, next, it showed their Masters readiness to meet unexpected difficulties. Nobody had foreseen that the wine would fail. Jesus had not gone to the marriage, prepared and primed, as we say among men. The demand came all of a sudden and the supply came, too. The wine ran out and He was ready for the difficulty. Does not this confirm your faith? Christ is always ready for every emergency! Something may happen tomorrow that you have not thought ofChrist will be ready for the unexpected. Between here and Heaven you will meet with a great many unlikely events, but they will not be surprises to Him. He has clear foresightwhen the trial comes He will provideIn the mount of the Lord it shall be seen.

Again, their faith was confirmed because He had showed that He could allow nothing to fail with which He was connected. I like to feel sure that Jesus is with me in any business, for then I know that the pleasure of the Lord will prosper in His hands. True, it was not the wedding of one of His relatives or disciples, but still it was a marriage at which He was a guest and He would not suffer it to be said that they ran short of provisions when He was there. His connection with the feast may seem to have been remote, but it was a connectionand slight connections are observed by our Lord Jesus! O my Soul, if I can but touch the hem of His garment, virtue will come from Him to me! I get into the same boat with Jesus and if I drown Jesus must drown, too, and therefore I know that I am safe! O my Heart, if I do but get the hand of Christ in my hand, or my hand in His hand, I am linked with Him and none can separate us! In that union is my life, my safety, my successfor nothing that He touches, or that touches Him, will ever fail.

He is only one of a party at a wedding, but because He is there things must go well. I think this must have encouraged the disciples much when, in later days, they began to preach. Their confidence would be that Jesus was with them and they must prevail. They were poor, unlearned men and all the scholarship of the age was arrayed against thembut they said to themselves, We fear not, for Jesus is in this controversy and He will see it through. Let us get Christ into our quarrel for Gods Covenant and Truth and the battle is no longer doubtful! If, in the matter of your salvation, faith brings the Savior into the business, you may rest assured of eternal life!

It showed to them, nextand this must have greatly confirmed their faiththat He could use the poorest means. To make wine the Lord had only water and six large water pots. Yes, but He can make better wine out of water than men can make out of grapes! Behold His vats and His winepressessix water pots of stone. You and Iwhat are we? Well, we are poor earthen vessels and a little cracked, I fear. There is little enough in us and what there is weak as waterbut the Lord can bring forth from us a wine which will cheer the heart of God and manwords of faith which will please God and save man! The disciples would, in later days, know themselves to be nothing but earthen vessels and they would remember that their Lord could work miracles with them. When they saw the majestic ease of His working, do you not think it confirmed their faith? He did not call for angels. He did not deliver a long prayer, much less repeat a sacred incantation. He did but will it and the deed was done!

Next time they came into a difficulty, the disciples would believe that the Lord could easily enough appear for them. They would stand still and see the salvation of God! In some way or other the Lord would provide and He would do wonders without trouble to Himself. Brothers and Sisters, we shall come out at the big end of the horn, yet, for God is with us! It showed them, also, that from now on they need never be anxious. Will you that read your Greek Testament notice the expression here? Is it said, His disciples believed Him? No. Is it Believed in him? No. Believed on him? Yes. It is so in our version, but into would be more correct. The

Greek is, eisHis disciples believed into Him. They so believed that they seemed to submerge themselves into Jesus!

Into himthink what that means! John, Andrew, Nathanael and the others cast their life-long concerns upon Jesus and felt that they need never have another care! Jesus would see them through to the end. They would leave everything to Him. Mary took the matter a little into her own hands, but she erred thereinthe disciples entered into Jesus by the open door of this confirming miracle and there they rested. Be this your conditionCasting all your care on Him, for He cares for you. They believed right into Jesus. It is one thing to believe in Him and another thing to believe Himit is a restful thing to believe on Him, but it is best of all to believe right into Him so that your very personality is swallowed up in Christ and you feel the bliss of living, loving, lasting union with Him!

Those six men could not have produced a drop of wine for the weddingbut count their Master in with them and the seven could flood the streets with it if there had been need! Entering into partnership with Jesus, their faith rose as a morning without clouds. Now were they sure, steadfast, strongfor their weak and watery faith had gained the fullness and richness of generous wine!

I have done when I have said to any here who are undecidedsee, my dear Hearer, Jesus Christ will come and visit such as you are! He is willing to go to plain mens houses even when they have a feast going on. Ask Him to come to you just as you are. See how He is able to bless human joy! You think, perhaps, that you will go to Jesus next time you are in sorrow, but I say to you, come to Him at once, while you are in joy. You that are getting on in business, you that rejoice over a new-born child, you that are lately married, you that have passed an examination with honorscome to Jesus in your joyand ask Him to raise your happiness to a higher degree and quality and elevate it till it touches the joy of the Lord!

Jesus is able to raise you, beloved Friend, from what you now are into something better, fuller, grander, nobler, holier and more God-like! May He do it now! Believe in Him! Believe Him! Believe on Him! Believe into Him and it shall be done! Amen.

**PORTIONS OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMONJohn 1:35-51; 3:1-11.** HYMNS FROM OUR OWN HYMN BOOK257, 775, 435.  
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JESUS CHRISTS IDIOM   
NO. 3053

A SERMON   
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, AUGUST 15, 1907.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, JANUARY 19, 1873.

**Jesus answered, Verily, verily.   
John 3:5.**

THIS expression, Verily, verily, seems to me to have been the peculiar idiom of our Lord Jesus Christ. He has absolutely forbidden His people ever to take an oath. His command upon that matter is most explicit, I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by Heaven; for it is Gods Throne: nor by the earth; for it is His footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King: neither shall you swear by your head, because you cannot make one hair white or black. But let your communication be, Yes, yes; No, no: for whatever is more than these comes of evil. My text was Jesus Christs strongest form of affirmationwhen He wished to speak most emphatically, He said, Verily, verily, I say unto you. Every prominent public speaker has his own peculiar idioms and very much of the mans character will be found in the idioms that he uses. And I may add that the attention which the man deserves may sometimes be gauged by his idioms, for as his style of speaking will reveal to you the man, you will discover how far you ought to lend him your ears. If, from his speech, you judge that he is flippant, or insincere, or that there is something sinister in his motives, or that he is aiming at the display of himself rather than at the proclamation of the truth, you may straightway say, Then there is no particular reason why I should listen to him. But if, from the very idiomatic force of the words which he uses, you feel that the man is true, sincere and earnest, then you say, I shall be wise to give heed to his words and to let his thoughts operate upon my own.

There are three qualities which these words reveal to us in our Saviors teaching. First, there was clearnessVerily, verily. Secondly, there was certaintyVerily, verily, I say this and that unto you. Thirdly, there was solemnityVerily, verily, I say unto you. We must, therefore, give to Him, in return for clearness, the desire to understand Him. In return for certainty, the conviction of the Truth of what He says and, to His solemnity, we must respond with a deep sense of the importance of His teaching and act in accordance with what He says.

I. I am to speak, first, upon Christs idiom, Verily, verily, as denoting to US THE CLEARNESS OF WHAT THE SAVIOR SAID.   
He knew what He meant when He spoke. Some people, when they speak, do not know what they mean and, when a man does not make you understand what he means, it generally is because he does not know the meaning of what he says. Indistinct speaking is usually the result of indistinct thinking. If men think clouds, they will preach clouds, but the Savior never spoke in that style which, at one time, was so common in our pulpitsa style imported partly from Germany and which was excessively cloudy and smoky, though it was thought by some people to be wonderfully profound and to be the very trademark of intellect! But there was not a sentence of that kind in all Christs teaching. He was the clearest, most straightforward and most outspoken of all speakers. He knew what He meant to say and He meant His hearers also to know. It is true that the Jews of His day did not comprehend some of His teaching, but that was because judicial blindness had fallen upon them. The fault was not in the light, but in their bleared eyes. Turn to His teaching and see if anyone else ever spoke as simply as He did. A child can comprehend His parables. There are, in them, hidden Truths of God which are a mystery even to Christs deeply-taught disciples, but Christ never mystified His hearersHe talked to them like a child, as He was Gods Holy Child Jesus. He never laid aside the simplicity of childhood though He had all the dignity of fully-developed Manhood. He wore His heart upon His sleeve and spoke out what was on His mind in such plain, clear language that the poorest of the poor and the lowest of the low were eager to listen to Him.   
Now, Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ, if you wish to imitate your Master, speak with the same clearness. Say to your hearers, Verily, verily, I have to proclaim to you, in Christs name, this simple yet sublime Truth of God which I have myself grasped, and which I would also have you grasp. Never affect profundity among the poor and never use a theological jargon among the uneducated anywhere! If you have, in speaking, to show the Savior to your hearers, show Him in His own dressdo not cover Him up with the tawdry vestments of your gaudy language, for He will count them only as filthy rags. Tell sinners, in simple words, first about their sins and then about the Savior who can wash away their sins in His most precious blood. But go not a-hunting after novelties, for they will be of no service to perishing souls. If you are to be like Jesus, your teaching must be clear!

But next I need to say to those of you who are still unconverted, how necessary it is that you should clearly understand this clear teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ! There are some Truths upon which He spoke with very wonderful clearnessas for instance, concerning what sin ishow a look may be a sin and how a longing may be as much a sin as an action or a word is. Christ has also told us very clearly that sin must and will be punished. There never was anyone else so kind in heart as He was, yet He clearly taught the dreadful Truth of God that sinners shall be punished in Hell forever! There never can be any question about the Saviors view of sin as being a very evil thing and of the punishment of sin as being a very terrible thing. How very plainly, too, He speaks about the new birth! He said to Nicodemus, Except a man be born-again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God. And He was equally explicit concerning the way of salvation. He tells us that just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness and every bitten Israelite who looked to it was healed, so He, Himself, was lifted up upon the Cross and every sinner who trusts Him is saved forever! The teachings of Christ and of His Apostles concerning sinners being saved through faith in Him are blessedly clear. The Gospels and Epistles tell us that a perfectly holy and Divine Substitute for sinners was requiredand that Jesus was that Substitute and stood in the place of all His chosen peopleand bore the punishment which was due for all their sins. If we are Believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, all our liabilities to Infinite Justice are forever discharged, for Jesus bore all our sins in His own body on the treeand bore them so completely away that they shall be remembered against us no more forever!   
I want to ask you who have not yet believed in Jesus, whether you really understand this Truth of God of which I have been speaking. Lest there should be anyone here under a delusion upon this matter, let me say, once and for all, that there is no salvation in any charm or ceremony invented or performed by men. The common notion is that there is some kind of charm which operates upon a person, young or old, who is brought to a fontthat some virtue or other goes through the fingers of the priest who sprinkles the water because at his ordination he received something or other, from somebody or other, who received that something or other from some other body and so on, and so on, and so on right up to the Apostles! All that is sheer superstition as base as the witchcraft for which old women were burned in the evil days of the past!

[See Sermons #581, Volume 10CHILDREN BROUGHT TO CHRIST, NOT TO THE FONT and #573, Volume 10BAPTISMAL REGENERATION, the sermon by Mr. Spurgeon which has had a larger circulation than any other in the 3,052 published sermons to dateRead/download the entire

sermons, free of charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.] How I wish that all men,

women and children could be undeceived concerning it! Then there is a notion that a piece of bread, or a drop of wine, consecrated and dispensed by properly-authorized persons, will, somehow or other, charm away evil from a dying person. That is another superstition not a whit better than the fetish of the pretended rainmakers of South Africa! Neither the water, nor the bread and wine can convey Divine Grace to an unbeliever! But if I am a Believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, my being

buried with Him in Baptism [See Sermon #1627, Volume 27, BAPTISMA BURIAL Read/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.] reminds me

that I am saved through His death and burialand if I, as a Believer in Christ, eat the bread and drink the wine at the Communion Table, those suggestive symbols help me, as Paul says, to show the Lords death till He comes. That is all. There is no charm in the water, or the bread, or the wine in themselves, whatever incantations any so-called priest may have muttered over them!

Then, never imagine that we cannot understand what the Gospel of Christ really is. Someone perhaps says, Well, you see, Sir, I am not learned. I am no scholar, so I cannot understand the Gospel. My dear Friend, there are many people who cannot understand the Gospel just because they are scholars! They know too much to understand itthey have so much of what they think is knowledge that they are prejudiced against it! Knowledge may prejudice a person as much as ignorance does. What you need to know is simply thisthat you are a sinner and that if you trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, He is your Savior. The result of believing in Him will be thisknowing that you are saved because God tells you that you are, you love God whom you dreaded before and, loving Him, you naturally ask, What can I do to please Him? So you give up your old sins and, led on by the impulse of love, which is the work of the Holy Spirit in your heart, you seek after holiness! The things that concern your souls salvation are plain enough for a child to comprehend! If you are lost, it will not be a mystery that damns you and if you are ever to be saved, it is the simplicity of the Gospel that will save you! The Truths of God that relate to your ruin through sinand the only remedy for that ruinthrough the Grace of God, are as plain as a pikestaff, as our common proverb puts it.

Still, says one, I have often listened to the preaching of the Gospel, but I have failed to understand it. Then ask the Spirit of God to guide you into it! He is waiting to instruct sincere seekers. Let me ask you whether you have ever really tried to understand the Gospel. Well, Sir, I have heard Dr. So-and-So and Mr. So-and-So. Yes, but perhaps they have only muddled you. Have you read the Bible itself? He who wishes to drink pure water had better go to the wellhead. He who wishes to find the Truth of God had better come to these sacred pages, for here he will find it pure and unalloyed. Have you imitated the Jews at Berea who searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so? There are many people who condemn the Scriptures, but no man who has read them in the right spirit ever condemns them. You may remember the story of the City Missionary who was arguing with a cobblera man who thought himself a very wise skeptic although he had never read the Bible. He said he never would do so, yet he knew it was a very bad book! So the missionary said to him, I bought a pair of boots yesterday which cost me twelve and sixpencedo you think they were worth the money? He replied, Possibly they were, but I cant say positively without seeing them. The missionary said, But, if you are a cobbler and understand your business, you can certainly tell me their value without seeing them. Why you must consider me a fool to think that I can judge of a thing I never saw. Yes, said the missionary, I did think you were a fool because you have been judging and condemning the Bible which you have never studied. So I ask you, dear FriendHave you read the Bible? Have you studied it? If you say that you cannot comprehend it, I ask Have you ever tried to do so? Do not plead that you cannot understand the Gospel if you have never tried to understand it! But if you humbly ask the Holy Spirit to teach you its meaning as you read it, I believe the Light of the Truth of God will soon enter your soul.

Let me ask you another questionHave you put into practice what you really do understand of the Scriptures? You know that you are sinfulhave you confessed your sinfulness to God? You know that there is a Savior from sin and that He is to be laid hold of by faithhave you trusted Him to save you? With the Truth of God so clear there is no need for you to perish in the dark! I read in the paper, yesterday, the notice of a reward to be given to anyone who would furnish information concerning the injury done to a certain buoy off the coast. The buoy was described as being on such-and-such a sand and, as it was 20 feet in height, it must have been injured through sheer carelessness or willful wickedness. So, if you have rightly read the Scriptures, or have heard the Gospel plainly preached, it will be impossible for you to perish by accidentyou will perish willfully and your blood will be upon your own head. When Christ brings the printed Gospel before your eyes, as it were, in capital lettersif you will not read it and understand ityou must perish as a spiritual suicide, which may God forbid!

II. The time flies so quickly that I must pass on to notice, in the next place, that THE EXPRESSION, VERILY, VERILY, AS THE SPECIAL IDIOM OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, SIGNIFIED CERTAINTY.

He knew that what He said was true and, therefore, He said, Verily, verily, I say unto you. Untold mischief has been done in our country by the kind of preaching which was very common at one time, namely, for the preacher to speak as if he did not know what the Truth of God is and must be pardoned for intruding his opinions! If a man does not know the Truth, let him hold his tongue until he does. I believed, therefore have I spoken, said the Psalmist. And he alone has the right to speak who speaks that which he believes and, therefore, knows. The Lord Jesus never hesitates as to what He shall say, His language never halts! His Verily, verily, I say unto you, is the utterance of One who knows the Truth of God and who speaks it as One who is assured that it is the Truth of God.

On our part, there should be a suitable response to Christs certainty. If we believe Him to be the Son of God speaking the Truth of God to us with absolute certainty, let us receive with certainty what He says to us. But, says one, there are so many different opinions that I do not know which to believe. What have you to do with mens opinions? Supposing there are 10,000 isms in the worldwhat have they to do with you? If you are lost, it will not abate the flames of Hell if you say, There were so many isms in the world I did not know which to choose. There was but one Truth, for Christ said, I am the Truth. If you had believed Him you would have been saved by Him. There are, today, many persons who raise all sorts of questionsthere always have been and there always will be such persons while this dispensation lastsbut what have you to do with them? Your business is to trust the Lord Jesus Christ and leave all those questions alone!

But, says another, even good men differ. I know they do, but if you go into a watchmakers shop, you find that even good watches and clocks differ in some respects. Yet that fact does not affect Greenwich mean time which is the standard for all the watches and clocks in the country! So, supposing that one good man sees one side of a Truth and another sees another side of itwhat good man ever asks you to trust in him? You have listened to my preachingsome of you for many yearsdid I ever ask you to follow my guidance except just as far as the Scriptures prove the truth of what I preach to you? With Gods Word in your hand as the map of the road to Heaven, ask His Spirit to guide you and He will guide you all the way!

All that Christ teaches is certainly true and there are some things which He tells us which are absolutely essential for us to learn. For instance, You must be born-again. Or this, Except you repent, you shall all likewise perish. There is no doubt that at the Last Great Day, Christ will judge the world in righteousness. We must all stand before His Great White Throne to receive from Him the final sentence which shall fix our eternal destiny. If you are an unbeliever, you are condemned alreadyand if you live and die an unbeliever, you must be driven from His Presence into a hopeless eternity. All these things are certainties. There are many fictions in the world, but these things are not fictions neither are they trifles. And I do pray you to believe these Truths of God and to draw the right practical inferences from them.

There are also some Truths about which Christ says, Verily, verily, which ought to be a great comfort to you. For instance, it is certainly true that if you confess your sins to Him, He will forgive you. It is certainly true that if you trust in Jesus, He will give you rest and peace, and you shall be, accepted in the Beloved. It is certainly true that if you commit your soul into Christs hands you shall never perish, and no one shall ever be able to pluck you out of His hands. [See Sermon #726, Volume 12LIFE

ETERNAL and #2120, Volume 35THE SECURITY OF BELIEVERSOR, SHEEP WHO SHALL NEVER PERISHRead/download the entire sermons, free of charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.]  
There are many blessed assurances in the Word of God upon which you may surely rely. God help you to rely upon them now!

There are other Truths in Gods Word which you will find to be sure if you test and try them. I might address myself to many a man here and say to him, Brother, did you not put Christs Word to the test in the time of trouble, and did you not prove it to be true? And I know that the answer would be, Yes, that I did! I might pick out many a humble man and woman here who have had a heavy task to bring up their children as they have done and many stern struggles with poverty and affliction, and I might say to them, My Brother, my Sister, has not Christ been precious to you? And I know that the answer would be, Yes! That He has! He has fulfilled every word of promise that He ever gave us to rely upon. There is no one who can ever convict Christ of a liethere is not a friend or a foe who can truthfully say, He deceived me. Verily, verily, is stamped upon every promise, every precept and every threatand He will prove all of them to be true to the end of time and throughout eternity!

Then, as these things are certain, let us act upon them. O Sirs, in a short time we shall have done with preaching and hearing the Gospel! I fear that many people come to our places of worship in the same spirit in which they go to places of amusement and that the main things of which they think arehow the preacher puts his message, whether he is fluent and eloquent and whether he interests them or not. Yes, but that is not the principal matter about which we should be concerned! You and I will soon be before the bar of God! I shall have to prove that I faithfully preached what I believed to be the Truth of Godand you will have to prove whether you accepted it and acted upon it! And I charge you all, before the living God, at whose bar you must soon stand, not to treat the Gospel as if it were mere fiction. Go not away from this building as though you had been watching a play, or listening to an organ recital which might or might not mean anything to you. There is a real Hellwill you be shut up in it forever? There is a real Heavenwill you be shut out of it forever? There is a real Savior who died upon the Cross for sinners will you despise and reject Him? And, above all, there sits a real God in whom we live, and move, and have our beingshall we continue to forget Him, break His Laws as if we had liberty to do what we would and despise Him as if He were a man like ourselves? Oh, by the Verily, verily, of the Christ of God, I beseech you to lay to heart the certainty, the reality of His teachings and let them have their due weight upon your spirits! May the Spirit of God make it to be so!

III. The third point was to be that CHRISTS VERILY, VERILY MEANT SOLEMNITY.   
Christ was a very solemn Preacher, though He was by no means a dull Preacher. There are some speakers who confound dullness with solemnity, but Christs discourses were always interesting. How He abounded in parables and metaphors! The children listened with pleasure to His teachings, yet how solemn it always was, and how forcibly the Master proved the solemnity of His speech by the solemnity of His life! Those nights of prayer that He spent on the lone mountainside show that His was no mock earnestness. And that life of untiring labor showed how real and intense was His zeal. And His death, as with bloodred seals proved that, having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end. It was the same Christ who said, Verily, verily, who died upon the Cross, rose again and went up into Glory to make intercession for the transgressors!  
The solemnity of Christs words and work should cause us to listen to His Gospel with a corresponding seriousness and solemnity. If you are worldly and earth-bound, you will not attach that importance to the Gospel of Christ that you should. To many of you, the Truth that you need to be saved does not seem to come home with power. If I were, in the middle of a sermon, to begin to talk about the way to get money, the attention of many of you would be far more intense than it is when I am speaking about the salvation of immortal souls. If I were to discuss the price of British bonds, many ears would be at once opened to catch every syllable! Whereas when I talk of the incalculable price that Jesus paid for the redemption of the souls of men, the Truth makes no more impression upon many mens minds than oil would upon a slab of marble! Your souls, the best part of your real selves, concern you not, O you foolish sons of men! You treat your souls as if they were dirt, yet you prize the things of time and sense as if they were all that you had! You have a notion that these things concern people a long way offpeople who are very wicked and do not go to any place of worship, or other people in this congregation who are somehow more fitted than you are to receive my message! But, Sir, the Gospel is for you, and God is speaking by His Word and by His servant, to you! I wish that you would end this folly of passing on to others the Gospel that is meant for yourself.   
In closing, I must just mention one or two reflections concerning the solemnity of the Gospel message. First, remember that the Gospel concerns our never-dying souls. Most people think a great deal about that which concerns the body. There is much talk about an operation, wisely performed by an eminent surgeon upon the poor body which must soon become food for worms. Yet little or nothing is said about the soul which is so vastly more precious! The soul of an emperor or the soul of a beggar is of the same value in Gods sight. Where does it take its flight when its earthly cage is broken? Is that a question which is never asked by some of you? If so, what arrant fools you must be! O blessed Spirit of God, teach us the solemnity of the Gospel which concerns the soul which must live forever in raptures or in woe!   
This Gospel also concerns the never-ending eternity. We are not going into another time-state that shall come to an end, but into that eternity which shall know no close. I can make no meaning out of Christs words if it is not soand He said, concerning the wicked, These shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal. The word is the same in each case in the original. Oh, eternity, eternity, eternity, who can conceive what it is? A million millions of years would be less than a moment compared with eternityand that sum multiplied by a million millions a million times told would be but as a drop in a bucket compared with that which is everlasting! O Sirs, as I know that I am to live forever in such a state as I shall die in, my first concern is to be ready for death that I may be ready for my eternal future! Is it not so with you also? Oh, I do implore you, trifle not with eternity and with your never-dying souls! Trifle not with the God who can cast you into Hell forever! Trifle not with Christ whose hands and feet were nailed to the accursed tree for sinners such as you! Trifle not with His precious blood for that is your only hope of redemption! Trifle not with the Holy Spirit for if He should leave you to perish, your case would be hopeless! Trifle not with your Sabbathsyou will wish to have them back again when you are near death. Trifle not with the Gospelwhat would the lost in Hell not give to hear another proclamation of mercy? The devil does not triflehe is very earnestly seeking your destruction! God, Christ and the Holy Spirit are not trifling with youand we are not trifling with you! We long to preach the Gospel to you more earnestly, more fully and more faithfully than everand we pray to God to help us do so and lament when we fear that we have failed. Trifle not when everything around you seems to be in earnest and especially when the Lord Jesus Christ, speaking out of this chapter, says to you, Verily, verily, I of the crown of thorns. I of the pierced hands and feet speak plainly, certainly and solemnly to you and bid you look unto Me that you may be saved.

I never go out of this pulpit feeling so utterly cast down as when I have been trying to deal with the consciences of the ungodly. I wish I could grip each one of you by the hand and look you in the face, and say, Man, Woman, are you going to die without a Savior? Oh, be not so foolish, so mad! I would tell every young man here how, when I was myself a young man, I was led to look by faith to the Savior and I have found it a blessed thing to rest in Him ever since. And I would say to him, Brother, come with me to the Cross of Calvary and rest in Jesus, and begin to live a holy and useful lifeand you shall find yourself truly blessed among men. I cannot come round and speak personally to you all, but will you let me follow you to your bedside and, if you think of getting into bed tonight without a prayer for your souls salvation, just imagine that you feel my hand upon your shoulder and hear me say to you, What? No offering of a prayer to God? I was about to say, Stepping into your bed, but I thought that it might become your sepulcher, for you may die there! As many have done who went to bed as thoughtlessly and prayerless as you have often done. But if you trust in Jesus and then fall asleep for the last time on earth, you will wake up amid the splendors of eternal bliss!

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **JOHN 3:1-18.**

If we were asked to read to a dying man who did not know the Gospel, we would probably select this chapter as the most suitable one for such an occasion. And what is good for dying men is good for us all, for that is what we areand how soon we may actually be at the gates of death, none of us can tell.

Verses 1, 2. There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: the same came to Jesus by night. We do not know the names of many other Pharisees, but we do know the name of this one because God had loved him with an everlasting love and, therefore, with loving kindness did He draw him to the Saviors feet! The same came to Jesus by night. Possibly he was too busy to come during the day. Anyway, it was better to come to Jesus late at night than not to come to Him at all! From the fact that after our Lords death, it is said that he was the man who at the first came to Jesus by night, I gather that he did come then partly out of timidity and partly also out of candor. He wanted to know more about Christ before he committed himself, so he came privately to see and hear for himself. It does not matter if any of you also come to Christ by night if you like. Our Savior has a night-bell to His door and He is quite willing to be the Physician of your souleven if you ring Him up at midnight!

2. And said unto Him, Rabbi. He begins very respectfully, and so far, so good. But then, Judas said, Hail, Master, and kissed Christ when he went to Gethsemane to betray Him.

2. We know that You are a Teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that You do, except God be with him. Dear Friends, if any of you do not know all about Christ that you wish to know, or that can be known, make use of what you do know about Him. Nicodemus had not yet learned the truth of Christs Deity, but he knew that He was a teacher sent from God, and that God was with Him.

3. Jesus answered and said unto Him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a man is born-again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God. [See Sermon  
#130, Volume 3REGENERATIONRead/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at

http://www.spurgeongems.org.] Christs formula, Verily, verily, I say unto you, was a new style of speech for the Pharisees to hear, for they quoted Rabbi this, and Rabbi thatbut Jesus gives Himself as His own sufficient authority, with an egoism which cannot be blamed and which no true disciple of His ever questions, for Christ is, Himself, the Truth, and whatever He says is to be humbly received by all His followers. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a man is born-again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God. He has no notion of what it really is. He cannot even see it, for he is blind to it until he is born-again. It is for this reason that our most lucid explanations of the Gospel are altogether lost upon unregenerate men and women. However bright a light God may make our ministry to be, bright light is of no use to blind men and they must be born-again before they can even see the Kingdom of God.

4. Nicodemus said unto Him, How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mothers womb and be born? His questions proved that he could not see the Kingdom of God. He blundered over the letter of Christs message. He misunderstood the metaphor that Christ usedbut did Jesus therefore not give Nicodemus any further instruction? Oh, no! Listen.

5. Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a man is born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God. There must be a purifying operation upon his heart and mind, he must be spiritually washed and cleansed, and the Spirit of God must create him anew. Otherwise he cannot possibly enter into the Kingdom of God.

6. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. So that the best child who was ever born, even though he were, like Saul of Tarsus, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews, yet even he, inasmuch as he is born of the flesh, is flesh, and not spirit. Everything which comes to us by our first birth can be nothing better than fleshand what can you get out of flesh but flesh? The only evolution that can come of the flesh is corruption! There must be another birth if you are to get anything but fleshthat which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Fleshly things are understood by the flesh, and spiritual things must be spiritually discerned. Hence the absolute necessity of a second birth, a Spirit birth, that we may first see and then enter the spiritual Kingdom of God.

7. Marvel not that I said unto you, You must be born-again. This ruler of the Jews was full of astonishment at this strange Doctrine, so Christ said to Him, Marvel not.

8. The wind blows. That is, the Spirit blows.   
8. Where it wills, and you hear the sound thereof, but cannot tell from where it comes, and where it goes: so is everyone that is born of the Spirit. This is a great mystery and our Savior connected it with the most mysterious thing in the whole realm of Naturethe winda thing which has never been seen and which must remain a mystery to us, at least while we are upon the earth. Christ uses this mysterious force as an emblem of the Holy Spirit and of those who are born of the Spirit.   
9. Nicodemus answered and said unto Him, How can these things be? He was puzzled and perplexed, like a man in a maze. The Savior had given him something to think aboutand I wish that when we preach to a congregation, or when we talk to individuals, we would not aim at dazzling them with our fine phrases, but would seek to set the Truth of God before their minds, that it might lie there to be studied, and thought of, and to be like seed which, in later days, would germinate and bring forth a harvest to Gods praise and Glory! Our Savior is an example to all of us who preach and, in this instance, He shows us the wisdom of not keeping back the mysteries of the Kingdom of God! I am greatly afraid that many preachers would have begun by talking to Nicodemus of some point that was common to both Judaism and Christianity and that they would have gone on to apologize for the peculiar mysteries of Christianity, all of which would have been a waste of breath and worse than that. Do not so, my Brothers, but speak out the Truth boldly and leave the Eternal Spirit to make use of it as He pleases!   
10-12. Jesus answered and said unto Him, Are you a master of Israel, and know not these things? Verily, verily, I say unto you, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and you receive not Our witness. If I have told you earthly things, and you believe not, how shall you believe if I tell you of heavenly things? The Savior as good as told Nicodemus that He did not come to argue or to reason with him, but to bear witness to absolute certainties of which He Himself was absolutely sure. So He said to him, If you do not receive Our witness concerning these things, which lie on the very threshold of the Kingdomyet, mark you, He had been speaking about regeneration, the great mystery of the new birthit is of no use going on to still higher themes. So it is evident that the Kingdom of Christ requires great faithfaith on the very threshold of itto believe the wondrous mystery of the new birth and still greater faith as deeper Truths, the more heavenly things of the Kingdom are revealed to us.   
13. And no man has ascended up to Heaven, but He that came down from Heaven, even the Son of Man which is in Heaven. Now Nicodemus must have been indeed puzzled! Here was a Man who had come down from Heaven, yet who had gone up to Heaven and was still there, although He was at that moment talking to Nicodemus! Without the Spirit of God to explain the mystery, he could not make heads or tails of it.   
14, 15. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up: that whoever believes in Him should not

perish, but have eternal life. [See Sermon #153, Volume 3THE MYSTERIES OF THE BRONZE SERPENTRead/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at

http://www.spurgeongems.org.] Mark, dear Friends, the blending of the different Truths of God in this wonderful chapter! There is no keeping back the necessity of the new birth and there is no cutting down of the glorious Doctrine of Salvation by Faith in Jesus! He puts the whole matter as broadly as it could be put.

16, 17. For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved. If any one of you says, I cannot cause myself to be born-again, that is quite true. Yet listen to this message in the same chapter which speaks of the new birthFor God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

18. He that believes on Him is not condemned. [See Sermons #361, Volume 7  
NONE BUT JESUSFIRST PART and #362, Volume 7NONE BUT JESUSSECOND PART Read/download the entire sermons, free of charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.] That is a

grand Truth of God!   
18. But He that believes not is condemned already, because he has not  
believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. His not believing is   
the master-sin, the surest evidence of his being, in his heart, an enemy   
to God. If he refuses to trust Christ, the matchless gift of the Fathers   
love, he must be desperately set on mischief and he is condemned   
already. These two Truths of the necessity of the new birth and of the  
fact that everyone who believes on Christ is saved, are quite consistent   
and in perfect harmony with each other. God grant to us the Grace to  
know them both by experience! Never talk about reconciling them, for   
they have never fallen out with one another!. God grant that we may find   
them both true in our own lives, for His dear Sons sake! Amen.

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PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #1455 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

EVERY MANS NECESSITY   
NO. 1455

DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON. You must be born again.   
John 3:7.

WHEN men are perishing all around you it would be cruel to waste time in attempting to interest their minds or to amuse their fancies. We must do something more practical and give earnest heed to their pressing necessities. Is it famine which slays them? Let us feed them. Is it cold? Let us supply them with covering. Is it disease? Let us administer medicine. When the case is urgent, we confine ourselves to necessities and attend with our whole heart to that which must have our attention. That which may can wait, but that which must demands our immediate care.

Now, the spiritual needs of men are urgent and among them the most pressing is their regenerationthey must be born again or they are lost! Therefore, at this time we will dwell on this topic and give it our whole consideration, letting other interesting matters wait till this most weighty business is happily over. This is a must and we must press it upon you at once with our whole heart! Our earnest desire is for a great ingathering of souls to the garner of salvation, but in order to this they must be born again. We have had many of you hovering round about us like birds around the fowler, but you are not, as yet, taken in the Gospel net. This state of things cannot content uswe need to see you decided for Christ and truly born again.

You have long been hearers, but, alas, you remain hearers, only, and are not doers of the Word of God. We do not want the fault to lie with usif you continue unsaved it shall not be because we have not preached the Gospel and kept to preaching it and preached it as a matter of life and death! Again, then, we aim at the one point, the point of absolute necessityYou must be born again. We trust that if one arrow does not reach the mark, another may. At any rate, we will continue driving at the one targetthe conversion of your souls. O you who as yet have not been brought to know the Lord, may the Holy Spirit guide the arrow at this hour!

And now we will have a little simple talk about the great experience called regeneration, or the new birth, without which no man can see the kingdom of Heaven, much less enter it.

I. And we shall remark concerning it, in the first place, that the change which is worked in us by the new birth is MOST THOROUGH. You must be born again. A new birth is the most sweeping and entire process conceivable. It is, in fact, more than a change, it is a creation. Regeneration is a great deal more than reformation of life, or a becoming religious, for it is not, You must be washed, you must be improved, you must be elevated, but, you must be born. It is not enough that the present life, as already possessed, should be renovated; that the existing nature should receive fresh vigor and new tone, but you must be born againa new life must

be received and no improving the present life will suffice in its place.

It is also a great deal more than any change of opinion. I am always afraid of those persons who glory in being converted from one set of religious opinions to another. The best converts to a Church are those who are brought into it from the worldthose who migrate from other sections of Christianity are not often the most valuable acquisitions. Sometimes, like the convicts who leave their country for their countrys good, they benefit their party best by leaving it and do not come to the newly adopted section of the Church as an unmixed gain. The text says not, You must change your opinions and drink in new notions, but, You must have a new nature; you must be born again. Notions may be altered again and again and yet the man may be no nearer being a child of Godbut let the nature be changed by the Holy Spiritand then the matter is accomplished!

This it is and nothing short of this can land a man in Heavenhe must become a new creature in Christ Jesus. The process of the new birth is so thorough that it is a great deal more than an alteration of a mans way of thinking, even upon the best of topics. A man may now think it his duty to be religious, whereas once he was debauched. He may now conceive it to be his duty to be sober, whereas before he was a drunk. He may feel it his duty, now, to be diligent, whereas before he was a sluggard. But all these put together would not amount to a new birth! We rejoice in reformation of any sort. The less sin there is in the world the better, but, for all that, the vital point will not have been reached with all the alterations of thought and even of life, of which a man is capable!

The text remains in force after all the renovations, conversions and reformations that are possible to unaided flesh and bloodand it cries with stern, unchanging voiceYou must be born again. The person concerned may have passed through a long series of ceremonies. He may have been received with a welcome into a so-called church and from the hands of those who think themselves priests there may have distilled the aqueous imposture which is said to regenerate the soul. But there is something more needed than priests can convey, or than water can effect. Our Lord Jesus Christ meant something far other than the hocus pocus of an empty form when He said, You must be born again.

I say in the presence of all that have been baptized in infancy and all that have been baptized in adult age but were not Believersyou, even you, baptized infidelsYou must be born again! If you have been baptized and re-baptized, but are still unbelievers and have not the Spirit of God in your souls, you must be born again. What does all this mean? And what is the signification of this so thorough change? Do not the words evidently mean that a new nature must be created in us? For a life, a nature is the production of a birth. At a birth there comes into the world a life which was not there before.

There must come into us a new life to which, by nature, we are perfect strangerssomething far beyond that which belongs to us as we are born after the flesha life that was not latent in the infant, to be gradually developed in the training of the child, but a life which is altogether absent till Divine Grace implants it there. You must be born againyou must be created again, or as the Scriptures say, Begotten again unto a lively hope. The life within you must be as fresh a creation as was the light when God spoke it, or as was the world when God formed it out of nothing! A work of Divine power must be exercised upon you equal to that which raised the Lord Jesus from the dead and gave Him Glory!

With a new life in the matter of our ordinary birth there begins a new experience. To the new-born child everything is new. Every pain, every sensation of pleasure is all novel to himhe has known nothing of all this before. And though we may have attained to manhood, or even to old age when we are born again, the spiritual life is all a fresh experience. There are new feelings of contrition; there is a new faith; there is a new joy, a new hopeeverything is newOld things have passed away and all things have become new. Though the man may have traversed many paths and experienced many sensations, yet the moment he is born again, he is a stranger in a strange land and he is led in a way which he knows not and in paths which he has not seen. All young souls just born to God, however old they may be as to the bodily reckoning, rejoice in the sacred novelty of the new life and they thank and bless God who has put His hands, a second time, to the work and quickened them into newness of life.

Now, as there is a new life, a new nature and a new experience, so is there to the child born and the man regenerated a new world. It is all new to the childits brothers and sisters surprise it. When it is taken into the open air and sees the green fields for the first time, it marvels at them! To the little one everything is fresh. It lives in a museum; it is surrounded with wonders! Even the toys which grown-up people look upon with so much contempt are quite marvels to the little oneit is charmed with them all. A Christian, a man or woman born again, lives in a new world. It is all new to him now, as I remember to have heard a young girl say, when first she found the Savior. When she came to confess her faith in Christ she said, Either I am altogether changed, or else the world isand I could not help telling her I hoped it was bothI hoped she herself was changed and that this change had produced the other, so that all things had become new.

There is a new Heaven and a new earth reserved for us, by-and-by, and even now, while we are in this world, it is no longer to us what it is to the carnal man. To the twice-born, the world is turned upside down. The things we once loved we cease to care for. Former objects of ambition we count but dross, while things that were contemptible become to us objects of supreme solicitude. The Holy Spirit having changed us, our views of all around us are entirely different. Such must be your experience, dear Hearer, or you will live as carnal men and die in your sins. You

must experience this Divine creation, no matter who you may bethere can be no exceptionsyou must know this great change or be lost!

You may have been dandled on the lap of piety; the name of Jesus may have mingled with the hush of your first lullaby; you may scarcely, at first, have heard any music but that of holy hymns; you may have been taught morality and sanctity by the example of many generations of ancestors. But, be you who you may, or what you may, you must receive a new life and you must pass through a new experienceand you must live in a new world or be lost! You must live in the spiritual world where all is

new. You must converse with God, a thing unknown to you before. You must converse with His Son to whom you have been a stranger. You must feel the power and energy of the Spirit working in you, a matter which you have never known till now, or there is no hope for you!

Note that every birth brings into operation a new force. A new worker is born. He is feeble as yet, but those little feet will yet be strong for running and those tiny hands will yet become dexterous at some useful craft. And so, when a soul is born to God, it feels a new power within and it becomes a new force. It is obedient to a power which it never recognized before and a power is put forth from it which it had not been able to exercise before and did not even understand. A new power has come among men when another soul is born to Godthe spiritual world is stronger and the carnal world is all the weaker for the birth of another spiritual man.

I do not know how to put the matter better than this, but I think I have shown you that regeneration is a most thorough change. To be born again is no childs play. It is not enough for a man to rise under a sermon and say, I have been impressed and touched by it and I believe I am converted. There is a vast difference between saying, I am born again, and really undergoing the heavenly birth. It is not making a profession, or even maintaining it with credit for years which will suffice, for, alas, some have seemed almost Apostles and yet have been altogether sons of perdition! You must come to know vitally, indeed, and of a truth in your own soul what it is for the flesh to be crucified with Christ and for a new life to be implanted in you supernaturally as the work of the Holy Spirit, or else you cannot enter into the Kingdom of God. The work is radical, spiritual, marvelous, Divine!

II. In the second place it is MOST WONDERFUL. It is most wonderful in the sense of mysteryas to the manner of it. It is not easy to preach from this text and attempt to go minutely into details for, if we did so, we might venture too far. I have read treatises upon the subject which were far too destitute of delicacy and calculated to disgust rather than to impress. We do not pry and must not pry into a Divine secret. You hear the sound thereof, but cannot tell where it comes, or where it goes; so is everyone that is born of the Spirit.

Who knows how the Holy Spirit works? That He works by means of the Word of God we know. That He blesses the Truth of God read in a book or heard from the ministerthis we knowbut how it is He enters into the heart; how it is He creates a spirit within us; how he begets in us the spiritual lifewho can tell but God only? But then we do not need to knowit is enough for us to be assured of the factthe manner we need not pry into. The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him. They know experimentally what it is to be born again, but they themselves could not explain how it is that the sacred wind blows, nor how the Spirit operates upon the human heart.

Many discussions there have been as to whether the Spirit of God, as it were, comes nakedly into contact with the nature of man, or whether He always works in and by Truth and thought, and so on. Into all this it is not necessary for us to go. We would rather admire, wonder and adore, for these are better than merely to comprehend since a man may understand all mysteries and yet be as a sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal. It is a mystery as to the supernaturalness of the operation, for true regeneration is always supernatural. There is no doubt that moral persuasion does much with men; that the influence of association will often improve mens manners and habits; that great results may flow from education, especially if it is of the right kind. And that much may be developed in mankind that is admirable, honest, lovely, and of good repute.

But this is nothing to the purpose, since it is not what our Savior meantit falls short of the new birth and is, indeed, quite another thing. The Holy Spirit, the third Person in the blessed Trinity must as much come to work upon us as God came forth to work upon this world in its creation, or else we are not born again. It is not enough that we, of ourselves and in the energy of our old nature begin to pray, repent and so on, for all that which can come of our flesh will still be flesh. In regeneration it is the Spirit who begins by infusing the life and then the new nature begins to pray and repent. That which is born of the Spirit is spirit and, therefore, the new birth must be a spiritual operation in order to produce that spiritual nature without which we cannot see and enter into the things of God.

This is a solemn matter for you, my Hearer, if you have been merely an attendant upon the means of Grace and a lover of the outward forms of religion. Do I mean to tell you that you must undergo a change which is beyond your own working, which all the men in this world and all the angels in Heaven could not work in you, but which God Himself must perform? I do mean thatI mean nothing less than that! Am I to understand, you say, that almighty power must work upon me as much as in my creation? I mean that and that it needs as much power to cause you to be born again as it did to make a world! Yes, and that the same power which raised Jesus Christ from the dead when He had slept three days in the grave is needed in all its fullness to raise you from your death of sin and must be exerted if ever you are raised at all.

It is a wonderful thing that the Spirit of God should condescend to undertake this work and that the Lord should set Himself a second time to the work. It is surprising that when the vessel was marred upon the wheel and spoiled, instead of breaking it up and consigning it to destruction, He should put forth all His power again and fashion the clay to His own model! He stoops to make us twice born, new-created, begotten again, that we might at the last come to wear the image of Jesus, the First-Born among many Brethren. You must be born againthe Infinite Jehovah must deign to be, a second time, our Creator or we must hopelessly perish!

This work is wonderful because of the grandeur of the relationship into which it introduces us. The child that is born has a father from the very fact of its birth and we that are born from above cry, Abba, Father, from the very fact that we are regenerated! Adoption gives us the rights of children, but only regeneration gives us the nature of children! Because we are sons, God sends forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. If I have been born again, no matter what my station in life or position in society, God is my Father and it follows that Jesus Christ is my Brotherand this not merely in form and in name as men call each other Brethren when there is no actual relationshipbut

there is a real relationship between us and Christ Jesus and the Divine Father, for we are made partakers of the Divine Nature.

We are the sons of God, and if sons of God, then are we brothers and sisters of Christ! It must be so and it follows from this that if children, then heirs, and if Christ is the heir, we are joint-heirs with Him. My Brethren, what privileges spring out of the relationship which arises from the new birth, for our Father pledges Himself for our support, for our comfort, for our education, for all that is necessary for our perfection in the day of the home-bringing when we shall see Him face to face! What can happen to a man so great as to be born again? Suppose some of the poorest of the earth who have swept the streets for a paltry pittance should suddenly be elevated by royal favor to the peerage. Or imagine that by some revolution of the wheel of Providence they should become emperors and kingsyet what of that?

The change would be extraordinary and men would wonder at it, for the passages in history which have been thought most noteworthy have been those wherein paupers have mounted from the dunghill to the throne and fishermen have cast aside their rough garments to put on the imperial purple. But these strides from nothingness to greatness are inconsiderable and trifling compared with rising from being a slave of Satan to become a son of God! To be elevated by God Himself from the darkness and degradation and bondage under which we are brought by the Fall and by actual sin, to the liberty, to the glory, to the eternal blessedness of the children of Godthis surpasses all conception! This can only be ours through our being born again!

Our first birth makes us sons of Adam; our second birth makes us sons of God! Born of the flesh, we inherit corruptionwe must be born of the Spirit to inherit incorruption. We come into this world heirs of sorrow because we are sons of the fallen man. Our new life comes into the new world an heir of Glory, because it is descended from the Second Man, the Lord from Heaven! Thus I have spoken upon the wonderful character of this work as well as upon the thoroughness of it.

III. Now, let us remark, in the third place, that wonderful and mysterious as the new birth must always be, it is MOST MANIFEST. The house knows when a child is born. There are mysteries surrounding its birth, but the fact is apparent enough. You shall soon hear its cry in the nursery and before long its prattle in the parlor. You shall see the joy of the parents as they clasp their offspring and the care with which they watch for its good. So in the new birth, we know not how the Spirit works, but we know that He does work and we soon

see that a marvelous change has come over those whom He has made possessors of the heavenly seed, creatures of the new life! Those who know converted persons best are among the first to perceive the transforming miracle of Grace.

Do you not think that Elstow knew when John Bunyan had found the Savior? The bell-ringers knew itthere was no more Sabbath-breaking! And the few poor, godly people that used to meet at Bedford knew it, for he crept into their midst and began to ask them about the things which had become the delight of his soul. We sometimes hear of a person being born again and not knowing ita somewhat singular matter. Yet I suppose that such an event, after a fashion, very commonly happens in the Episcopalian denomination, because if persons are born again in infant baptism there are thousands in London who have undergone the change! But I am sure that they cannot be sure of it, for their own lives would not tell them so and their own emotions and feelings would not lead them to any such belief.

Regeneration is a poor business if these baptized rebels are regenerate! Why, at that rate our prisons swarm with regenerated thieves and our streets are infested with regenerated harlots! And occasionally we have regenerate murderersall born again in their baptism, made children of God, members of Christ and inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven. The lie is sickening! The devil himself laughs at it! Of all transparent falsehoods, surely that of baptismal regeneration is the grossest! It is a marvel that men who live and walk among sane persons should ever fall into it. Ah, Sirs, where the true Heaven-given life is found, there is something to show for it!

Does a man say, I am regenerate? Come, then, Sir, what is the difference in you? What life do you lead? Have you a higher objective than the ordinary sons of men? Are you swayed by higher motives? Are there diviner impulses pulsing in your soul than those which stir the hearts of worldlings? For except your righteousness exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees, the best of worldlings, you cannot enter into the kingdom of God. If the love of Christ within does not make us better than the best of worldly men, we give no evidence of having experienced the renewing work of God the Holy Spirit! The heavenly life is very manifestand it is all the more so from the fact that there are certain signs which always attend and attest the new birth.

Persons may be born again and yet they may not be able to see with us in certain points of doctrine, but there are some things which all the regenerate agree about. For first, every soul that is born again repents of its sin. If a man lives in his sin as he used to do, he must not pretend that he is a twice-born man, or he will mightily deceive himself. If he can look upon sin in the same light as he did before; if he can find pleasure in it, yesif he does not unfeignedly turn from it with loathing and seek the mercy of God to blot it outhe knows nothing of what regeneration is! Again all the regenerate have faith. They all agree in finding the sole ground of their hope in the blood and merit of Jesus. Meet them anywhere and they will tell you they have no confidence except in the Saviors precious blood. He is all their salvation and all their desire. They rest upon this Rock, every one of them, and no matter what high professors they may be, or what lofty offices they hold in the Church, if Christ is not their one and only trust, they know not what it is to be born again!

In addition to this, all that have passed from death unto life pray. If it really rises from the heart, prayer is an infallible mark of the new birth. If it can be said of a man, He does not pray, then he is still dead in his sins, the Spirit of God has not renewed his soul. I might mention some other holy signs which are invariable accompaniments of the new birth, but these three will suffice for all practical purposes. You can test yourselves, Beloved, by them. Have you repented? Have you faith towards God? Do you rejoice to draw near to God in prayer? If these things are in you, they are marks of the new life, for they were never yet found in the

spiritually dead!

Do you groan over sin? A corpse does not groangracious mourning over transgression is one of the surest proofs of inward spiritual life. Trust in Jesus is an equally clear sign of spiritual life, for the dead man does not know what it is to trust. And genuine prayer is equally a certain token of life received from above. A pang of penitential grief, a thought of holy trust and a yearning of inward prayer are more than all the unregenerate upon earth can compass, even though they should be doctors of divinity or cardinals of the church!

This new life, the new birth, is a very manifest thing from the power that it puts into men after it has had time to develop itself. At first converts are trembling and weak, but if they have received the new life they gather strength and there is a power in it which the Church soon rejoices in and which the devil trembles at. This power, of course, can be kept under restraint by unbelief and other follies, but it ought to have full range and should never be repressed. I often wish our Christian people were a little more natural in their expression of what they feel. If any Brother cries, Amen very heartily after prayer, many look at him, but in the primitive Church it was the universal custom of those who joined in prayer to say, Amen, by way of endorsing it and making it their own. I wonder why Christian people have, to so large an extent, given up the practice? It is a most fit and proper one and ought to be restored.

I read the other day of a good Bible Christian Brother who sometimes, when his heart was merry within him with joy in the Holy Spirit, would even leap for joy as he went to the pit to work. Why should he not do so? Yet you do not like the look of it, do you? I would a good deal sooner a man should be as nimble as David before the ark than be as sleepy as some Christians are, who, if they have any joy, repress it and never let it outthey are afraid of expressing their joy for fear they should be misjudged. Let it not be so with you! If you let the new life within you have its own course, you may be thought eccentric, but in those eccentricities will lie your force! Who is he that shall cramp us and hold us in when the eternal Spirit quickens us? If God has blotted out our sins, we will praise and magnify His name! And if we have been delivered from going down into the Pit, we will tell others of it and not hold our tongues!

Even though our testimony may not be delivered in the most classical style and our telling forth of the precious Saviors love may not be all that the educated may wish it to be, yet if we should hold our peace, the stones of the street would cry out and, therefore, we must and we will speak! He that has a well within him bubbling up must let it gush forth and he that has the new life within him will, in one form or other, become a power in the midst of his fellow men and the secret will ooze out that he is a twice-born man! I cannot linger longer. Regeneration is a thorough change and a wonderful changebut it is a manifest change and in some men it is especially so. Be it our aim to prove to a demonstration that we are born from above!

IV. But now, very briefly, regeneration is a MOST IMPERATIVE change. You must, you must, you must be born again! You may be rich or you may be poor, but you must be born again. You may be intelligent, you may be educated, you may be talented, but you must, you must be born again. Many things are desirable, but one thing is necessary, imperatively necessaryyou must, you must, you must be born again!

This imperative necessity may be seen from many points of view. We cannot mention them all, but just one or two. If you are not born again, you have no life, no spiritual life. The first birth gave you bodily life and mental life, but it did not give you spiritual lifeit could not do so, for that which is born of the flesh is flesh and no more. Now, you must have spiritual life or else you are dead in trespasses and sins and to all that has to do with spiritual blessingsto a spiritual Gospel, a spiritual salvation, a spiritual Heavento all these things you are dead as the corpses in their graves are dead to the business of today.

There may be great changes taking place in politicstrade may be very prosperous, or it may be depressed, but the dead man has no interest in the nation or its commercehow can he have? So is it with you. Until you are born again, the spiritual world is shut to you and you are indifferent to it. Angels may be rejoicing and Believers may be rejoicing over saved souls, but you care nothing about it. The Lord Jesus Himself may be seeing of the travail of His soul, but it is nothing to you and it must be nothing to you because you are dead! Oh if our bodies could take the shape of our souls, there would be many carcasses sitting before me in these pews! Ah, strange and ghastly sight! We thank God that He conceals the spiritual from our eyes, else we might, in horror, leave the places where we sit because we should find ourselves in close companionship with the dead! What a horrible thing a dead soul must be if our spirits could now perceive it as our senses would perceive a corpse!

Let us pause here to realize striking facts in this connection. Some of you are linked in marriage with the spiritually dead. Some of you have dwelling in your house the children of your care who are dead while they live. You will sit to-night at the supper table with the spiritually dead! Regard them in that light and your hearts will, perhaps, be moved to pray more intensely for them than you have ever done. You that sit regularly in this place, I would like you to remember this fact when this house is crowded. Think, In my pew there are sitting an unconverted man and an unconverted womanand they are dead. We dont expect them to feel for themselves, but we do expect the living to feel for them. My dear Hearers who are unrenewed, do you not see that you must be born again, for unless you are so, you will remain dead to spiritual things?

Furthermore, remember that a man who is not born again has no spiritual capacity. We must be receivers, first, in the spiritual life, but the dead sinner as yet, until God quickens Him, can receive nothing. How often are the saints of God spiritually comforted, instructed and enriched under the preaching and hearing of the Word of God? But it is their spiritual nature that receives the enrichment. The unregenerate have no spiritual nature they are carnal, sold under sintheir mental powers, as well as their bodily appetites, are enslaved. Therefore they have no power to receive the blessing. The gracious and ever-blessed rain of the Spirit comes, but they are not like Gideons fleece ready to drink it in, but like a hard stone upon which the drops may descend but cannot be saturated with the moisture, nor softened by it. Unregenerate men are broken cisterns which it is vain to attempt to fill. Even if Gods own Grace were to come to them it could

not be retained, for they have not the capacity to hold it.

Only the spiritual can receive the spiritual! You must, then, be born again to have a spirit by which spiritual things are discerned and received. Do you not see that you must be born again? Once more, you must be born again because without the Sprit of God you are not the children of God and, consequently, you have no spiritual inheritance. The Spirit causes us to be bornthat birth makes us children and our being children makes us heirs. If we are not born again we are not children, therefore we are not heirs and we are out of the heritage, for Gods heritage of Glory is for the heirs of Grace and for none others. And none shall come into the eternal portion but those who are born in His house and are His true sons and daughters. Universal fatherhood, whatever that may be, brings us common mercies, but it is the special fatherhood which God has towards the living in Zion which brings us special blessings!

You must, then, be born again or lose all share in the Divine inheritance. No soul can ever cross the threshold of Heaven that has not received the new life. No matter how abundant its prayers, nor how multiplied its acts of religiousness, unless it has been born again, the gates of Paradise are forever fastened against it. Banished from the Presence of Jehovahs Glory, there is only one other place where it can dwelland that must be where their worm dies not and their fire is not quenched. You must be born again.

V. I will finish my discourse by saying that this new birth is EMINENTLY PERSONAL. You must be born again. The idea of proxy is quite apart from the figure of the text. A man is born himself, in propria personano other can be born for himso here the change which must be worked in us must be personally experienced and individually known and felt. What delusion it is to fall back upon a parents godliness or a godfathers promises, or to imagine that the minister or the so-called priest can stand before God for us! Youyou must be born again and if you are not, you shall never enter the Kingdom of God!

Now, I think I hear passing through the congregation at this moment the whisper of many hearts who are saying, This is very discouraging. We like to hear, Only believe and you shall be saved. We are glad to be told that, whoever believes in the Lord Jesus Christ has everlasting life. But this distresses us, for it does not open the door as wide as we could wish. Believe me, I am very glad to tell you of the free and wide Gospel of Grace! It is joyful work for me to bring that welcome message to you and I am sure I bring it as constantly as I come upon this platform. My most frequent note isLook unto Christ and be saved all you ends of the earth. But at the same time, God forbid that you should be built up upon a false foundation, or that your faith and confidence should stand apart from the Truth of God as it is in Jesus. It will be found to be wood, hay and stubble if it is so.

But you say my sermon is discouraginghad you not better ask, Is it true? A person has been building a house and we see him piling up stones, but he has never dug out a foundation! It is certainly discouraging to him to tell him that it is not the right way to build a house, but it will be a great mercy for him to be discouraged in a work which is so foolish. It will be a great saving to him, in the long run, if all that he has already built should come down at once and he should even now begin at the beginning once more and lay a good foundation and make sure work of it. It would be foolish to cry out, Do not discourage him! He ought to be discouraged. Yes, indeed, we would discourage all that will end in disappointment. The fact is, your efforts, your doings and your merits, all of them, at their very best, must be a failure and it is a good thing for us to tell you so.

But what am I to do? asks one. That, permit me to remind you, is not the best question for you to ask, for if the work of salvation were what you must do, surely it would be left undone! You may put the question, What must I do to be saved? but we will point you away from doing and we will tell you to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, that you may be saved. If you persist in saying, What must I do, we will tell you that the sooner you look away from all that you can do, the betterfor the work of salvation from sin is the work of the Spirit of God in you and you must come to look to Him through Jesus Christ that He may work in you all those graces and gifts which shall adorn your future life. Faith looks to the blood of Jesus for the pardon of sin and then looks to Him for His Spirit to overcome the power of sin within the heartnor does she look in vainbut if you look elsewhere you will search till your eyes fail you and never see your desire.

Would to God we could bring you, not only to discouragement, but to despair of yourselves! When you shall feel you are powerless we shall have hope of you, for then you will leave yourselves in the hands of Him who can do all things! When selfs strength is gone, Gods strength will come in. Oh, but you tell me I must have Divine power working in me. We do tell you thatwe can tell you nothing lessand if that power is ever at work in your soul, its first effect will be to bring you to confess this and you will fall down before the footstool of Divine Mercy and say, Lord save me, or I perish. God be merciful to me a sinner. I do not want to rouse your activity, you unconverted peopleI want to rouse you to the conviction that you are lost and I pray God the Holy Spirit may so convince you! I wish not to make you think, we can cure ourselves, but oh that you would feel that you are diseased and that, though you have destroyed yourselves, your remedy lies in a higher handthat you must look to Jesus, only, for healing!

To get the supernatural element into the matter is that which we would strive for and may God the Holy Spirit help us in it. We would have you look away from what is in you or can come from you and trust to what Christ did on the Cross, to what the gracious Father is waiting, still, to do and what the Holy Spirit is sent on purpose to work in you that you may be saved! Oh that you may begin to pray for the Divine power! May you never rest in anything short of the Divine working in your spirit. It is to this we would bring you!

Now you know all this and have known it for years, the most of you. To know itah, how great a privilege if not abused! How great a responsibility if the knowledge shall end here! Yet to know it, oh how sad unless you feel it! To feel that, I must be born again, and to be wretched till I am renewed in heart is a good beginning! I pray that you may go home and feel, There is no pillow in this world that will suit my head till I have laid it

upon the Saviors bosom. There is no bliss that can give me solace till I have found pardon in the wounds of my Redeemer. God grant you may sigh and pant in this way and we shall then believe that you are regenerate! May you receive the Lord Jesus and He will give you power to become the sons of God, for those who believe in Him were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God!

Then shall you know the secret of regeneration and the Lord, Himself, shall be revealed in you. Then shall you know that you are blessed of the Lord, for flesh and blood could not have revealed this unto you. May the Holy Spirit be within you evermore. Amen.

**PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMONJohn 3:1-21.** HYMNS FROM OUR OWN HYMN BOOK456, 448, 461. TO MY HEARERS AND READERS AT THE TABERNACLE AND ELSEWHERE:

BELOVED FRIENDSBy the tender kindness of God, the journey here was made without excessive fatigue and now I trust that genial weather will bring with it rapid restoration. This place has participated in the severe weather which has swept over the Continent, so that I miss, just now, the bright sunshine to which I have been formerly accustomed. Yet it is comparatively warm and so far is beneficial to an invalid. Rest is the main thing and rest I hope to find, that I may come back to you strengthened for sacred service.

It is at the request of many that I write these few lines, otherwise I should be better content to say nothing about myself. Tottering on my staff today in weakness, I hopefully look forward to the time when I shall stand among you in fullness of vigor. God grant that mental and, above all, spiritual strength may be given me for the preaching of the Word in your midst and that my long bodily affliction may assist to that end.

I trust I shall not be forgotten in your prayers when it is well with you. I hope also that the various enterprises such as the College and Orphanage will not be allowed to languish because their President is ill. Peace be to you all. Yours very heartily,   
*C. H. SPURGEON.*   
MENTONE, January, 1879

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**THE NECESSITY OF REGENERATION   
NO. 3121**

**A SERMON   
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, DECEMBER 3, 1908.**

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, NOVEMBER 29, 1874.

*Marvel not that I said unto you, You must be born-again. John 3:7.*   
[See Sermon #130, Volume 3REGENERATION   
Read/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.]

WE need not wonder that there are some mysteries in our holy faith, for there are mysteries everywhere. In Nature there are ten thousand things that we cannot understand. In our own bodies there are inexplicable mysteries. He who thinks for only a little while, even of so simple a matter as to how it is that food is gradually turned into flesh, knowing how impossible it would be for us to do it by any chemical process or mechanical apparatus, will see that there is a mystery in every human lifea secret chamber into which the eyes of man cannot look. There are mysteries all around us at this very moment. If we go outside this building, we shall, like Nicodemus, observe that the wind blows. We know it blows, for we hear the sound of it, but as to from where it comes, or where it goes, we know nothing. As there are mysteries in Nature, as there are mysteries in our own bodies, as there are mysteries all around us even in the most commonplace things, it is not remarkable that there should be mysteries in the Kingdom of God!

Yet Christ, by using the metaphor of the wind, shows us that the mystery is a matter of fact and that the mystery can be turned to practical account, for though we do not understand all about the wind, yet we know when it is blowing. And though we cannot comprehend it, we can make use of it. The wind has been employed in a thousand ways in the service of man and it is not necessary that we should understand it in order to make use of it. A man may be an admirable sailor and yet know nothing about the origin of the wind. If he does but understand how to hoist, or shift, or furl his sail, he will do well enough. So is it with the mysteries of the Kingdom of Godalthough we cannot understand them, the practical use of them is a matter of such simplicity that we shall do well to learn what it is.

I am not going to attempt to explain the mystery of the new birththat is altogether beyond my powers. I can only explain its results. But there is one point upon which I want to fix your attention and that is that if you are ever to be saved, you must experience this new birth. Must is for the king, we say, and it was the King of kings who said, You must be born-again. My text belongs to the absolute necessitiesthis is a Truth of God that cannot be put aside! You must be born-again. If you are ever to enter the Kingdom of God, or even to see itif you are ever to be reconciled to the God whom you have so greatly offendedYou must be born-again.

But what is it to be born-again? I have already said that I cannot tell you how the Spirit of God operates upon the unregenerate, making them to be new creatures in Christ Jesus. I know that He usually operates through the Wordthrough the proclamation of the Truth of the Gospel. So far as we know, He works upon the mind according to the laws of mind by first illuminating the understanding. He then controls the judgment, influences the will and changes the affections. But over and above all that we can describe there is a marvelous power which He exerts which must remain among the inscrutable mysteries of this finite state, even if we can never comprehend it. By this power such a wondrous effect is produced that a man becomes a new man as much as if he had returned to his native nothingness and had been born-again in an altogether higher sphere! A new nature is created within him, although the old nature is not entirely eradicated. It will ultimately be destroyed, but it is not destroyed at first. Yet a new nature is born within the man, a nature which hates what the old nature loved, and loves what the old nature hateda new nature which is akin to the Nature of God! That is a wonderful sentence in Peters second Epistle, that by these you might be partakers of the Divine Nature. In his first Epistle, he writes concerning being born-again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God which lives and abides forever. This living seed is sown within our hearts and there it begins to grow, first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. The new birth is the implanting of that living seed within the soulit is the creation within us of that new, Divine, immortal life. We must have that life or we cannot see or enter the Kingdom of God.

My subject is the imperative necessity of regeneration and I want to show you, first, that the new birth is a great necessity. And, secondly, to ask, have we all experienced it?

I. First, then, I want to show you that THE NEW BIRTH IS A GREAT NECESSITY.   
That it is a necessity is quite certain, because it is Jesus Himself who says, You must be born-again, and Jesus cannot err. Unless we are prepared to reject Him altogether, we must believe Him to be the Infallible Teacher sent from God. Yet He says, You must be born-again, and you may depend upon it that you must if you are ever to be saved. He was of a gentle, loving spirit. He never bound heavy burdens upon mens shoulders which they were not able to bear. He was so gentle that the little children gathered around His knees and He took them up in His arms and blessed them. I am sure that if He could have said, You can enter the Kingdom of Heaven without experiencing the new birth, He would have said so. He said, Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way which leads unto life, because He must speak the Truth of God. In other places, how blessedly has He set the gate of mercy wide open, saying, If any man thirsts, let him come unto Me and drink. And His last Gospel invitation is, Whoever will, let him take the water of life freely. The words of our text become all the more solemn because they drop from the lips of Him who would not exclude a single soul from everlasting happiness unless the Truth of God required Him to do so. It is the kinder, gentle, loving Christ who says, You must be born-again, and so shuts and bars the gate of Heaven against the admission of the unregenerate!   
The necessity of regeneration is universal, for Christ addressed this message to a man who was the type of a class of persons who might be exempted from the new birth if any might. Is was Nicodemus, a man who sincerely wished to know the Truth and who was truly desirous to be informed as to the way of salvation. He came to Christ, not with any traitorous design of catching Him in His speech, but keenly desirous to learn what the God-sent Teacher had to tell him. Yet Nicodemus could not enter the Kingdom of God until he was born-again, nor can the most earnest enquirer nor the keenest searcher after the Truth of God! It is an excellent thing to have an honest heart and a candid mind, but Christ says even to such men, You must be born-again. I delight to meet with honest-minded persons even if they are opposed to the Gospel, for I have often found that their honesty compels them to yield to the claims of the Gospel when it is faithfully set before them. Several of the first followers of Christ were plain, blunt fishermen, honest after their fashion, yet they had to be born-againit does not matter how good a man may be, or how earnest he may be in seeking to find the Truth of Godhe cannot escape from the necessity which applies to the entire human race! You must be born-again.   
Moreover, Nicodemus was a wise man, well taught in the Scriptures. To be a Rabbi required a thorough education in the Old Testament Scriptures and doubtless Nicodemus was equal to the rest of the Sanhedrim to which he belonged. But the study of Scripture, admirable as that is, will not save the soul without the new birth. It is not merely reading about Christ, but having Christ formed in us, the hope of Glory, that will really save us. The Spirit of God has written the Scriptures in this blessed Book but that same Spirit must write those Truths in our heart, or else the Truths will, so far as salvation is concerned, be valueless to us. No amount of knowledge that you can acquire, even a doctors degree of divinityno amount of skill in imparting knowledge to others, even though you should be a master in Israelwill enable you to enter Heaven without being born-again!   
Moreover, in addition to being a wise man, and a naturally good man, Nicodemus was a very religious man. He was a man of the Pharisees, a ruler of the Jews. The Pharisees were very specially a religious sect they pushed their observances to the extreme point and all the minutiae of external ritual were carefully attended to by them. They were great believers in fasting, in almsgiving, and in oft-repeated prayers. They were the High Churchmen of that period, yet to the most conscientious Pharisees, Christ had to say, You must be born-again. The Pharisee might be particular as to the tithing of mint and anise and cummin, and the straining out of gnats from the wine that he drank, or he might abstain from it altogetherbut all this availed him nothing unless he was born-again! Regeneration is the universal necessity of the entire human family. This text would suit a congregation of kings and princes, peers of the realm and bishops, quite as well as a congregation of vegetable sellers, drunks, harlots and convicts. To all of woman born, this necessity comes without a single exceptionYou must be bornagain.   
This necessity is evident if we consult the authority of Scripture. Consider its testimony conceiving what man is by nature. The Word of God never flatters us. It tells us that there is none righteous, no, not one; there is none that understands, there is none that seeks after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that does good, no, not one. The whole head is sick and the whole heart faint. From the soles of the feet even unto the head there is no soundness in it, but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores. The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. Now, if this is your ruined condition, you must be born-again if you are ever to enter the Kingdom of God. Mending you, patching you up, revising you, reforming you will be of no availyou must be new-created, nothing less than that will suffice for you

*Not all the outward forms on earth,   
Nor rites that God has given,   
Nor will of man, nor blood, nor birth,   
Can raise a soul to Heaven.   
The Sovereign Will of God alone   
Creates us heirs of Grace   
Born in the image of His Son,   
A new peculiar race.*   
Remember also what even the Gospel requires of men. Men can hear the Gospel, for they have ears, but they cannot understand it until the Spirit of God opens their minds and hearts to receive it. Unto this day it happens unto men as unto the generation in Christs day that though they have ears, they hear not, and though we speak unto them, they do not perceive, for how shall the fleshly man receive spiritual things? The unregenerate heart can no more understand the Gospel than a horse can understand astronomyit is altogether beyond the comprehension of the carnal man! When we use a simple metaphor, he takes it as literally, as Nicodemus did when the Lord said to him, Except a man is born-again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God, and he foolishly asked, Can he enter a second time into his mothers womb and be born? When Christ talked to the woman at the well of Sychar about the living water, she said at once, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come here to draw. And, today, when Christ says concerning the bread at the communion, Take, eat, this is My body, the carnally-minded say that the bread is turned into flesh, not having the spiritual discernment to be able to comprehend even the simplest metaphors which the Lord Jesus Christ is pleased to use! Spiritual things must be spiritually discerned and, therefore, the carnal mind cannot discern them!   
The Graces which appear at the very dawn of the Gospel in the heart are wholly above the reach of man. The Gospel says, Repent. The unregenerate man loves his sins and will not repent of them. He presses them to his bosom and until his nature is changed, he will never look upon them with abhorrence and sorrow. The Gospel says, Believe; cast away all confidence in your own merits and believe in Jesus. But the carnal mind is proud and it says, Why should I believe and be saved by the works of another? I want to do something myself that I may have some of the credit for it, either by good feelings, or good prayers, or good works of some kind. Repentance and faith are distasteful to the unregeneratethey would sooner repeat a thousand formal prayers than shod a solitary tear of true repentance! They would sooner work their way to Heaven even if they had to pass through Hell itself to get there, than come and simply receive salvation for nothing as the gift of God by Jesus Christ. Brothers and Sisters we must be born-again because the Truth of the Gospel cannot be understood and the commands of the Gospel cannot be obeyed except where the Spirit of God works regeneration in the heart!   
As for the privileges of the Gospel, such as communion with Christ, what does the unregenerate man care about that? Access to God, acceptance in the Beloved, adoption into the family of Godhe knows nothing about these things and does not want to know about them. Give him prosperity in his business and happiness in his household, and he is perfectly satisfied without the treasures of the Covenant of Grace, or a saving interest in the Lord Jesus Christ. You may call him to the Gospel feast, but he will not come, for he sees nothing to come for. You may invite him, as you ought to do, but he will say, I must go to my farm to try my new yoke of oxen or, I must go to my newly-wedded wife, so I pray you have me excused. He will do anything rather than come to the banquet which eternal love has spread because, until he is regenerated, he cannot appreciate the privileges which the Gospel presents to him.   
And, Brothers and Sisters, you must be born-again, because it is impossible for you to ever enter Heaven unregenerate. On earth you cannot have peace with God without the new birth. God will never be reconciled to the flesh. It is a filthy thing which must be put away. The old nature must be dead and buried. The ordinance of Believers Baptism is meant to teach us that great Truth of God. It is not the putting away of the filth of the flesh that was done by circumcision, but in the New Covenant it is the burial of the flesh altogether! It must be reckoned to be dead and buried with Christ and so be put right away once and for all. Oh, that the Holy Spirit would work this with each one of us! Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God. And that which, in our mental nature, is called the flesh cannot inherit the Kingdom of God. Is must die and be utterly put away as a corrupt thing! We can only enter Heaven through the possession of the heavenly life by virtue of having been made new creatures in Christ Jesus. Do you, dear Friends, know experimentally what this mean?   
I have to make this further observation, that this necessity is not to be escaped. You may do what you will, my dear Hearer, and I trust you will be in real earnest in seeking the salvation of your soul, but when you have done your best and your utmost, you must be born-again! Were you from this time to give yourself diligently to searching the Scriptures, you must be born-again. Did you ever notice the very strong light in which Christ put that matter of searching the Scriptures? Read aright, the text says, You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life: and they are they which testify of Me: but you will not come unto Me that you might have life. Many a Bible-reader is content with his Biblereading but never comes to Christ! Yet Bible-searching alone will not suffice for salvation, You must be born-again. If you were to become, from this time, regular in private devotion and constant in attendance upon public ordinances, this declaration would still stand, You must be born-again. If you are to be saved, you must have a new heart and a right spirit and these you cannot get for yourself. A tree may shoot out a new branch, but it cannot change its nature. You must be born-again, born from above, so our Savior tells us. There must be worked in you a work which is impossible to you, a work which only God, the Holy Spirit, Himself, can perform, or else you cannot see the face of God with acceptance.   
Yes, and in addition to anything that you can do, ministers may do all that they can do for you, but they cannot take you to Heaven, nor make you Gods childyou must be born-again. I thank God for any revival that produces any genuine results but just because I rejoice in revivals of the right kind, I tremble as I think of many of the supposed converts who are only converted to self-conceit and other delusionsand not to real faith in Jesus Christ. I charge you, by the living God, everyone of you, not to trust to mere excitement, or fancy as a ground of salvation! You must be made new creatures in Christ Jesusyour very nature must be changedthe whole bent, current and tenor of your life must be altered and that not by human arguments and persuasions, but by the Holy Spirits power, or else into Gods Kingdom you cannot come! All the praying parents, praying preachers, praying ministers and revivalists in the world cannot save a single soul! It must be born-again and when it is born-again, they do not work the miracleGod may bless their teaching, but the Holy Spirit must have all the praise for itfor He alone works this wondrous change!   
Let me also say to you that there is nothing in the world that can stand in the place of your being born-again  
*Could your zeal no respite know,   
Could your tears forever flow,*

this text would still remain true, You must be born-again. There it stands in front of the gate of Heaven and to every one of you the question is put, Can you produce the evidences and tokens of the new birth? If you can, you may enter. But if you cannot, you can in no wise enter the Kingdom of Heaven. This necessity is most pressing upon you all. I feel as if I could stand over some of you and weep as I say to you, You must be born-again. I have told you again and again about judgment to come, but it does not affect you. I have preached to you about Christs life, death and Resurrection, but it does not move you. In a short time you will be upon your dying beds and no one will be able to help you, then, unless you are born-again! In a little while you will be in eternityand unless you are born-again, you will be driven from the Presence of God forever into the outer darkness where there will be weeping, wailing and gnashing of teeth! O Sirs, You must be born-again or you will be damned! You must be born-again or you can never stand among the white-robed throngs that hymn the praises of Jesus! By the love we bear to you, we declare that you must be born-again! A mothers tears, a fathers prayers, a ministers entreaties all seem to cry to God, Lord, our children, our hearers must be born-again. Oh, work this great miracle for Your love and mercys sake! I should weary you if I kept on harping upon this string, but I do want to get this Truth of God right into your souls. It does not much matter whether you remember what I say or what any other preacher says, for we may err, but our text does not err, it is the Infallible Truth of God write it in capital lettersYOU MUST BE BORN-AGAIN!

II. Now, secondly, I want very briefly to answer this question, HAVE WE EXPERIENCED THIS NEW BIRTH?   
Perhaps somebody says, Well, I was born-again by baptism. I am told that in my baptism, I was made a member of Christ, a child of God and an inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven. Yes, you were told that, but I will ask you one question, were you really made all that by your so-called baptism? I was sprinkled when I was a child, but I know that I was not thereby made a member of Christ, a child of God and an inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven! I know that nothing of the kind took place in me, but that, as soon as I could, I went into sin and continued in it. I was not born-again, I am sure, till I was about 15 years of age, when the Lord brought salvation so my soul through the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit and so I was enabled so trust in Jesus as my Savior. You say that your prayer book teaches you that you were born-again in baptism but again I ask you, Were you? Have you lived like one who has been bornagain? Have you loved Divine things? Have you really been a child of God? Have you really hated sin and put your trust in Christ? If you have, I am not going to deny facts. But when I see myriads of persons who were said to have been born-again in baptism, turn out as bad as drunkards, swearers, adulterers and even murderers who have

not been sprinkled, I really cannot put any confidence in such a baptism as that! The fact is, baptismal regeneration [See Sermon #573, Volume 10BAPTISMAL

REGENERATIONthe Sermon which has had the largest circulation of any in the whole of Mr. Spurgeons discourses!Read/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at

http://www.spurgeongems.org.] is a lie, a wicked invention of Popery, without the slightest warrant in the Word of God! Not one has ever been born-again in baptism, nor ever can be! Regeneration, in the Scriptures, is always put side by side with faith, as anybody can see who will read the Scripture without prejudice, seeking to know the Truth of God that is there revealed. There is nothing in so called sacraments upon which a soul can rest for salvation. If you have been baptized and even if you have been immersedwhich is the only true Baptismunless the Spirit of God has regenerated you, You must be born-again, born from above.

Someone asks, How am I to know whether I have been born-again? Well, one of the first evidences of regeneration is faith in Jesus Christ, for wherever there is a sincere trust in Jesus Christ, the new birth must have been experienced. This belief was described by Christ as the work of God. When He was asked, What shall we do that we might work the works of God, He answered, This is the work of God, that you believe on Him whom He has sent. To Nicodemus, Jesus said, He that believes on Him is not condemned. To the Jews who sought to kill Him, He said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that hears My word, and believes on Him that sent Me, has everlasting life. So that faith is the evidence of the possession of that new life which shall last foreverthat life which is imparted in regeneration.

Another evidence of the new birth is repentance. Sorrow for sin is one of the sure signs of the new Nature. The new-born Christian hates the sins he loved before and continues to hate them. And the longer he lives, the more he mourns that he ever committed them. His loathing of sin grows with his growth in Divine Grace and sin is never so hateful to a man as when he is most fully sanctified. The nearer we get to Heaven the more ashamed we shall be of ever having been guilty before God.

Sincere prayer is another sure evidence of regeneration. What was said to Ananias concerning Saul of Tarsus, as a proof that he was a chosen vessel unto the Lord? Behold, he prays. It was not in a Prayer Meeting that he was praying, but all by himselfand the man who is in the habit of communing with God in secret prayer is a living man, for prayer is the vital breath of the soul. One of the signs that a new-born child is living is a crywhen a man cries to God out of his very soul, you know that he is a living child of the living God.

You may also know whether you are born-again by asking yourself another questionDo you feel a new life within you which you never had before? Well, says one, I never experienced any change that I know of. I always was good. Then I am afraid you have formed a wrong estimate of yourself and that you never were what you call, good. Well, says the self-righteous man, I really do not think there was any necessity for any such change as you have been speaking of. Ah, but it is not a question of what you thinkwhat says the text? You must be born-again. But, say others, we had godly parents. We had an excellent example set before us. We were taken, when we were little children, to hear the Word of God and we have been regular attendants upon the ministry all our days. All that does not alter the fact, you must be born-again, or else all these privileges will only increase your responsibility! Jesus still says to you, Except you are converted and become as little children, you shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. Repent and be baptized, everyone of you, was the answer of the Apostle Peter to those who asked what they must do to so saved. Repentance is necessary in every case there must be this radical change which shall make you loathe what you once loved and love what you once loathed. I dare not diminish one jot or tittle of the absolute necessity of the case, for I have to answer at the judgment bar of God for what I tell you. If I should flatter you into some vain hope for which there is no solid foundation, you might at the last turn round upon me and say, You deceived us into the belief that we were saved when we were not! I will not do that and, therefore, I say to you You must be born-again.

Do you, then, feel this new life within you? Have you desires that you never used to have? Have you hopes you never had before? Have you fears you never had before? In fact, have you got into a new world where old things have passed away and all things have become new? Do you feel like that woman who said, Either the world is altogether changed, or else I am? And is this the result of the change that has taken place in youyou now love God, you now seek to please Him, spiritual things are now realities to you, now the blood of Jesus is your only trustyou now desire to be made holy, even as God is holy? If there is such a new life as that in you, however feeble it may be, though it is only like the life of a new-born child, you are born-again and you may rejoice in that blessed fact!

Ah, somebody says, I fear that this kind of preaching will be very discouraging to a great many people. Well, how will it discourage them? It will discourage them from trying to save themselves. That is the very thing that I want to do! I would like not only to discourage them from attempting that impossible task, but to cast them into despair concerning it! When a man utterly despairs of being able to save himself, it is then that he cries to God to save himso I believe that we cannot do a man a better turn than to discourage him from ever resting upon anything that he can do towards saving himself!

Well, says another, but it is apt to make sinners look within. It is? Have I ever said a word about sinners looking within? I have not said that you are to make yourselves to be born-again, but I have said that you must be born-again by the effectual working of the Holy Spirit. Surely that does not make sinners look within! It makes them look above to Someone infinitely higher than themselves. The fact is, dear Friends, that the preaching of the necessity of the new birth must be continued because it is true. It is in the Word of God and, as it is there, it is there for a definite purpose and it ought not to be put into the background, or must not be so treated. I believe that wherever there is the work of Grace in the soul, preaching the necessity of the new birth deepens that work. I know that a great many profess to come to Christ and I hope that they really do come to Him, although they have never felt what some of us experienced when we were under conviction of sin. Well, if they have come to Christ, it is all right and I am glad. But I am still a believer in the old-fashioned type of conversion and I do not think there are many new births without pangs, or that many souls come to Christ without alarms of conscience and much sorrow of heart on account of sin. When I was converted, sinners used to come to Christ in this way. They looked by faith at Him whom they had pierced by their sins and mourned for Him as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn. I think I have seldom seen a conversion turn out well that had not the foundations of it laid in some measure of abhorrence of sin, loathing of self and utter despair of any salvation except by the Sovereign Grace of God. Remember, Brothers and Sisters, that that which is born of the flesh is flesh and nothing better, andall flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower thereof falls away. It is only the word of the Lord and the work of the Lord that shall endure forever! Therefore I pray that if there is any work in you at all, it may be Gods work and not my work, or the work of any earnest man striving to stir you up, but the real work of God the Holy Spirit from first to last.

If I were in a state of anxiety about my soul and heard such a sermon as this, it would make me feel, Oh, how dependent I am upon the Spirit of God! It would compel me to breathe from my inmost soul this prayer, O Lord, save me! I think that it would drive me, in despair of doing anything to save myself, to cast myself into the Saviors arms that He might give me of that Spirit by which I should be born-again. And remember that the moment a sinner does that, he is born-again! As soon as ever he casts himself upon Christ, he has passed from death unto life and the miracle of regeneration has been worked in him!

I think, dear Friends, that when we solemnly preach the necessity of regeneration, it has the good effect of overthrowing all that which is false in men and most, if not all of that which comes of humanity, is false. You may grow mushrooms out of almost any filthiness you choose to put down, but the Rose of Sharon needs a different soil from that! You can easily grow men and women who say they are Christians and who are very earnest for a month or two, and then go back to the world again. It is the Holy Spirit alone who creates that life which is everlasting! In the case of those who are mere professors, a very little reproof has the effect of making them go away because they are offended, but it is not so with the true possessors of Divine Grace. That which is of our heavenly Fathers planting will never be rooted up, but it will endure all tests that may so applied to it. I know that when I went to see the minister about making a profession of my faith in Christ, I hoped that he would test me, and try me, and probe me, for I wanted him to find me out if I was a hypocrite or self-deceivedand I think that every genuine convert feels very much as I did. We do not want to have any superficial work. We do not want the work to be slurred, we want it to be done thoroughly so that it will last throughout eternity! I do not want to have any peace except it is real peace through the precious blood of Jesus. To cry, Peace, peace where there is no peace, is a terrible thing which will be sure to end in overwhelming despair, or else in fatal presumption which is still worse.

I am sure that the preaching of the necessity of regeneration is one of the most effectual ways to injure Satans cause, for nothing else will avail for the conversion of a big sinner, a ringleader in the devils army. John Bunyan once said a very strange thing. He said that he had great hopes concerning the generation following his own because the young people in his time were so very wicked. He thought that if they were savedand he expected that many of them would besuch great sinners as they had been would make great saints. He knew what he had, himself, been, and what the Grace of God had made of himand that gave him hopes for others. It was an odd way of putting it, but he was right. And if the Lord should take some big sinner here and transform him or her into a saint, what a grand alteration it would make in their homes! Perhaps it would affect a whole parish! I have known some leaders in sin whose conversion has really had a wonderful influence over the whole countryside where they livedthose who used to be drinking and sporting with them have said to one another, Have you heard what has come to old Tom? No, whats up with him? Why, he says that he has been converted! I met him the other day and I said to him, Whats the latest news? and he said to me, The best news I have ever heard is that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the chief. I cant make out what has happened to him! Then everybody says, There is something in that religion which has laid hold of him.

I remember well, in my first pastorate, the time when the biggest drunk in Waterbeach joined the Church. His conversion crowded the place at once! People said, Well, if that young mans ministry has been a blessing to such an old sinner as that, there is something in it, you may depend upon it!And they came out of curiosity to hear the Word of God. The best gamekeepers are those who used to be poachers and the best preachers to great sinners are those who were once just such as they themselves are! They know the ins and outs of a sinners heart and they can talk from experience instead of from theory. When a man has been in the fire and has the smell of it still upon him, he is the one to warn others not to meddle with fire and by means of such sinners, saved by Grace, God shakes Satans kingdom to its very center and translates sinners from it into the Kingdom of His dear Son! Such conversions as these, like all true conversions, can only be worked by the Holy Spirit.

I pray you all to adore the Holy Spirit, think of Him always with the profoundest reverence. Christian men and women who have been quickened by His power, invoke His might to rest upon you whenever you go about Gods work, for without Him you can do nothing! Pray in the Holy Spirit, preach in the Holy Spirit and do not believe in the conversion of a single soul apart from the Spirit of God! Go and preach, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved, as fully and as freely as you can, but remember that your preaching cannot, of itself, raise one soul out of its lost estate. This will be your comfortthat the Spirit of God will work with you and through you if you rely upon Him and depend wholly upon Him! I tell you, Sinners, all of you without exception, that if you will come to Jesus Christ and simply trust Him, you shall have salvation and shall have it at once! But my reliance upon any result of my proclamation of the Gospel is not based upon my hope that you will be so well disposed as to come, or upon my confidence that my way of putting the Truth of God will lead you to come to Christ. No! I have not a shadow of reliance, either upon you or upon myself! But I do have this confidence, that if I faithfully preach Jesus Christ and Him crucified, He will draw sinners unto Himself and I believe that He will save some out of this congregation, though I know not who they may be. You are like a heap of steel filings and ashes before meit is no business of mine to separate you. My business is to thrust in the magnet and that will do it! You who will accept Christ as your Savior may have Himyou who will not accept Him must perish in your sin!

But if you do accept Christ, it is because the Spirit of God has led you to do so and has given you the new birth which enables you to do it! If you reject Him, on your own heads be your blood forever. This is a solemn matter. I hope that what I have said will make you think that it is so and that before you go to your beds, you will shake off the idea that this is a very small matter to be attended to whenever you like and to be trifled with as long as you pleasebut that, instead thereof, you will each one say, O God, I see that You alone can save me! You can crush me, or You can save me. I have no claim upon You. If You destroy me, You will be just, yet save me, Lord, for Your dear Sons sake! Amen.

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PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #1356 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

THE HEAVENLY WIND   
NO. 1356

**DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, MAY 27, 1877, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell from where it comes, and where it goes: so is everyone that is born of the Spirit.   
John 3:8.**

THE Holy Spirit is to be admired, not only for the great Truths of God which He teaches us in Holy Scripture, but also for the wonderful manner in which those Truths are balanced. The Word of God never gives us too much of one thing or too little of another. It never carries a doctrine to an extreme, but tempers it with its corresponding doctrine. Truth seems to run at least in two parallel lines, if not in three, and when the Holy Spirit sets before us one line He wisely points out to us the other. The truth of Divine Sovereignty is qualified by human responsibility and the teaching of abounding Grace is seasoned by a remembrance of unflinching Justice. Scripture gives us, as it were, the acid and the alkalithe rock and the oil which flows from itthe sword which cuts and the balm which heals.

As our Lord sent forth His Evangelists two and two so does He seem to send out His Truths two and two, that each may help the other for the blessing of those who hear them. Now in this most notable third of John you have two Truths of God taught as plainly as if they were written with a sunbeam and taught side by side. The one is the necessity of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and the fact that whoever believes in Him is not condemned. This is a vital doctrine, but there is a possibility of preaching it so baldly and so out of relation to the rest of Gods Word that men may be led into serious error. Justification by faith is a most precious Truth of God. It is the very pith and heart of the Gospel and yet you can dwell so exclusively upon it that you cause many to forget other important practical and experimental Truths and so do them serious mischief.

Salt is good, but it is not all that a man needs to live upon, and even if people are fed on the best of dry bread and nothing else they do not thrive. Every part of Divine teaching is of practical value and must not be neglected. Therefore, the Holy Spirit, in this chapter, lays equal stress upon the necessity of the new birth or the work of the Holy Spirit and He states it quite as plainly as the other grand Truth of God. See how they blendYou must be born again, but, whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life. Except a man is born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God, but, He that believes on Him is not condemned.

Two great Truths are written in letters of light over the gate of Heaven as the requisites of all who enter thereReconciliation by the blood of Jesus Christ and Regeneration by the work of the Holy Spirit. We must not put one of these Truths of God before the other, nor allow one to obliterate or hide the other. They are of equal importance, for they are revealed by the same Divine Spirit and are both necessary to eternal salvation. He who cares to preach either of these ought, also, diligently to teach the other, lest he be found guilty of violating that salutary precept, What God has joined together let no man put asunder.

Avoid all neglect of faith and equally shun all undervaluing of the work of the Holy Spirit and so shall you find that narrow channel in which the way of the Truth of God lies. You must rest in Christ that you may be accepted before God, but the work of the Holy Spirit within you is absolutely necessary that you may be able to have communion with the pure and holy God. Faith gives us the rights of the children of God, but the new birth must be experienced that we may have the nature of children! Of what use would rights be if we had not the capacity to exercise them?

Now, it is of the work of the Spirit of God and of the man in whom the Spirit of God has worked, that I shall speak this morning, according to the tenor of the text. The text may be read two ways. First it may evidently refer to the Holy Spirit Himself. Do you not expect the text to run thus The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell from where it comes, and where it goes: so, also, is the Spirit of God? Is not that the way in which you, naturally expect the sentence to end? Yes, and I doubt not that such was really the Saviors meaning, but frequently, according to the New Testament idiom, the Truth of God is not stated as our English modes of speech would lead us to expect.

For instance, The kingdom of Heaven is like unto a man that sowed good seed in his ground. Now the kingdom is not like the man, but like the whole transaction of the parable in which the man is the principal actor. The kingdom of Heaven is like unto a merchantman seeking goodly pearls, but the kingdom is not like the

man, but the comparison runs into all that the man does. So here the Lord Jesus lays hold of one grand sphere of the Spirits operations and puts it down, intending, however, a wider sense. There are certain readings of our text which would make this more clear if we could think them allowable, as, for instance, that which does not render the Greek word by, wind, at all, but translates it Spirit, and makes it run, The Spirit blows where He wishes, and you hear the sound of Him. I do not adopt that reading, but there are several great authorities in its favor and this tends to show that our first head is correct.

When we have spoken upon that, we will take the language in its second sensein reference to the regenerate manand then we read, The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell from where it comes, and where it goes: so is every man that is born of the Spirit. He himself, like the Spirit of which he is born, is free and is mysterious in his ways, but discerned by the sound of his works and life.

I. Take the text in reference to THE HOLY SPIRIT HIMSELF. The figure is the wind and, as most of you know, the Hebrew word for, wind, and for, spirit, is the same. And it is interesting to note that the same is true with the Greek word, pneuma, which signifies both, breath, and, spirit, so that the figure which the Savior used might very naturally grow out of the word which He employed. The wind is air in motion and is, of course, material. But air is apparently more spiritual than any of the other elements, except fire, since it is not to be grasped by the hand nor seen with the eyes.

It is certain that wind really exists, for we hear the sound of it and observe its various effects, but it is not to be touched, handled, or gazed upon. Men cannot traffic in it, or measure it in scales, or weigh it in balances. We may watch the clouds for hours as they hasten along like winged birds, but the wind which drives them is out of our sight. We observe the waves roused to fury in the tempest, but the breath which so excites them we cannot see. Therefore the word becomes all the more excellent a figure of that mighty power, the Holy Spirit, of whose existence no man ever doubts who has come under His influence, but who, nevertheless, is not to be tracked in His movements, nor to be seen as to His Divine Person. He is mysterious, incomprehensible and Divine.

The metaphor of the wind cannot fully set forth the Holy Spirit, as you know, and, consequently, many other natural figures are employed, such as fire, dew, water, light, oil and so on, in order to exhibit all the phases of His influence. But still, the wind is a most instructive metaphor, as far as it goes, and as we cannot draw forth all its teaching in one sermon, let us be content to keep as closely as we can to the text. First, the wind is a figure of the Holy Spirit in its freenessthe wind blows where it wishes. We speak of the wind as the very image of freedom. We say to those who would enthrall us, go bind the winds. As for ourselves, we claim to be free as the winds which roam at their own will. No one can fetter the wind.

Xerxes threw chains into the Hellespont to bind the sea, but even he was not fool enough to talk of forging fetters for the winds! The breezes are not to be dictated to. Caesar may decree what he pleases, but the wind will blow in his face if he looks that way. The Pope may command the gale to change its course, but it will blow around the Vatican neither less nor more for the holy father and the cardinals. A conference of plenipotentiaries from all the powers of Europe may sit for a week and resolve unanimously that the east wind shall not blow for the next six months, but it will take no heed of the arrangement and will cast dust into the counselors eyes and whistle at their wisdom!

No proclamation nor purpose under Heaven will be able to affect the wind by so much as half a point of the compass. It will blow according to its own sweet will, where it pleases, when it pleases, how it pleases and as it pleases, for the wind blows where it wishes. So is it, only in a far higher and more emphatic sense, with the Holy Spirit, for He is most free and absolute! You know that the wind is in the hands of God and that He ordains every breeze and each tornadowinds arise and tempests blow by order from the supreme Throne, but as for the Holy Spirit, He is God Himself and absolutely free. He works according to His own will and pleasure among the sons of men.

One nation has been visited by the Holy Spirit and not anotherwho shall tell me why? Why do the heathen lands lie in the dense darkness while on Britain, the Light of God is concentrated? Why has the Reformation taken root in England and among the northern nations of Europe, while in Spain and Italy it has left scarcely a trace? Why blows the Holy Spirit here and not there? Is it not that He does as He wills? I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion is the declaration of the Divine Sovereigntyand the Spirit of God, in His movements, confirms it.

Among the nations where the Spirit of God is at work, how is it that He blesses one man and not another? Why is it that of two men hearing the same sermon and subject to the same influences at home, one is taken and the other left? Two children nursed at the same breast and trained by the same parents grow up to different ends? He who perishes in sin has no one to blame but himself, but he who is saved ascribes it all to Divine Gracewhy came that Grace to him and not to the other? We never dare to lay the fault of mans not repenting and believing upon Godthat rests with the evil will which refused to obey the Gospelbut we dare not ascribe the saving difference in the case of the one who believes to any natural goodness in himself! We attribute it all to the Grace of God and believe that the Holy Spirit works in such to will and to do according to His own good pleasure.

But why works He in us? Why in any of the chosen? Ah, why? The wind blows where it wishes. So, too, is it with the blessing which rests upon ministries. One man wins souls to God and, as a joyous reaper, returns with full sheaves. But another who goes forth with strong desires and seems to be as earnest as his fellow, comes home with a scanty handful of ears which he has painfully gleaned. Why is one mans net full of fish and anothers utterly empty? One servant of the Lord seems, whenever he stands up to preach the Gospel, to attract men to Jesus as though he had golden chains in his mouth which he did cast about mens hearts to draw them in joyful captivity to his Lord! But another cries in bitterness of soul, Who has believed our report? Truly, the wind blows where it wishes.

Yes, and these changes happen to each man differently. One day the preacher shall be all alive, his spirit shall be stirred within him and he shall speak evidently with the Holy Spirit sent down from Heaven. But tomorrow he shall find himself dull and heavy, even to his own consciousness and even more so to his peoples experience, for the power rests not upon him. One day he speaks like the voice of God and another day he is but as a reed shaken of the wind. His fat time of years gone by are devoured by the lean cattle of the present! He has his famine as well as his plenty. You shall see him come forth today with the unction of the Lord upon him and his face shining with the Glory of fellowship with the Most High! And tomorrow he shall say, Look not upon me, for I am evil, for the glory shall have departed.

We know what it is to come forth like Samson when his locks were shorn and to shake ourselves as at other times and discover that the Lord is not with us. Why all this? Is it not because the wind blows where it wishes? The Holy Spirit, for His own wise reasons, puts not forth an equal power upon any man at all times. We cannot control nor command the Spirit of the living God! He is, in the highest sense, a free agent. Your Free Spirit is a name which David gave Him and a most appropriate name it is.

Yet, Beloved, do not fall into a misapprehension. The Holy Spirit is absolutely free in His operations, but He is not arbitrary. He does as He wills, but His will is Infallible Wisdom. The wind, though we have no control over it, has a law of its own, but the Holy Spirit is a law unto Himself. He does as He wills, but He wills to do always that which is for the best. Moreover, we know, with regard to the wind, that there are certain places where you will almost always find a breezenot here, in the teeming city, nor down in the valley shut in by the mountains, nor on yonder steaming marsh! But lift up your eyes to the hills and mark how the breeze courses along the downs and sweeps the summits of the mountain ranges!

In the morning and the evening, when the inland air is hot as an oven, gentle winds come to and from the sea and fan the fishermens cheeks. You may find places where the air seems always stagnant and mens hearts grow heavy amid the feverish calm, but there are elevated hillsides where life is easy, for the air exhilarates by its perpetual freshness. Brothers and Sisters among lively saints, in the use of the means of Grace, in private prayer, in communion with the Lord, you will find the wind that blows where it wishes always in motion! The wind, too, has, at least in some lands, its times and seasons. We know that at certain times of the year we may expect winds and if they come not to a day or two, yet, as a rule, the month is stormy. And there are, also, trade winds, monsoons which blow with remarkable regularity and are counted upon by mariners.

And so with the Spirit of God. We know that at certain times He visits the Churches and under certain conditions puts forth His power. If, for instance, there is mighty prayer, you may be sure the Spirit of God is at work. If the people of God meet together and besiege the Throne of Grace with cries and tears, the spiritual barometer indicates that the blessed wind is rising. Besides, the Holy Spirit has graciously connected Himself with two things, truth and prayer. Preach the Truth of God, publish the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and it is the habit of the Holy Spirit to make the Word of God quick and powerful to the hearts of men. If we falsify His Word, if we keep back part of the Truth of God, if we become unfaithful we cannot expect the Holy Spirit to bless us.

But if our teaching is Christ Crucified, lovingly set forth, and if the Grace of God in its fullness is really declared, the Holy Spirit will attend the Truth and make it the great power of God. I will not say that it is always and without exception so, but I think exceptions must be rare. Almost invariably the Spirit bears witness with the Truth of God in the conversion of men. So, too, with prayer. The Holy Spirit is pleased to connect Himself with that, also, if it is believing prayer. Here the connection is exceedingly intimate because it is the Spirit of God who Himself gives the believing prayer and it is not only true that the Spirit will be given in answer to prayer, but the Spirit is already given or the believing prayer would never have been offered!

The spirit of prayerfulness, the spirit of anxiety for the conversion of men is one of the surest indications that the Holy Spirit is already at work in the minds of His people. Coming back, however, to the great fact that we cannot command the Holy Spirit, what influence ought that Truth of God have upon us? Should it not be just this?It should lead us to be very tender and jealous in our conduct towards the Holy Spirit so that we do not grieve Him and cause Him to depart from us. Vex not the Spirit! When you enjoy His gracious operations be devoutly grateful and walk humbly before God that you may retain them. And when He is at work, let not negligence on your part cause you to receive the Grace of God in vain.

The wind blew, but the sailor was asleep. It was a favorable breeze but he had cast anchor and his boat moved not. If he had but known it, all through the night he would have spread his sail and have made good headway towards his port. But he slumbered and the blessed wind whistled through the cordage and the ship lay idle at its moorings! Let it not be so with us! Never suffer the Spirit of God to be with us and find us not aware of His Presence. In the olden times, when country people depended more than they do now on the use of windmills to grind their corn, some parishes would be half-starved when, week after week, there had been no wind. The miller would look up anxiously and everybody in the parish would become a watchman for his sails, hoping that they would soon be set in motion.

If the breeze stirred at the dead of night and the miller was sound asleep, somebody or other would run and wake him up. The wind is blowing, the wind is blowing, grind our corn. So it ought to be whenever the Spirit of God is vigorously working in His Churchwe should eagerly avail ourselves of His power! We should be so anxious for His Divine operations that all should be on the watch, so that if some did not discover it, others would, and observant ones would cry, The Holy Spirit is working with us! Let us arise and labor more abundantly. Hoist sail when the wind is favorable! You cannot command it, therefore carefully value it.

But we must pass on. The Holy Spirit is described as being like the wind as to His manifestations. You hear, says Jesus, the sound of it. It has been suggested and some have enlarged upon it, that there are many other manifestations of the presence of windyou can feel it, you can see its results upon the trees and the waves and sometimes you can be sure that the wind has been at work by the devastation which it has caused. But in this place our Savior was not so much alluding to a great wind as to the gentler breezes. The Greek word, pneuma, is translated, breath, and can hardly be made to mean a tempest! It was a gentle wind like a zephyr of which the Lord was here speaking.

The great winds, as I have already said, can be somewhat calculated upon, but if you sit in the garden in the cool of the evening it is utterly impossible for you to tell from where the zephyrs come and where they go. They are so volatile in their movements and untrackable in their course! They are here, there, everywherethe soft breezes of evening steal among the flowers. Our Lord tells us that such gentle zephyrs are heard. Nicodemus, in the stillness of the night could hear them. You hear the sound of it. The leaves rustle and that is all. You hear a gentle movement of branch and stem and, as it were, the tinkling of flower-bells, and so you discover that the wind is flitting among the beds and borders.

Now, Beloved, this shows us that the hearing ear is intended, by God, to be the discerner of the Spirit to mento the most of men the only discerner that they have. You hear the sound of it. What a wonderful dignity the Lord has been pleased to put upon this little organ, the ear! The Romish Church gives the preference always to the eyes. Her priests are always for astonishing men into grace with their wonderful performances! But Gods way is, Faith comes by hearing, and the first detector of the Holy Spirit is the ear. To some men this is the only revealer of His mysterious Presence, as I have already saidthey hear the sound of it, that is to say, they hear the Gospel preachedthey hear the Word of God read.

Truth, when it is couched in Words of God, is the rustling of the holy wind, it is the footstep of the Eternal Spirit as He mysteriously passes along a congregation. Oh, what grief it is that some never get any further than this, but abide where Nicodemus was at the firstthey hear the sound and nothing more. Some of you are now daily hearing the Truth of God which has saved thousands, but it does not save you! You are hearing the very Truth of God which peoples Heaven, but yet it leaves you without a hope of eternal life! Yet be you sure of this, the Kingdom of God has come near you. You hear the sound of it, and that wind whose whispers you hear is not far off your own cheeks. When you hear the rustling among the branches of the trees, the breezes are not far to seek, nor is the Spirit of God far away when His sound is heard.

Some hearers, however, go further, for they hear the sound of the Spirit in their consciences and it disturbs them. They would sleep as others do, but as the wind sometimes comes whistling through the keyhole or howls down the chimney and wakes the sluggard, or if the man is lying in a garden, asleep, the breezes play around his ears and face and startle him, so it is with many unconverted people! They cannot be quiet, for they hear the sound of the Holy Spirit in their consciences and are troubled and perplexed. There is a revival and they are not saved, but they are startled and alarmed by it. Their sister is converted, they are not, but still it comes very near them and they feel as if an arrow had gone whizzing by their own ear. It is hard living in a careless state in the midst of revival. You hear the sound of it.

But some of you, in your conscience, are hearing the sound, now, in your family circle, from the fact that one after another of your relatives have been brought to know the Lord. You cannot avoid feeling that there is something powerful abroad, though it has not yet exerted its regenerating power upon you. As for the man who is saved, he hears the Holy Spirit in the most emphatic sense and with what variety that sound comes to him! At first he heard it as a threatening wind which bowed him in sadness and seemed to sweep all his hopes to the ground, as the sere leaves

of the forest are carried in the autumns wind.

When the Spirits voice sounded in my ears at the first it was as a wail of woe, as a wind among the tombs, as a sigh among faded lilies! It seemed as if all my hopes were puffed away like smoke, or as the night mists in the morning breeze. Nothing was left for me but to mourn my nothingness. Then I heard a sound as of the hot south wind of the East, as if it issued from a burning oven. You know the text, The grass withers and the flower thereof fades away, because the Spirit of the Lord blows upon it: surely the peoples are grass. In my soul there had bloomed a fair meadow of golden kingcups and fair flowers of many dainty colors, but the Spirit of God blew on them and withered them all and left a dry, brown, rusty plain where there was neither life nor comeliness.

So far the sacred wind destroys that which is evil, but it ends not there, for we thank God we have heard the sound of the Spirit as a quickening wind. The Prophet cried, Come from the four winds, O Breath, and breathe upon these slain that they may live, and the Wind came and the dead arose an exceedingly great army! The same miracle has been worked on us. The sere bones of our own death have crept together, bone unto his bone, and flesh has come upon them and now, because of the Divine Breath, we have begun to live! Now, also, when the Holy Spirit visits us, He renews our life and energy and gives us life more abundantly.

The Holy Spirit has, since then, been to us full often a melting wind, He causes His wind to blow and the waters flow. Locked up in the chains of ice all through the winter, the waters are still as a stone, but the spring winds come, the brooks find liberty and leap away to the rivers! And the rivers flow in all their free force to add their volume to the sea! So has the Spirit of God oftentimes broken up our frost and given our spirits joyous liberty. He melts the rocky heart and dissolves the iron spiritat the sound of His goings men are moved to feeling. We know the sound of this wind, also, as a diffusive breath, drawing forth and diffusing our slumbering graces. Awake, O north wind; and come, you south; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out.

Oh, what a sweet freeing of holy gratitude, love, hope and joy has there been in our heart when the Spirit of God has visited us! As sweet essences lie hidden in the flowers and come not forth until the loving wind does entice them to fly abroad and so do sweet Graces lie within renewed spirits until the Holy Spirit comes and speaks to them! And they know His voice and come forth to meet Him and sweet fragrances are shed abroad. Yes, my Brothers and Sisters, all this we know! And we have heard the sound of the Holy Spirit in another sense, namely, as going forth with us to the battle of the Lord. We have heard that sound of a going in the tops of the mulberry trees which David heard and, by Gods Grace, we have bestirred ourselves and victory has been ours!

If we have not heard that rushing mighty wind which came at Pentecost, yet have we felt its Divine effect, which ceases not, but still brings life, power, energy and all that is needed for the conversion of the sons of men to us who are bid to go forth and preach the Gospel among the nations. In all these respects the Holy Spirit has manifested Himself, as wind does, by His sound. You hear the sound of it. Their sound went into all the earth and their words unto the ends of the world.

A third likeness of the Spirit to the wind is set before us in the point of mystery. You cannot tell from where it comes nor where it goes. Of the wind we may tell that it comes from such-and-such a quarter or point, but you cannot put your finger on the map and say, The north wind began in this region, or, here the west wind was born. Indeed, we know very little about the windstheir origin or their laws. One of the best and most accurate observers of the wind during 30 years, recorded every wind in his regions until, at the end of the term, he abandoned the few rules which he had laid down during the first two or three years, for he found that no rule held good. No man can say from where the wind leaps forth.

The heathen dreamed of a certain cave where the winds were enclosed as in a prison and suffered to go abroad one by oneit was but a fable. We know not where the winds first spread their wings, or where they sleep when all is still. So is it with the Holy Spirit in the mind of man. His first movements are hidden in mystery. You know that you are converted, my dear Friend, and you know somewhere about the time. And you probably remember somewhat as to the means which the Lord used for your salvation. Those outward circumstances you know, but how the Holy Spirit operated upon you, you do not and cannot tell any more than you can tell how the life swells within the seed until it springs up and becomes the full corn in the ear, or how the sap in the trees first descends in the winter and afterwards climbs, again, in the spring.

There are secrets which Nature does not revealthe work of the Spirit is even more a secretand no man can explain it to his fellow or to himself. Why is it, my Friend, that you obtained a blessing under one sermon but not under another? And why, when you spoke to your sister, was she more blessed under the second than the first? The power does not come from the preacher, then, it is clearand you cannot tell from where it comes. There are times in which you feel not only that you can pray but that you must prayhow do you come to be in that state?

I know what it is to feel a very ecstasy of delight in the Lord, for which I can scarcely account. And, at another time, when I have been engaged in the same work and I think with the same earnestness, I have not been conscious of any such delight in God! At one time the heart will be full of penitence as if it would break because of sin. At another season it will overflow with such delight in Christ that the sin seems almost forgotten in the pardoning Sacrifice. Why these various operations? We know what it is, at times, to feel such a sense of death upon us as to be earnestly preparing for our last hours. At another time we seem to be altogether forgetful of death and to be living, as it were, the immortal life already, raised up together and made to sit together with Christ!

But how these various modes and forms and workings of the Spirit come, who among us shall tell? Go trace the dewdrops, if you can, to the womb of the morning, and discover which way the lightning flashes went, or how the thunder rolled along the mountain tops! But you cannot tell nor can you guess from where comes the Spirit of God into your souls!

Nor can we tell where He goes. Here, again, is another mystery. Oh, it charms me to think that when we let loose the Truth of God in the power of the Spirit we never know where it will fly! A child takes a seed, one of those little downy seeds which has its own parachute to bear it through the air. The little one blows it into the air, but who knows where that downy seed shall settle and in whose garden it shall grow?

Such is the Truth of God, even from the mouths of babes and sucklings. Whole continents have been covered with strange flowers simply by the wind blowing foreign seeds there! Mariners have discovered sunny islets out there in the Southern Sea where foot of man has never trod, yet covered with abundance of vegetation which the wind has, by degrees, blown there! Scatter the Truth of God on all sides, for you cannot tell where the Spirit will carry it! Fling it to the winds and you shall find it after many days. Scatter the living Seed with both handssend it north, south, east, and westand God will give it wings!

*Float, float you winds the Story,   
And you, you waters roll,   
Till like a sea of Glory   
It spreads from pole to pole.*

I had a letter but the other day when I was sorely sick. It was written by a Sister in Christ in the very heart of the empire of Brazil. She said that she had met with a copy of my, Morning Readings, and had found, thereby, the way of peace and, therefore, she wrote me such a loving, touching letter that, as I read it, it brought tears to my eyes. There was something more affecting yet, for at the end was written in another hand, some words to the effect that his dear wife who had written the above letter had died soon after finishing it, and with a bleeding heart the lone husband sent it on to me, rejoicing that the Word of God came to his wifes soul in the far-off land.

Brethren, you do not know where the Word will go and the Spirit with it! In Bohemia the papists thought they had stamped out the Gospel and with cruel edicts they kept down all thought of Protestantism. But just lately, since the Toleration, the Gospel has been preached in that country and, to the surprise of everybody there, men and women have come forward from lone cottages in the woods and from different corners of the great cities of Bohemia, bringing with them ancient copies of the Word of God, themselves being eager to know the precious Truths of God for which they remember that their fathers died!

A Truth of God will go down the centurieslike the river, it sings *Men may come and men may go,   
But I go on forever.*

You can not tell where it goes, it will travel on till the millennium! Send that saying abroad that the Truth of God cannot die! The persecutor cannot kill it, it is immortal like the God who sent it forth! The persecutor cannot even stay its course! It is Divine! Popery will always be in danger so long as there is one leaf of the Bible upon earth, or one man living who knows the Savior! Antichrist cannot triumph! The Holy Spirit wars against it with the sword of the Word of God and you cannot tell how far into the heart of error any Truth may be driven. To the overthrow of falsehood and the death of sin, the Spirit speeds on, but you know not how. You cannot tell where it goes.

If you have received the Holy Spirit into your heart, you cannot tell where He will carry you. I am sure that William Carey, when he gave his young heart to Christ, never thought the Spirit of God would carry him to Serampore to preach the Gospel to the Hindus! And when George Whitefield first drank of the life-giving Spirit, it never occurred to him that the pot-boy at the Bell Inn at Gloucester would thunder the Gospel over two continents and turn thousands to Christ! You know not to what blessed end this Wind will take you!

Commit yourselves to itbe not disobedient to the heavenly vision. Be ready to be borne along as the Spirit of God shall help you, even as the dust in the summers breeze. And O child of God, you do not know to what heights of holiness and degrees of knowledge and ecstasies of enjoyment the Spirit of God will bear you. Eye has not seen nor ear heard the things which God has prepared for them that love Him, and though He has revealed them by His Spirit (for the Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God), yet even to the best taught child of God it is not yet known, to the fullest, where the Spirit of God goes.

Trust in the Lord forever, for in the Lord Jehovah there is everlasting strength, and He will bear you onward and upward, even to perfection, itself, and you shall be with Jesus, where He is, and behold His Glory!

II. I have but a few minutes left for my second head, but I do not need many, since I do not wish to say much upon it. The text relates TO THOSE WHO ARE BORN OF THE SPIRIT. The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell from where it comes, and where it goes: so is everyone that is born of the Spirit. The birth partakes of the nature of the parent. That which is born of the Spirit is like unto the Spirit of which it is born, even as that which is born of the flesh is flesh and is similar to the flesh by which it is begotten.

The twice-born man is like the Holy Spirit who produced him, and he is like He in each of the points which we have already dwelt upon. As to freedom, you may say of him, He blows where he wishes. The Spirit of God makes the Believer a free man, bestows on him the freedom of his will which he never had before. He gives him a delightful consciousness of liberty. If the Son makes you free, you shall be free, indeed. I do not affirm that every spiritual man does as he wishes, because, alas, I see another law in our members warring against the law of our mind and bringing us into captivity to the law of sin and death. But still, where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

Now you can pray, which you could not do before. Now you can praise, though before you could not extract a note of praise from your ungrateful heart. Now you can cry, Abba, Father. Now you can draw near to God. You are no longer under mans control, you go where you wish. You are not now ruled by priestcraft, nor domineered over by the opinion of your fellow man. The Lord has set you free and you wish to go where Gods Word bids you go. And you find the utmost liberty in going that way. Oh, Brothers and Sisters, I cannot tell you the change which is felt by a regenerate man in the matter of spiritual liberty! When you were under the bondage of the law of custom and of sin, and of fear of death and dread of Hell, you were like a man shut up in one of those cells in Venice which lie below the level of the water mark, where the air is foul and the poor prisoner can only stir half-a-dozen feet and then walk back again in the darkness.

But when the Spirit of God comes, He brings the soul from darkness into light, from clammy damp into the open air! He sets before you an open door. He helps you to run in the ways of Gods commands and, as if that were not enough, He even lends you wings and bids you mount as the eagle, for He has set you free! Again, the man who is born of the Spirit is somewhat manifested and is known by his sound. You hear the sound of it. The most ungodly man, if he lives near a Christian, will hear the sound of him. The secret life within will speak words, for Christians are not dumb. But actions will speak more loudly, still! And even apart from actions, the very spirit and tone of the man who is really regenerated will speak and the ungodly man will be compelled to hear it. You hear the sound of it.

And now notice the mystery there is about a Christian. You know nothing, if you are unregenerate, about the life the Believer leads, for he is dead and his life is hid with Christ in God. You know not from where he comes forth in the morningthose beds of spices which have made his garments fragrant, you have not seen. That weeping in prayer or that rejoicing in fellowship with which he opened the morning you know nothing ofand you cannot know until you are, yourselfborn of the Spirit! Neither can you tell where the spiritual man goes. In the midst of his trouble you see him calm. Do you know where he went to win that rare quietude? In the hour of death you see him triumphant! Do you know where he has been to learn to die so joyously?

No, the unregenerate man knows not where the Believer goes. There is a secret place of the Most High and they shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty who have once learned to enter there, but carnal men come not into this secret chamber. The Christian life is a mystery all through, from its beginning to its end. To the worldling it is all a mystery and, to the Christian, himself, a puzzle. He cannot read his own riddle, nor understand himself. This one thing he knows, Whereas I was once blind, now I see. This, also, he knows, O Lord, I am Your servant! I am Your servant and the son of Your handmaid: You have loosed my bonds. This, also, he knows, that when his Lord shall be revealed, then will he, also, shine forth as the sun!

The Life within him, in its coming and going, is all a mystery to him, but he blesses God that he has fellowship in it. He goes on his way feeling that though men know not from where he is, nor where he is going, yet the Lord knows him, and he, himself is sure that he is going to his Father and his God! O that every one of you had so delightful a hope! The Lord grant it to you, for Jesus sake.

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THE SPIRIT AND THE WIND   
NO. 2067

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON THURSDAY EVENING, FEBRUARY 2, 1888.

**The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it but cannot tell from where it comes and where it goes. So is   
everyone that is born of the Spirit.   
John 3:8.**

OUR Saviors words are infinite. Some men use a great deal of language to convey a very little meaning. But our Savior compacts boundless instruction into short sentences. If all the preachers in Christendom were to preach from this one verse for the next twelve months they would still leave much of its teaching undeveloped.

These words remind us of the Holy Spirit. Is it not to be feared that we have lost a great deal of power in our lives because we have not been sufficiently mindful of the power of the Spirit of God? When our Savior compared the Holy Spirits operations to the movements of the winds did He not show us how absolutely needful they are, how indispensable they are? Imagine a world without winds! Why, we should soon stagnate into death. Without wind what would be the use of the great highway of the sea? A thousand mischiefs would followinfinitely more than we could calculateif henceforth the air had no motion and there were no living, breathing winds.

Without the Spirit of God, the scene were infinitely worse. O ship of the Church, how could you speed over the sea of time? The trees of the forest would no more clap their hands. Stagnation of progress would take place. The dry bones of the valley would lie unquickened and even the odors of the rose of Sharon would no more be shed abroad. We must have the Spirit of God. Even as the Sun of Righteousness brings healing beneath His wings so does the Holy Spirit bring all that is living to us all. Let us adore the third Person of the Trinity in Unity and think of Him often, with deep reverence in our spirits, so that we never go to work, nor to prayer, nor even to the singing of a hymn without seeking that He would Himself be the life of the holy engagement.

With the view of bringing out the Truth about the Spirit of God, I shall first mention certain minor lessons contained in the text. Then, the lesson of the mystery of the Holy Spirit. And thirdly, the mystery of the man that is born of the Spirit. For it is not merely said, so is the work of the Spirit. But so is everyone that is born of the Spirit. The child of a mystery is himself a mystery.

I. First, there are CERTAIN MINOR LESSONS TO BE TAUGHT HERE. The Spirit of God is like the wind. Note well that His operation is unexpected. The wind blows where it wishes so that you know not what wind to expect. In this land, especially, we can never tell what wind will blow tomorrow. A few days ago it was the south-west and it brought a rapid

thaw. But the next morning it was nearly north and a frost was upon us. We may well put vanes upon our public buildings, for without them we could never tell from the day of the year or the season of the year, from what quarter the wind would come. I feel thankful when I remember that, like the wind, the Holy Spirit blows where He wishes for I cannot tell where next He may operate.

Perhaps tomorrow He may save a princeit would be an unexpected thing. Another day He may save some great backslider, who knows? He may graciously work upon the more degraded part of the people or He may deal with certain of our great merchants and bring them to His feet. He that knows the work of the Holy Spirit must have learned to expect the unexpected. The last thing expected in Jerusalem was that Saul of Tarsus would be converted. But he was converted. And you may now hope that the most violent opposer of the Gospel may become a trophy of its power. And might not that same wind blow on you who come here simply to be a spectator of solemnitieswilling to hear what the preacher has to say but not at all desirous to be affected by it?

How often have we seen men and women the least likely, the very first to be impressed by this Divine power? O heavenly Wind blow where the feeble faith of Your people has scarcely dared to think that You can come, and where every influence has operated to shut You out! The movement of the Holy Spirit is like the wind, too, because it is inexplicable. Who can tell me why the wind was north-west on Monday, or why it was east on Friday? There are persons who profess to tell us but they use great words which mean nothing. As a general rule, science signifies bamboozlement, riding upon hypotheses, or mystifying with long words.

The explanations of modern savants are often more difficult to understand than the fact which requires the explanation. Now I cannot tell why the Spirit of God works here or there. Why was England favored with the Gospel when other nations, who were in advance of Britain in civilization, were left without it? Why is it that the islands of the sea seem almost always to accept the Gospel, while continents are left in darkness? He gives no account of His matterstake that for your answer. It is all that He will give you.

The Holy Spirit moves like the wind for suddenness and freeness. None of us can raise the wind. We use the expression, but the fact is beyond our power. The wind comes without our call or direction. Who shall tell whether tomorrow we shall wake up with a thaw or a sharp frost? The wind springs up just where it likes and moves just where it pleases. And it is so with the Holy Spirit. I grant you that prayer such as that of Elijah can chain the winds and stay the clouds, or unseal the bottles of Heaven and bring down the rainbut it is because the Lord wills it. Still, the Spirit is absolutely free and He moves as the dew which tarries not for men, neither waits for the sons of men.

If He wills to break forth tomorrow across this country with His Divine energy He cannot be stopped. If, in answer to the prayers of His people, He should be pleased to work in India or in China, as I trust He will, we shall soon see how free is the blessed Spirit to bring glory to God. God may be glorified thereby. The Spirit is like the windHis movements are not to be accounted for.

And, next, the Holy Spirit is like the wind because He is absolutely sovereign. Preachers scarcely like to tell their congregations nowadays that God gives His Grace according to His own good pleasure. I learned, when I was a boy, that the chief end of man was to glorify God and enjoy Him forever. But I hear now, according to the new theology, that the chief end of God is to glorify man and enjoy him forever. Yet this is the turning of things upside down. The glory of God is still the chief end of the worlds existence. And whether men will have it so or not, the Lord has settled it. I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.

So that, it is not of him that wills, nor of him that runs but of God that shows mercy. No voice is more glad than mine to preach the free salvation of God to them that perish. But God has not sunk His sovereignty in His bounty. Jehovah still reigns and the wind blows where it wishes and not where man wills that it shall blow. Further, the Spirit of God is comparable to the wind because of the variety of His operations.

The wind does not blow at all times alike. Soft and mild, it brings us summer heat. Rough and rugged, it makes us bind our cloaks about us as the sharp breath of winter chills us to the bone. The Spirit of God works differently at different times, according to the necessity of the case and according to His own will. For He blows as He wishes as well as where He wishes. Sometimes I have almost trembled to pray for the power of the Holy Spirit. I remember a Brother praying that we might be filled with the Spirit of God and I was but very young then but ventured to ask him whether he knew what he meant.

He looked at me with astonishment when I added, Where He comes He is the Spirit of judgment and the Spirit of burning. It is a blessing, no doubt, to be filled with the Spirit. But who may abide the day of His coming? Like the Lord Jesus, He is as a refiners fire. We might have had the Spirit much more copiously had we been able to bear His wondrous work within us. I know He is a Comforter but I know also that His fan is in His hand. He is a searcher as well as a healer, a destroyer of evil as well as a creator of good.

Thus you see that His working is not always of one kind. One gracious soul has gone out weeping, broken-heartedthe Spirit of God had wounded the heart. Another has gone forth rejoicing in full salvationit was the Spirit of God. One day the Word of God comes like a hammer and a fireat another time it drops like the gentle dew from Heaven upon the parched heart. All these are works of the same Spirit. Judge not, I pray you, so as to deny this humble hope or that trembling trust to be of the Spirit, for the Spirit works all good things.

Even in the same individual the Spirit of God works very differently at different times. One day He makes us leap like young harts upon the mountains. And then Napthali is a hind let loosethe Spirit of God is on him. At another time the true Prophet is shut up and cannot come forth.

He is filled with sighs and groans which cannot be uttered and the Word of the Lord is as a pent-up fire in his bones. But the Spirit of God is as much in the silence as in the eloquencepossibly more sofor the flesh may go with the first but it is the Spirit which works in the second.

Let us not judge ourselves to be abandoned by the Spirit of God because after autumn eventides, in which we sat under our own vine and fig tree, we have had wintry nights of darkness, leafless and fruitless. Dont you know that the Spirit of God is that Wind which passes over the green field when the flowers are all in bloom and the grass withers and the flower fades because the Spirit of the Lord blows upon it? Surely the people are grass. The withering work of the Holy Spirit is as necessary for our eternal benefit as when the Spirit, at another time, opens the buds of those fair flowers which shed their perfume at the feet of love.

Note then, that like the wind, He varies in His modes of manifestation. And note, again, the Spirit of God is like the wind because His operation is manifest. The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound thereof. Yes, we cannot see the wind but we can hear it. So may you hear the Spirit of God. When you hear the Scriptures and read the Word, the Spirit of God speaks to you. It is well to hear the Spirit whisper in the ear of conscience when He presses home the Truths of God and makes the mind to feel its power. Sweetest of all is it when the newly-opened ear hears the Spirit of God speak to it with its own peculiar, still small voice. Then it is sweetly true. You hear the sound thereof.

My dear Hearers, do you know anything about this? Has the Spirit of God so worked in you that you have recognized the sound? It is a manifest workhave you felt it?

In all respects, the work of the Spirit of God remains mysterious and wonderful. Men cannot tell us much about the wind but when the wind rises to a tornado and carries everything before it, we see what the wind can do. I would to God that we had a cyclone of the Holy Spirit! What a sweep it would make of a great many rotten Church buildings which now stand upright! Many a magnificent pile would fly before it like dust and chaff from the summers threshing-floor! But the Spirit of God, whether He works so gently that He scarcely disturbs the tear that hangs in the eye like a dewdrop on a blade of grass, or whether He comes with such tremendous force that the most stubborn infidelity is swept away before itin either case it is very marvelousfor He is God and He works after the Divine manner.

I am half inclined to pause here and say, For the rest of our time let us worship in the presence of this mighty God, who does His pleasure and works the will of the Most High forevermore.

II. But I must take you onin the second place to consider THE GREAT LESSON OF THE MYSTERY WHICH IS TAUGHT US BY THE SYMBOL OF THE WIND, WHICH IS THE TYPE OF THE SPIRIT OF GOD.

Now dear Friends, concerning the wind, our Savior says, You can not tell from where it comes and where it goes. Yet we know that it comes from the east, or the south and passes on its way and it goes towards the west. The text cannot mean that we do not know the direction of the wind, or the direction in which the Spirit of God is moving, for we do know that. We know that He is a power that makes for righteousness and for eternal life. But then, we do not know where any wind begins to blow. No one can explain where the north wind commences.

The heathen had an idea about the wind rushing out of a cave, or of its being let loose from a bag. We know that this is but a dream. We cannot imagine a place where the wind starts on its journey. And we do not know when the Spirit of God begins to work in any persons heart, or even in our own. Some persons are troubled because they cannot tell the day of their conversion. Let them not be troubled about that question. Even those who know that on such-and-such a day they took a decided step, and the light burst in upon their spirit, will find, if they look back, that a great deal of gracious experience went before their decision to prepare their minds for the final step.

We do not know how early the Divine processes begin within a soul. Our very parentage has something to do with it. That we were born of such-and-such godly parents is a part of the arrangement of Divine Grace. I do not think you can tell, with regard to yourself, when the first gracious thought was sown in you when first you lived towards God. You can tell when you first perceived that you believed in God. But there was an experience before that. You cannot put your finger upon such-and-such a place and say, Here the east wind began, nor can you say, Here the Spirit of God began to work on me.

Neither can we always tell what was the first process. Does a man pray first or believe first? If he prays without faith he will not be heard. Which comes first, repentance or faith? A repentance that has no faith in it is no repentance. A faith that has no repentance with it is no faith. These gracious products are like the spokes of a wheel, they all move at the same time. When the wheel of spiritual life moves we cannot tell which grace in it moves first. The processes of Divine Grace may, in your case, begin with a downcast soul and in the case of another person they may begin with a lifting up of holy faith. We cannot tell from where it comes.

Neither can we always tell the exact means of our receiving the Spirit. You say it was by this ministers preaching. Be grateful. But before that sermon an unknown person did a deal of plowing within your heart. How would the one have sown had not the other plowed? Many a man who thinks he has never done any good will find out at the Last Great Day that he did much more than he fancied and that he accomplished an essential part of the work though it remained hidden. You can not tell from where it comes.

Equally mysterious is the other point as to where it goes. We know which way the Holy Spirit points but you can not tell where He goesthat is to say what special fashion His work will take in the person who has received it tonightwhether it shall go towards a deeper and deeper sense of sin and the life shall be most noticeable for its repentance. Or whether it shall rise into a higher and a higher view of Christ and the life shall be noticeable for its joyfulness. You can not tell where it goes. How far the Grace of God can go in any man is impossible for us to say. Let none of us begin to measure by ourselves and say, Nobody can be holier than I am.

Nobody can have more Divine Grace than I have.

Brothers and Sisters, you yourself can obtain ten times as much Divine Grace as you now have. You are but a babe yet. You do not know what the stature of a man in Christ may be. The boy converted but a week ago may become a Moffat or a Livingstone. The girl who is now a trembling Believer, you can not tell what a Mary or Hannah, God may make her. You can not tell where the Spirit goes. When Martin Luthers father first taught Martin about Christ and prayed for him, he could not tell how the Spirit of God in him would work and how the whole world would be the better for the miners son. You can not tell where it goes.

Oh, if some of you get the Spirit of God just now, I cannot guess what it will make of you! There are wonderful possibilities sleeping within the breast of every man who receives the Spirit of God. Should the Spirit work in you, you would not know yourself in the sanctifying experience of a thousand years time. And what are a thousand years? Project yourselves beyond the growths of time to that grandest of all growths, when we shall be like He, for we shall see Him as He is. Even then you have not reached the end of the Divine way. You can not tell where it goes.

You are yet to outstrip the angels. Jesus your Lord is the First-born and you are to be one of the First-borns many Brethren. Measureless advancement lies before you. I have opened the windowlook through and contemplate with the eye of faith what yet may come of the entrance of the Grace of God into your heart! You can not tell where the north wind stays its course, nor where the east wind falls asleep. Is there such a place? You have not seen where it begins, nor can you guess where it shall end, yet even when you are in Glory the life which the Spirit imparted to you here shall be your life.

III. The last few minutes must be occupied with THE LESSON CONCERNING THE MYSTERY OF THE MAN HIMSELFSo is everyone that is born of the Spirit.

The Spirit-born man is a mysterious person. Only those who are like he is can pretend to know him. Even they do not know him. And what is more wonderfulhe does not know himself. Perhaps no man is more amazed at him than the godly man himself. He has experienced a change but he cannot describe it to you. He knows the things in which he is changedthe effects of the Spiritbut how it was worked he knows not.

As no man can tell anything about his first birth, so neither can he describe his second birthit remains a mysterious operation even to him who has passed through it. Oh, said one to me, Sir, either the worlds quite altered, or else I am. So, indeed, it iseverything is changed. The world itself is altered and in some things it seems altered for the worse. We find we are not at home in it, though we used to be. We should not know ourselves if we met ourselves. And when, unfortunately, we do meet ourselves, we fall to quarrelling with ourselvesfor we have no greater enemy anywhere than our own selves.

It is a strange thing that we should have to say sobut the greatest paradox that can be is a regenerate man still in a body which remains under corruption. The man is a strange mixture of old and new, nature and Grace. While he is himself a mystery to himself, his sorrows are a mystery to other people and they cannot make out why he is sad. His business prospers, his children are about him, he has good health and yet he is mourning. And if they hear him say, O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? They reply, This is a wretched man, though he ought to be the happiest of beings!

From the best man in the world we hear the deepest sigh that he is not better. The man that thanks God who can give him the victory is the man who groans in the battle. The world does not understand this. It cannot make out how we can fight and yet be at peace. How we can be torn asunder, yet never torn away from the Cross. How we can live by dying and die every day in order that we may never die at all. The Believers riddle is a very hard one. He is a mystery as to his sorrows and his joys these are secrets with which the world cannot intermeddle. This is a mysterious businessa man in poverty, rich. A man in affliction, rejoicing. A man alone, yet in the best of company. The unregenerate cannot comprehend this singular person.

The man that lives near to God is a mystery, more or less, at all times. He is not all he desires to be, nor all he hopes to be but he is far beyond what he ever expected to be. Strange impulses move him at times so that he does things which he cannot himself account for. He feels that he is bound to do them, and he does them, and has the warrant of having done rightly in the result of what he does. I am sure that every child of God who walks in the light of His countenance will understand what I mean when I say that we are moved in singular ways. So moved that we ourselves hardly know how. But so moved that Wisdom is justified of all her children.

Strange is the power of the Holy Spirit over the heart of the regenerate. And this is made manifest in the singular changes of which they are the subjects. Gods own people know what it is to sound the deeps and outsoar the heights. Up, up, up, where the callow lightning first spread his wings, we mount in ecstasy. And then down we go, down into the abysses where sea-monsters have their denssuch strange beings are we when under the highest power. The wind sighing through the trees, or singing amid the cords of an Aeolian harp is not more strange than the experience of a genuine child of God.

I know what it is to run before Ahabs chariot with Elijah and I am afraid I know what it is to faint under the juniper and need to be awakened that I may partake of food, that I may go forty days in the strength thereof. The Christian man does not understand himself but his varying experiences go to make up that sickness of self and fondness of Christ which is so desirable.

I will give you two words you cannot explain, just to show the mystery of our manhood. Spiritualitynow then, turn to your dictionaries and see whether they define it. You know what it isyou cannot tell me and I shall not tell you, because I cannot. There is another wordunction. You know what it is. If you hear a sermon that has none of it you know what the absence of it is. But when an unction rests upon the Word, can

you tell me what it is? I cannot tell you. But I pray that I may have that unction myself. Of course, the ungodly make jests upon the expression, because it has no meaning to them. Yet the children of God delight in it.

Do not expect the world to understand you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own. But inasmuch as Christ has chosen you out of the world, do not expect that the world will know you. If it knew Him not, who was so much better and clearer than you, how should it know you? And you, my dear Hearers, who are not born again, to whom all this must seem a foreign languageI pray you to believe that there is something which you need to understand and that in order to understand it you must be born again.

May the Spirit of God make you feel, experience, and enjoy this mystery by causing you to know the power of that gracious word, And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up: that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal lifeif you believe in Jesus, if you look to Him, if you trust Him if the Holy Spirit has given you faith, He has begun His work in you and He will carry it on and perfect it to the praise of His glory forever. May it be so, for Jesus sake. Amen.

LETTER FROM MR. SPURGEON

DEAR FRIENDSSufficient unto the day is the evil thereof, and therefore I will not repeat any of the fears which naturally thrive around such a shock as I have received. The doctor says, You may be well soon of that knee but do not deceive yourself by trying the brain till it has had a fair chance of recovery. I know what he means and I feel I must submit to be away from my delightful work till I can begin again without absolute folly.

The good points of the whole matter are very many. The name of the Lord is prayed for the splendid way in which, in the sorrowful absence of both pastors, all the Church has stuck to its work and the blessing has not ceased. I am cheered and comforted by this. And I am sure that the Lord has some great design of love to answer by the heaped up coals of fire which have burned upon our hearth. He is good. As surely good in the dark as in the sunlight. All is well. Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him. Perhaps by the way of bodily weakness may come increased spiritual strength.   
Love unbroken, from your suffering pastor,   
*C. H. SPURGEON.*   
Mentone, January 17, 1889.

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THE HOLY SPIRIT COMPARED TO THE WIND

NO. 630

**A SERMON PREACHED   
BY C. H. SPURGEON**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell from where it comes and where it goes. So is everyone that is born of the Spirit.   
John 3:8.**

AT the present moment I am not able to enter fully into the subject of the new birth. I am very weary, both in body and mind and cannot attempt that great and mysterious theme. To everything there is a season and a time for every purpose under Heaven and it is not the time to preach upon regeneration when the head is aching, nor to discourse upon the new nature when the mind is distracted. I selected my text with the intention of fixing upon one great illustration which strikes me just now as being so suggestive, and with Divine assistance I may be able to work it out with profit to you and ease to myself.

I shall endeavor to bring before you the parallel which our Savior here draws between the wind and the Holy Spirit. It is a remarkable fact, known, I dare say to most of you, that both in the Hebrew and Greek languages the same word is used for spirit and for windso that our Savior, as it were, rode upon the wings of the wind, while he was instructing the seeking Rabbi in the deep things of God. He caught at the very name of the wind as a means of fastening a spiritual truth upon the memory of the enquirer, hinting to us that language should be watched by the teacher that he may find out suitable words and employ those which will best assist the disciple to comprehend and to retain his teaching. The wind, said He, blows, and the very same word would have been employed if He had meant to say, The Spirit blows where He wishes.

There was intended, doubtless, to be a very close and intimate parallel between the Spirit of God and the wind, or otherwise the great Ruler of Providence who invisibly controlled the confusion of Babel would not have fashioned human language so that the same word should stand for both. Language, as well as nature, illustrates the wisdom of God! It is only in His light that we see lightmay the Holy Spirit be graciously pleased to reveal Himself in His Divine operations to all our waiting minds.

We are taught in Gods Word that the Holy Spirit comes upon the sons of men and makes them new creatures. Until He enters them they are dead in trespasses and sins. They cannot discern the things of God because Divine Truths of God are spiritual and spiritually discernedand unrenewed men are carnal and possess not the power to search out the deep things of God. The Spirit of God creates new in the children of God and then in their new-born spirituality they discover and come to understand spiritual things, but not before. And, therefore, my beloved Hearers, unless you possess the Spirit, no metaphors, however simple, can reveal

Him to you.   
Let us not mention the name of the Holy Spirit without due honor. For  
ever blessed are You, most glorious Spirit, co-equal and co-eternal with   
the Father and with the Son! Let all the angels of God worship You! Be  
You had in honor world without end!   
I. We will consider IN WHAT SENSE THE HOLY SPIRIT MAY BE COMPARED TO THE WIND. The Spirit of God, to help the spiritually-minded in   
their study of His Character and Nature condescends to compare Himself  
to dew, fire, oil, water and other suggestive types. And among the rest our  
Savior uses the metaphor of wind. What is the first thought here but that  
of mystery? It was the objection on the score of mystery which our Lord  
was trying to remove from the mind of Nicodemus. Nicodemus in effect,   
said, I cannot understand it. How can it be? A man born again when he  
is old, created over again and that from an invisible agency from above?  
How can these things be?  
Jesus at once directed his attention to the wind, which is none the less   
real and operative because of its mysterious origin and operation. You   
cannot tell from where the wind comesyou know it blows from the north   
or from the westbut at what particular place does that wind start on its   
journey? Where will it pause in its onward flight? You see that it is blowing to the east or to the west, but where is it going? From where did these   
particles of air originate which rush so rapidly past? Where are they going? By what law are they guided in their course and where will their   
journey end?   
The gale may be blowing due east here, but it may be driving west a  
hundred miles away. In one district the wind may be rushing from the   
north and yet not far from it there may be a strong current from the   
south. Those who ascend in balloons tell us that they meet with crosscurrentsone wind blowing in this direction and another layer of air moving  
towards an opposite quarterhow is this? If you have watched the skies   
you must occasionally have noticed a stream of clouds hurrying to the   
right, while higher up, another company is sailing to the left! It is a question whether thunder and lightning may not be produced by the friction of   
two currents of air traveling in different directions. But why is it that this   
current takes it into its head to go this way, while another steers for quite   
another port? Will they meet across each others path in regions far away? Are there whirlpools in the air as in the water? Are there eddies, currents, rivers of air, lakes of air? Is the whole atmosphere like the sea, only   
composed of less dense matter? If so, what is it that stirs up that great   
deep of air and bids it howl in the hurricane and then constrains it to   
subside into the calm? The philosopher may scheme some conjecture to  
prove that the trade winds blow at certain intervals because of the sun  
crossing the equator at those periods and that there must necessarily be a   
current of air going towards the equator because of the rarefaction. But he   
cannot tell you why the weathercock on yonder church steeple turned this   
morning from south-west to due east.   
He cannot tell me why it is that the sailor finds that his sails are at one   
time filled with wind and in a few minutes they fall loosely about so that  
he must steer upon another tack if he would make headway. The various  
motions of the air remain a mystery to all but the infinite Jehovah. My Brethren, the like mystery is observed in the work of the Spirit of God. His Person and work are not to be comprehended by the mind of man. He may be here tonight, but you cannot see HimHe speaks to one heart, but others cannot hear His voice. He is not recognizable by the unrefined   
senses of the unregenerate.   
The spiritual man discerns Him, feels Him, hears Him and delights in   
Him, but neither wit nor learning can lead a man into the secret. The Believer is often bowed down with the weight of the Spirits Glory, or lifted up   
upon the wings of His majesty. But even he knows not how these feelings  
are worked in him. The fire of holy life is at seasons gently fanned with the   
soft breath of Divine comfort, or the deep sea of spiritual existence stirred   
with the mighty blast of the Spirits rebuke. But still it is forevermore a   
mystery how the eternal God comes into contact with the finite mind of   
His creature, man. God is filling all Heaven, meanwhile, and yet dwelling   
in a human body as in a templeoccupying all space and yet operating   
upon the will, the judgment, the mind of the poor insignificant creature   
called man.   
We may enquire, but who can answer us? We may search, but who   
shall lead us into the hidden things of the Most High? He brooded over  
chaos and produced order, but who shall tell us after what fashion He   
worked? He overshadowed the Virgin and prepared a body for the Son of   
God, but into this secret who shall dare pry? His is the anointing, sealing,   
comforting and sanctifying of the saintsbut how does He work all these   
things? He makes intercession for us according to the will of God. He   
dwells in us and leads us into all the Truths of Godbut who among us  
can explain to his fellow man the order of the Divine working? Though veiled from human eye like the Glory which shone between the   
cherubim, we believe in the Holy Spirit and therefore see Him. But if our   
faith needed to sustain it, we should never believe at all. Mystery is far  
from being all which the Savior would teach by this simile. Surely He   
meant to show us that the operations of the Spirit are like the wind for  
Divinity. Who can create a wind? The most ambitious of human princes   
would scarcely attempt to turn, much less to send forth, the wind! These   
steeds of the storm know no bit nor bridle, neither will they come at any   
mans bidding. Let our senators do what they will, they will scarcely have   
the madness to legislate the winds!   
Old Boreas, as the heathens called him, is not to be bound with chains   
and welded on an earthly anvil, or in a vulcanian forge. The wind blows   
where it wishes. And it does so because God directs it and suffers it not   
to stay for man nor to tarry for the sons of men. So with the Spirit of God.  
All the true operations of the Spirit are due in no sense whatever to man,   
but always to God and to His Sovereign will. Revivalists may get up excitement with the best intentions and may warm peoples hearts till they   
begin to cry out, but all this ends in nothing unless it is Divine work.  
Have I not said scores of times from this pulpit, All that is of Natures   
spinning must be unraveled?   
Every particle which Nature puts upon the foundation will turn out to   
be but wood, hay and stubble, and will be consumed. It is only the gold,  
the silver and the precious stones of Gods building that will stand the   
fiery test. You must be born again from above, for human regenerations   
are lies. You may blow with your mouth and produce some trifling effects upon trifles as light as air. Man in his zeal may set the windmills of silly minds in motion. But, truly, to stir mens hearts with substantial and eternal Truths of God needs a celestial breeze such as the Lord alone can  
send!   
Did not our Lord also intend to hint at the Sovereignty of the Spirits   
work? For what other reason did He say, The wind blows where it   
wishes? There is an arbitrariness about the wind. It does just as it  
pleases and the laws which regulate its changes are unknown to man.  
Free as the wind, we saythe wild winds. So is the mighty working of   
God! It is a very solemn thought and one which should tend to make us  
humble before the Lordthat we are, as to the matter of salvation  
entirely in His hands! If I have a moth in my hand tonight I can bruise its   
wings, or I can crush it at my will and by no attempts of its own can it escape from me. And every sinner is absolutely in the hands of God andlet  
him remember he is in the hand of an angry God, too.   
The only comfort is that he is in the hand of a God who, for Jesus  
sake, delights to have mercy upon even the vilest of the vile. Sinner, God   
can give you the Holy Spirit if He wills. But if He should say concerning   
you, Let him alone, your fate is sealed, your damnation is sure! It is a   
thought which some would say is enough to freeze all energy. Beloved, I   
would to God it would freeze the energy of the flesh and make the flesh  
dead in the sense of powerlessnessfor God never truly begins to show  
His might till we have seen an end of all human power. I tell you, Sinner,   
you are as dead concerning spiritual things as the corpse that is laid in its   
coffin! No, as the corpse that is rotting in its grave and has become, like   
Lazarus in the tomb, stinking and offensive.   
There is a voice that can call you forth out of your sepulcher, but if that   
voice comes not remember where you arejustly damned, justly ruined,  
justly cut off forever from all hope. What do you say? Do you tremble at  
this? Do you cry, O God! Have pity upon me? He will hear your cry, Sinner, for there never yet was a sincere cry that went up to Heaven, though   
it were ever so feeble, but what it had an answer of peace. When one of   
the old saints lay dying, he could only say, O Lord, I trust You languida  
fide, with a languid faith. It is poor work that, but, oh, it is safe work.  
You can only trust Christ with a feeble faith. If it is such a poor trembling  
faith that it does not grip Him, but only touches the hem of His garment, it   
nevertheless saves you!   
If you can look at Him, though it is only a great way off, yet it saves   
you. And oh, what a comfort this is, that you are still on pleading terms   
with Him and in a place of hope! Whoever believes is not condemned.   
But, oh, do not trifle with the day of Divine Grace, lest having frequently  
heard the warning, and hardened your neck just as often, you should  
suddenly be destroyed and that without remedy! If He shuts you out,   
none can bid you come in! If He does but close the iron bar, you are shut  
out in the darkness of obstinacy, obduracy and despair foreverthe victim of your own delusions!

Sinner, if God saves you, He shall have all the gloryfor He has a right   
to do as He willsfor He says, I will have mercy on whom I will have   
mercy and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. But   
still, I think I have not yet brought out what is in the text. Do you not  
think that the text was intended to show the varied methods in which the Spirit of God works in the conversion and regeneration of men? The wind blows where it wishes. Now observe the different force of the wind. This afternoon the wind seemed as if it would tear up every tree and doubtless, had they been in leaf, many of those noble princes of the forest must have stretched themselves prone upon the earth. But God takes care that in these times of boisterous gales there should be no leaf and therefore the   
wind gets but little purchase with which to drag up a tree.   
But the wind does not always blow as it did this afternoon. On a summers evening there is such a gentle zephyr that even the gnats who have   
been arranging a dance among themselves are not disturbed, but keep to  
their proper places. Yes, the aspen seems as if it could be quiet, though  
you know it keeps forever quivering, according to the old legend that it   
was the tree on which the Savior hung and therefore trembles still as   
though through fear of the sin which came upon it. It is but a legend.  
There are times when all is still and calm, when everything is quiet and   
you can scarcely detect the wind at all.   
Now just so it is with the Spirit of God. To some of us He came like a  
rushing mighty wind. Oh, what tearing of soul there were then! My spirit   
was like a sea tossed up into tremendous waves, made, as Job says, To   
boil like a pot, till one would think the deep were hoary. Oh, how that   
wind came crashing through my soul and every hope I had was bowed as   
the trees of the wood in the tempest! Read the story of John Bunyans   
conversionit was just the same. Turn to Martin Lutheryou find his   
conversion of the same sort. So might I mention hundreds of biographies  
in which the Spirit of God came like a tornado sweeping everything before   
it and the men could not but feel that God was in the whirlwind. To others He comes so gently they cannot tell when first the Spirit of   
God came. They recollect that night when mother prayed so with brothers   
and sisters and when they could not sleep for hours because the big tears  
stood in their eyes on account of sin. They recollect the Sunday school  
and the teacher there. They remember that earnest minister. They cannot  
say exactly when they gave their hearts to God and they cannot tell about   
any violent convictions. They are often comforted by that text, One thing I   
know, whereas I was blind, now I see. But they cannot get any farther  
they sometimes wish they could.  
Well, they need not wish it, for the Spirit of God, as a Sovereign, will   
always choose His own way of operation. And if it is but the wind of the   
Holy Spirit, remember it is as saving in its gentleness as in its terror and   
is as efficient to make us new creatures when it comes with the zephyrs   
breath as when it comes with the hurricanes force. Do not quarrel with   
Gods way of saving you! If you are brought to the Cross be thankful for   
itChrist will not mind how you got there. If you can say, He is all my   
salvation and all my desire, you never came to that without the Spirit of  
God bringing you to it. Do not, therefore, think you came the wrong way,  
for that is impossible!   
Again, the wind not only differs in force, but it differs in direction. We  
have been saying several times the wind is always shifting. Perhaps there   
never were two winds that did blow exactly in the same direction. I mean  
that if we had power to detect the minute points of the compass, there   
would be found some deviation in every current, although, of course, for all practical purposes it blows from certain distinct points which the  
mariner marks out. Now, the Spirit of God comes from different directions. You know very well, dear Friends, that sometimes the Spirit of God will   
blow with mighty force from one denomination of Christians. Then suddenly they seem to be left and God will raise up another body of Christians, fill them with Himself and qualify them for usefulness. In the days   
of Wesley and Whitefield there was very little of the Divine Spirit anywhere   
except among the Methodists. I am sure they have not a monopoly of Him   
now. The Divine Spirit blows also from other quarters. Sometimes He uses  
one man, sometimes another. We hear of a revival in the North of Ireland.  
By-and-by it is in the South of Scotland. It comes just as God wills, for direction.   
And you know, too, dear Friends, it comes through different instrumentalities in the same Church. Sometimes the wind blows from this pulpit  
God blesses me to your conversion. Another time it is from my good sister,   
Mrs. Bartletts class. On a third occasion it is the Sunday school. Again, it  
may be another class, or the preaching of the young men, or from the individual exertion of private Believers. God causes that wind to blow just   
which way He wills. He works, also, through different texts of Scripture.  
You were converted and blessed under one textit was quite another that  
was made useful to me.   
Some of you were brought to Christ by terrors, others of you by love, by   
sweet wooing words. The wind blows as God directs. Now, dear Friends,  
whenever you take up a religions biography, do not sit down and say,  
Now I will see whether I am just like this person. Nonsense! God never  
repeats Himself. Men make steel pensthousands of grosses of themall  
alike, but I will be bound to say that in quills from the common, there are   
no two of them precisely the same. If you look, you will soon discover that  
they differ in a variety of ways. Certain gardeners cut their trees into the   
shape of cheeses and a number of unnatural forms, but Gods trees do   
not grow that way, they grow just anywaygnarl their roots and twist   
their branches.   
Great painters do not continually paint the same picture again and   
again and again, and my Divine Master never puts His pencil on the canvas to produce the same picture twice. Every Christian is a distinct work   
of Divine Grace on Gods part which has in it some originality, some portion distinct from all others. I do not believe in trying to make all history  
uniform. It is said that Richard III had a humpback. Whether he really  
was deformed, or whether history gave him the humpback, I cannot tell.  
But it is said that all his courtiers thought it was the most beautiful  
humpback that ever was seen and they all began to grow humpbacks, too! And I have known ministers who had some peculiar idiosyncrasy of experience which was nothing better than a spiritual humpbackbut their  
people all began to have humpbacks, tooto think and talk all in the  
same way and to have the same doubts and fears. Now that will not do! It  
is not the way in which the Most High acts with regard to the wind and if   
He chooses to take all the points of the compass and make use of them   
all, let us bless and glorify His name! Are not the different winds various   
in their qualities? Few of us like an east wind. Most of us are very glad   
when the wind blows from the south. Vegetation seems to love much the   
south-west.   
A stiff northeaster is enough to make us perish. And long continuance   
of the north may well freeze the whole earth! While from the west the wind   
seems to come laden with health from the deep blue sea. And though  
sometimes too strong for the sick, yet it is never a bad time when the west  
wind blows. The ancients all had their different opinions about wind.   
Some were dry, some were rainy. Some affected this disease, some   
touched this part of men, some the other. Certain it is that Gods Holy   
Spirit has different qualities. In the Canticles He blows softly with the   
sweet breath of love. Look farther and you get that same Spirit blowing  
fiercely with threats and denunciation.   
Sometimes you find Him convicting the world of sin, of righteousness,   
of judgment. That is the north wind. At other times opening up Christ to   
the sinner and giving him joy and comfort. That is the south wind that   
blows softly and gives a balminess in which poor troubled hearts rejoice.   
And yet all these works the same Spirit. Indeed, my subject is all but  
endless, and therefore I must stop. But even in the matter of duration you   
know how the wind will sometimes blow six weeks in this direction and,  
again, continue in another direction. And the Spirit of God does not always work with usHe does as He pleasesHe comes and He goes. We   
may be in a happy hallowed frame at one time, and at another we may  
have to cry, Come from the four winds, O Breath!   
II. We will consider. in the second place, THE PARALLEL BETWEEN   
THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE EFFECTS OF THE WIND. You hear the  
sound of it. Ah, that we do! The wind sometimes wails as if you could   
hear the cry of mariners far out at sea, or the moans of the widows that  
must weep for them. And, oh, the Spirit of God sets men wailing with an   
exceedingly bitter cry for sin, as one that is in sorrow for his first-born. You hear the sound of it. Oh, it is a blessed sound, that wailing! Angels rejoice over one sinner that repents. Then comes the wind at another time with a triumphant sound, and if there is an Aeolian harp in the   
window, how it swells, sweeps, descendsthen rises again! It gives all the   
tones of music and makes the air glad with its jubilant notes. So with the   
Holy Spiritsometimes He gives us faith, makes us boldother times full  
of assurance, confidence, joy and peace in believing. You hear the sound  
of a full diapason of the Holy Spirits mighty melody within the soul of  
man filling him with peace and joy and rest and love.   
Sometimes the wind comes, too, with another sound as though it were   
contending. You heard it, perhaps, this afternoon. We who are a little in   
the country hear it more than you doit is as though giants were struggling in the sky together. It seems as if two seas of air, both lashed to fury,

met and dashed against some unseen cliffs with terrible uproar. The Spirit  
of God comes into the soul sometimes and makes great contention with   
the flesh. Oh, what a stern striving there is against unbelief, against lust,  
against pride, against every evil thing.   
You hear the sound of it. You that know what Divine experience   
meansyou know when to go forth to fight your sins. When you can hear   
the sound of a going in the tops of the mulberry trees, then you bestir  
yourself to destroy your sins. Sometimes the wind comes with a sweep as   
though it were going on forever. It comes past and dashes through the   
trees, sweeping away the rotten branches. Then away it goes across the   
Alps, dashing down an avalanche in its course, still onward. And as it flies, it blows away everything that is frail and weak. And on, on, on it   
speeds its way to some unknown goal.   
And thus it is sometimes the Spirit of God will come right through us,   
as if He were bearing us away to that spiritual heritage which is our sure  
future destinybearing away coldness, barrenness, everything before it.   
We do not lament then that we do not pray. We do not believe that we  
cannot prayI can do everything, is our joyful shout as we are carried   
on the wings of the wind. You hear the sound of it. I hope you have  
heard it sometimes in all its powerful, overwhelming, mighty influence till  
your soul has been blown away.   
You hear the sound of it. But then the wind does something more  
than make a sound. And so does the Holy Spirit. It WORKS and produces   
manifest results. Just think what the wind is doing tonight. I cannot tell  
at what pitch it may be now. It is just possible that in some part of the   
ocean a vessel scuds along almost under bare poles. The mariners do   
their best to reef the sailsaway she goesnow the mast is gonethey do   
their best to bear up but they find that in the teeth of the gale they cannot  
stand.   
The ship dashes on the rocks and she is wrecked. And, oh, the Spirit of   
God is a great wrecker of false hopes and carnal confidences! I have seen  
the Spirit of God come to a sinner like a storm to a ship at sea. He had to  
take down the top gallants of the sinners pride. Then every thread of carnal confidence had to be reefed and then his hope, itself, had to be cut   
away. And on, on the vessel went, until she struck a rock and down she   
went. The man from that time never dared trust in his merits for he had   
seen his merits wrecked and broken in pieces by the wind.   
The wind, too, remember, is a great leveler. It always aims at everything  
that is high. If you are down low in the street you escape its fury. But  
climb to the top of the Monument, or St. Pauls and see whether you do   
not feel it! Get into the valley, it is all right. The lower branches of the   
trees are scarcely moved, but the top branches are rocked to and fro by it.   
It is a great leveler! So is the Holy Spirit. He never sees a man high but He   
brings him down. He makes every high thought bow before the majesty of  
His might.   
And if you have any high thoughts tonight, rest assured that when the   
Spirit of God comes He will lay them low, even with the ground. Now do   
not let this make you fear the Holy Spirit. It is a blessed thing to be rocked   
so as to have our hopes tested and it is a precious thing to have our carnal confidences shaken. And how blessedly the wind purifies the atmosphere! In the Swiss valleys there is a heaviness in the air which makes the   
inhabitants unhealthy. They take quinine and you see them going about  
with big swellings in their necks.   
From Martigny to Bretagne, there is a great valley in which you will see   
hundreds of persons diseased. The reason is that the air does not circulate. They are breathing the same air, or some of it, that their fathers   
breathed before them. There seems to be no ventilation between the two   
parts of the giant Alps and the air never circulates. But if they have a   
great storm which sweeps through the valleys it is a great blessing to the   
people. And so the Spirit of God comes and cleanses out our evil thoughts  
and vain imaginationsand though we do not like the hurricane, yet it   
brings spiritual health to our soul.   
Again the wind is a great trier of the nature of things. Here comes a   
great rushing up the street. It sweeps over the heaps of rubbish lying in  
the road. Away goes all the light chaff, paper and other things which have   
no weight in them! They cannot stand the brunt of its whirling power. But   
see, the pieces of iron, the stones and all weighty things are left unmoved.   
In the country you will often see the farmer severing the chaff from the   
wheat by throwing it up into a current of air and the light husks all blow   
away, while the heavy wheat sinks on the heap, cleansed and purified. So   
is the Holy Spirit the great testing power and the result of His operations  
will be to show men what they are.   
Here is a hypocrite, he has passed muster up to now and reckons himself to be a true and genuine man. But there comes a blast from Heavens   
mighty Spirit and he finds himself to be lighter than vanityhe has no   
weight in him, he is driven on and has no rest. He can find no peace. He   
hurries from one refuge of lies to another. There is no peace, says my  
God, to the wicked. Thus also we try the doctrines of men, we bring the   
breath of Inspiration to bear upon themdo they abide the test? Or are   
they driven away? Can you hold that truth in the presence of God? Can  
you cling to it and find it stable in the hour of trial?   
Is it a nice pleasant speculation for a sunny day when all is calm and   
bright, or will it bear the rough rude blast of adversity when Gods Holy   
Spirit is purifying you with His healthful influence? True Christians and   
sound doctrines have ballast and weight in themthey are not moved nor  
driven away. But empty professors and hollow dogmas are scattered like   
chaff before the wind when the Lord shall blow upon them with the breath   
of His Spirit. Therefore examine yourselvestry the doctrines and see if  
they are of God. What is the chaff to the wheat? says the Lord. Have root in yourselvesthen you will not wither in the hot blast, nor   
be driven away in the tempestuous day. Is not the Spirit moreover like   
unto the wind in its developing of character? See the dust is lying all over  
the picture, you cannot see the fair features of the beauteous sketch beneath. Blow off the dust and the fine colors will be seen and once more   
the skill of the painter will be admired. Have you ever noticed some piece   
of fine mosaic, or perhaps some well-cut engraving on metal all hidden  
and the fine lines filled up with dust?   
You have blown off the accumulation and then you could admire the   
work. So does the Spirit of God. Men get all covered with dust in the hot  
dusty roadside of life till they are nearly the color of the earth itself. But   
they come to the hilltop of Calvary and here they stand till the wind of  
Heaven has cleansed them from all the dust that has gathered around   
their garments. Oh there is nothing like communion with the Spirit of God   
to counteract the earthly tendencies of a business life! There are some   
men that get covered with a yellow dust till they are almost hidden by it.  
They can talk of nothing else but money. Gold, gold, gold is getting to occupy nearly every thought.   
Now I have no quarrel with money in its right place, but I do not like to  
see men live in it. I always try to drive away that mean and groveling spirit  
which lives for nothing else but to accumulate money, but I cannot always  
succeed. Now the Spirit of God will make a man see his folly and put his   
money into its right position and place the Graces of the Christian character where men can see them and glorify God in them. Never let your business character or professional skill dim and hide your Christianity. If  
you do, Gods Spirit will come to brighten you up and He will have no  
mercy on these, but will, in love to your soul, cleanse and give luster to   
Gods work which is worked in you.   
I have also noticed how helpful the wind is to all who choose to avail  
themselves of it. In Lincolnshire, where the country is flat and below the   
level of the sea, they are obliged to drain the land by means of windmills   
and hundreds of them may be seen pumping up the water so as to relieve   
the land of the excess moisture. In many parts of the country nearly all   
the wheat and corn is ground by means of the wind. If it were not for the   
wind the inhabitants would be put to great inconvenience.   
The Spirit of God is thus also a mighty helper to all who will avail   
themselves of His influences. You are inundated with sin, a flood of iniquity comes inyou can never bale out the torrent. But with the help of   
Gods Spirit it can be done! He will so assist that you shall see the flood   
gradually descending and your heart once more purified. You need always   
to ask His helpfresh sin, like falling showers, will be poured into you by   
every passing day and you will need a continuous power to cast it out  
you may have it in Gods Spirit! He will, with ceaseless energy, help you to   
combat sin and make you more than a conqueror!   
Or, on the other hand, if you need some power to break up and prepare  
your spiritual food for you, you will find no better help than what Gods   
Spirit can give. In Eastern countries they grind corn by hand, two sitting   
at a small stone mill. But it is a poor affair at bestso are our own vain   
attempts to prepare the bread of Heaven for ourselves. We shall only get a   
little and that little badly ground. Commentators are good in their way,   
but give me the teaching of the Holy Spirit. He makes the passage clear   
and gives me to eat of the finest wheat. How often we have found our utter   
inability to understand some part of Divine Truthwe asked some of  
Gods people and they helped us a littlebut after all, we were not satisfied till we took it to the Throne of heavenly Grace and implored the teachings of the blessed Spirit!

Then how sweetly it was opened to us! We could eat of it spiritually. It   
was no longer husk and shell, hard to be understood. It was as bread to   
us and we could eat to the full. Brethren, we must make more use of the   
wisdom which comes from above, for the Spirit, like the wind, is open to   
us all to employ for our own personal benefit. I see also here a thought as   
to the co-operation of man and the Spirit in all Christian work. It has   
pleased God to make us co-workers with Himfellow laborersboth in   
the matter of our own salvation and also in the effort to benefit others.   
Look for a moment at yon stately boatshe moves not because of her sails  
but she would not reach the desired haven without them.   
It is the wind which propels her forwardbut the wind would not act   
upon her as it does unless she had the rigging all fixedher masts standing and her sails all bent so as to catch the passing breeze. But now that   
human seamanship has done its best, see how she flies! She will soon   
reach her haven with such a favoring gale as that. You have only to stand   
still and see how the wind bears her on like a thing of life. And so it is   
with the human heart. When the Spirit comes to the soul that is ready to   
receive such influences, then He helps you on to Christian Grace and   
Christian work and makes you bear up through all opposition till you come to the port of peace and can anchor safely there. Without Him we   
can do nothingwithout us He will not work.   
We are to preach the Gospel to every creature and while one plants and   
another waters, God adds the increase. We are to work out our own salvationHe works in us to will and to do of His own good pleasure. We must   
go up to possess the goodly land with our own spear and swordbut the   
hornet goes before us to drive out the foe. Jericho shall be captured by a   
Divine and miraculous interference, but even there rams horns shall find   
a work to do and must be employed. The host of Midian shall be slain, but  
our cry is, The sword of the Lord and of Gideon. We give God all the   
glory, nevertheless we use the means.   
The water of Jordan must be sought out and used by all who desire a   
cleansing like Naaman the Syrian. A lump of figs must be used if other  
Hezekiahs are to be healedbut the Spirit is, after all, the great Cleanser  
and Healer of His people Israel. The lesson is clear to allthe wind turns   
mills that men make. It fills sails that human hands have spread. And the   
Spirit blesses human effort, crowns with success our labors, establishes   
the work of our hands upon us and teaches all through that, the hand of  
the diligent makes rich. And, if a man will not work, neither shall he   
eat.   
Another thought suggests itself to my mind in connection with the wind   
and human effort. It is thisHow completely dependent men are upon the  
wind as to what it shall do for them. They are entirely at its mercy as to its   
time of blowing, its strength and the direction it will take. I have already   
dwelt upon this thought of the sovereignty of the wind, but it comes up   
here in a more practical form. The steamer now can steer almost anywhere they please and at all times it will proceed on its voyage. But the sailing ship must tack according to the wind and when becalmed must wait for the breeze to spring up. The watermill and steam   
mill can be worked night and day, but the mill that depends upon the   
wind must abide by the winds times of blowing and must turn round its  
sails so as to suit the direction of the current of air. In like manner we are   
compelled to wait on the pleasure of the Spirit. There is no reservoir of water which we can turn on when we will and work as we please. We would   
forget God far more than we do now if that were the case. The sailor who   
is depending on the wind anxiously looks up to the masthead to see how  
the breeze is shifting and turning round the vane. And he scans the heavens to see what weather he is likely to have.   
He would not need to care nearly so much as he does now that he is   
absolutely dependent on the wind, if he had steam power so as to sail in   
the very teeth of the storm if he so willed. God, then, keeps us looking up   
to Heaven by making us to be completely at His mercy as to the times and   
ways of giving us His helping power. It is a blessed thing to wait on God,  
watching for His hand and in quiet contentment leaving all to Him. Brethren, let us do our part faithfully, spread every sail, make all as perfect as   
human skill and wisdom can direct and then in patient continuance in   
well-doing, wait the Spirits propitious gales, neither murmuring because  
He tarries, nor be taken unawares when He comes upon us in His Sovereign pleasure to do that which seems good in His sight.   
Now tonight I have only given you some hints on this subjectyou can  
work it out for yourselves. As you hear the wind you may get more sermons out of it than I can give you just now. The thing is perfectly inexhaustible. And I think the business of the minister is not to say all that  
can be said about the subject. Somebody remarked concerning a certain   
minister that he was a most unfair preacher because he always exhausted   
the subject and left nothing for anybody else to say.   
That will never be said of me and I would rather that it should not. A   
minister should suggest germs of thought, open up new ways and present, if possible, the Truth of God in such a method as to lead men to understand that the half is not told them. And now, my dear Hearer,   
whether you listen often to my voice or have now stepped in for the first   
time I would like to ring this in your ear. Do you know the Spirit of God? If  
you have not the Spirit, you are none of His. You must be born again.   
What, Lord, MUST? Do You not mean may? No, you must. Does it not   
mean, You can be? No, you must. When a man says, must, it all depends upon who he is. When God says, must, there it stands and it  
cannot be questioned.   
There are the flames of Hellwould you escape from them? You must  
be born again. There are Heavens glories sparkling in their own light  
would you enjoy them? You must be born again! There is the peace and   
joy of a Believer, would you have it? You must be born again. What, not a   
crumb from off the table without this? No, not one. Not a drop of water to   
cool your burning tongues except you are born again. This is the one condition that never changes. God never alters it and never will. You must, must, MUST. Which shall it be? Shall your will stand, or   
Gods will? O, let Gods must ride right over you and bow yourselves   
down and say, Lord, I must! Then I will! Ah, and it has come to thisI   
must tonight. Give me Christ, or else I die. I have hold of the knocker of  
the door of Your mercy and I must, I WILL get that door open. I will never   
let You go except You bless me! You say, must, Lord, and I say, must,   
too. You must, you must be born again. God fulfill the must in each of   
your cases, for Jesus Christs sake. Amen.

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THE MYSTERIES OF THE BRONZE SERPENT   
NO. 153

A SERMON DELIVERED ON SABBATH MORNING, SEPTEMBER 27, 1857, BY THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON,   
AT THE MUSIC HALL, ROYAL SURREY GARDENS.

**And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up: That whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.   
John 3:14, 15.**

WE are told by wise men that all languages are based upon figures that the speech of men who are uncivilized is mainly composed of figuresand that, indeed, the language of the most civilized, when cleaved so as to bring it to its natural foundation, is based upon a set of metaphors perceived by the mind and then used in language. This much I know, that when we would teach children to speak, we are accustomed to call things not exactly by the names by which they are known to us but by some name which it represents. For instance, the kind of noise which is uttered by some animal but which in some way or other, by a species of figures, is easily understood by the child to represent the things.

But certain it is that among savage nations, the speech is almost entirely composed of metaphors. Hear an Indian warrior addressing the chiefs and inflames them for war. He gathers together all the metaphors of Heaven and earth to make his speech. And you will note the same thing is true even in the names which the Indian warriors have. Those of you who are acquainted with their nomenclature will remember that the strangest names are given to their great men, by way of figure and metaphor to set forth the qualities of their mind.

Now, Beloved, it is the same in spiritual language as it is in natural speech. Nicodemus was but a child in gracewhen Jesus Christ would teach him to speak concerning things of the kingdom, He did not talk to him in abstract words but He gave him metaphorical words whereby he might understand the essence of the thing better than by giving him a mere abstract term. When He talked to Nicodemus, He did not say anything about sanctification. He said, Except a man be born of water. He did not talk anything to him about the great change of the heart. But He said, Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God. He would not tell him much about the Spirit when He began but he said, The wind blows where it lists.

And when Jesus wanted to teach him faith, He did not begin by saying, By faith we are allied to Christ and derive salvation from our living Head, but He saidLike as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness. And so the first religious talk of converted men must always be in figures. Not

the Epistles of Paulwhich are pure didactic teachingbut the words of Jesus must first be applied to the sinner before he is enlightened by the Holy Spirit and understands the mysteries of the kingdom. And I believe I have hit upon the reason why our Master used this figure and talked to Nicodemus with metaphor after metaphor and figure after figurebecause the root of all language must be in figures.

And now, today, I am about to address the mass of my congregation concerning that simple subject of faith in the Lord Jesus whereby men are saved. And instead of addressing them in a didactic and doctrinal manner, I shall adopt the parable of my text and endeavor to imitate the example of my Lord in trying to make faith plain to those who are but children in grace.

Allow me, then, dear Friends, to describe first, the people in the wildernessthe representatives of men who are sinners. Let me describe next, the bronze serpentthe type of Jesus Christ crucified. Let me then note what was to be done with the bronze serpentit was to be lifted up. And so was Christ to be lifted up. And then let us notice what was to be done by the people who were bittenthey were to look at the serpent and so sinners must believe in Christ.

I. Our first figure represents MEN IN THE STATE OF SIN. And the figure is borrowed from the children of Israel in the wilderness when they were invaded by the fiery serpents. Can you imagine the horror and dismay depicted upon the countenances of the Israelites, when, for the first time, they saw themselves invaded by an army of fiery flying serpents? They had stood valiantly in battle against Amalek. But these were things that trembled not at the sword. Moses had taught them the use of the bow, as it is written in the book of Jasher, but these were things against which the arrow could not prevail.

They had endured weariness and thirst and hunger. The sun had sometimes smitten them by day and the frost by night. And but for Gods preservation, the hardships of the wilderness would have cut them off. All these they had endured and were inured to them but these fiery serpents were novelties. And all new terrors are terrible from their very novelty. Can you imagine how they began to tell one another of the awful visitants which they had beheld? And can you imagine how their terror spread like wildfire through the camp and before the rumor had spread the serpents were devouring them?

And now, dear Friends, if we could all of us see our position in this world, we should this day feel as Israel did when they saw the serpents coming upon them. When our children are born into this world we believe there is sin in them but it is a terrible thing for us to reflect that even if the serpent had not bitten them in birth, yet they are surrounded everywhere by innumerable evils! Can a father send his son into this wicked world with a consciousness of all the evils that will surround him, without a sense of terror? And can a Christian man trust himself to walk in the midst of this ungodly and libidinous generation without feeling that he is surrounded with temptations, which, if he were left to himself, would be a thousand times more dangerous to him than the most destroying of serpents?

But the picture blackens. We must have deeper shades to paint it. Behold the people after they were bitten! Can you picture their writhing and contortions when the poison of the serpent had infected their veins? We are told by the old writers that these serpents, when they bit, caused vehement heat so that there was a pain throughout the body, as if a hot iron had been sent along the veins. Those who had been bitten had a great thirst. They drank incessantly and still cried for water to quench the burnings within. It was a hot fire which was lit in the fountain and which ran through every nerve and every sinew of the man. They were racked in pain and died in most fearful convulsions.

Now, my Brethren, we cannot say that sin instantly produces such an effect as this upon the men who are the subjects of it. But we do affirm that if we let sin alone it will develop itself in miseries far more extreme than ever the bite of the serpent could have caused. It is true the young man who quaffs the poisoned cup of intoxication knows not that there is a serpent there. For there is no serpent except in the dregs. It is sure that the woman who boasts herself of her riches and arrays herself right gaudily in her pride knows not that a serpent binds the zone of her waist. For there is no serpent there as she knows but she shall know it when the days of her frivolity are ended.

It is true he that curses God knows not that a viper has infused the poison which he speaks out against his Maker. But he shall know it in days to come. Look at a bloated drunkardsee him after years of intoxication have defaced all that was manlike in himas he totters to his grave a poor feeble creature. The pillars of his house are shaken, his strength has failed him and that which God had meant to be His own image has become the image of misery incarnate! See the lascivious debauchee after his brief day of pleasure has closed! No, it is too loathsome for me to paintmy lips refuse to depict the miseries which our hospitals see every day.

The awful loathsomeness, the accursed disease which eats up the very bones of those who indulge in sin. Fiery serpents, you are nothing when compared with fiery lusts. You may infuse poison into the blood but lusts do that and do something morethey infuse damnation into the soul! When sin has had its perfect work, when its last fair conception has been brought forth and has developed itself in the dire crime and the loathsome iniquitythen we have a picture which serpent-bitten Israel would not set forth to us in all its horrors!

And the shades thicken yet again. The darkness lowers and the clouds are heavier! How awful must have been the death of those who died by the serpents! There are some deaths which are sweet to think upon. The

death of the late eminent preacher, Dr. Beaumont, who died in his pulpit, was a death which all of us might envy. His released spirit, while the singing of Gods praise was ascending up to Heaven, left his body and was forthwith raised to the Throne of God. The death of him who having served his Master sinks like a shock of corn fully ripe, or like a sun that has run its race. It is something to be noted and remembered with delight.

But the death of the sinner who has been bitten by his lusts and has not been saved by faith in Christoh, how terrible! It is not in the power of mortal language to depict the horrors of the deathbed of a man who has lived without God and without Christ. I challenge all the orators that have ever lived to draw forth from their vocabulary words full enough of horror and of terror to depict the departing scene of the man who has lived at enmity with God and who dies with his conscience quickened then.

Some men, it is true, live in sin and take the last dregs of their infatuation before they die and sink into the pit blindfoldedwithout the slightest pang of horror. But other men who have had their consciences awakened die not so. Oh, the shrieks, the yells, the screams! Oh, the face of anguish, the contortions, the misery! Have you ever heard how men do shake their fists and swear they will not die and how they start forth and declareI cannot and I must not die, I am unprepared! Starting back from the fiery gulf, they clutch the physician and desire him, if possible, to lengthen out the thread of their existence! Yes, many a nurse has vowed that she would never nurse such a man again, for the horrors would be with her till she died.

And now, my dear Hearers, you are not dying now. But you will be dying soon. None of you have taken a lease of your lives. It is impossible for you to guarantee to yourselves existence for another hour. And if you are Godless and Christless you have all in your veins the venom of that death unutterable which will make your departure doleful beyond expression! I would to God I could cut the cords of my stammering tongue so as to address you with vehemence and passion upon this subject. Men are dying every day around usat this very hour there are thousands departing into the world of spirits. In upper chambers mourning relatives are pouring floods of tears upon their burning brows.

Far away on the wild sea, where the sea gull utters the only scream over the shipwrecked mariner, down, deep, deep, deep, in the lowest valley and high upon the loftiest hills, men are dying now and dying in all the agonies I have sought to describe but have failed to do. Ah and you must die also! And will you march on heedlessly, will you go on step after step, singing merrily all the way and dreaming not of that which is to come?

Oh, will you be like the silly bullock that goes easily to the slaughter, or will you be like the lamb that licks the butchers knife! Mad, mad, O Man, that you should go to eternal wrath and to the chambers of fell destruction and yet no sigh comes from your heartno groan is uttered by your lips! You die every day but never groan till the last day of your death which is the beginning of your misery. Yes, the condition of the mass of men is just like the condition of the children of Israel when they were bitten by the serpents.

II. And now comes THE REMEDY. The remedy of the bitten Israelites was a bronze serpent. And the remedy for sinners is Christ crucified. Stupid nonsense, said some of the children of Israel when they heard that a bronze serpent lifted up on a pole was to be the means of their cure. Many of them laughed in the jollity of unbeliefabsurd, ridiculouswho ever heard of such a thing, how can it be? A serpent of brass lifted up upon a pole to cure us of these wounds, by being looked upon? Why all the skill of the physicians cannot do itwill a glance at a bronze serpent do it? It is impossible!

This much I know, if they did not despise the bronze serpent, there are many that despise Christ crucified. Shall I tell you what they say of Him? They say of Him as they did of the bronze serpent. Some wise one said Why it was a serpent that did the mischief, how can a serpent undo it? Yes and men will say, It was by man that sin and death came into the world and can a man be the means of our salvation? Ah, says another, having the prejudice of a Jew about him, and what a man He was! No king, no prince, no mighty conqueror. He was but a poor peasant and He died upon a Cross.

Ah, so said some in the camp. They said it was only a bronze serpent, not a golden one and how could a bronze serpent be of any use to them? It would not sell for much if it were broken up. What was the use of it? And so men say of Christ. He is despised and rejected of mena Man of Sorrows and acquainted with griefand they hide their faces from Him because they cannot see how He is adapted for their cure.

But some will have it that the preaching of the Cross not only cannot save, but will increase the evil. Old physicians tell us that brass was the most likely thing in the world to make people die the quicker. The sight of anything that is bright would have the effect of making the poison yet more strong in its effects, so that it would be death at once to look upon brass. And yet strange to say, to look at the bronze serpent saved them. Now, says the infidel, I cannot see how men are to be saved from sin by the preaching of Christ. Truly Sir, he says you go and tell men that though they have sinned never so much, if they do but believe, their sins shall all be washed away!

Why they will take advantage of that and they will be more wicked than ever they were. You tell men that their good works are of no avail whatever, that they must rest on Christ alone! Why, says the skeptic, my dear Fellow, it will be the destruction of all morality, instead of a cure, it will be a death. Why preach it? Ah, the preaching of the Cross is foolishness to them that perish. But unto us who are saved, it is Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. I cannot myself but admit that at first sight the bronze serpent seems to be the most absurd invention,

in itself, for curing those who were bitten that ever mind of man could have invented.

And yet I see in the bronze serpent, when I come to study it, the highest wisdom that even God Himself could develop. I grant you that the Cross of Christ also does in its outward appearance seem to be the simplicity of simplicities, something which anyone might have thought of, but which would have been beneath their thought. But when you come to study and understand the marvelous scheme of Gods justice vindicated and man pardoned through the atoning blood of the Cross, I say that not even the mighty intellect of God could have conceived a wiser plan than the wisdom of God displayed in Christ Jesus crucified.

But remember that much as those who heard of the bronze serpent might have despised it, yet there was no other means of cure. And, now hear me for one moment while I tell the whole story of salvation. Men, brethren and fathers we are born of a sinful generation and we have ourselves increased our guilt. For us there is no hopedo what we maywe cannot save ourselves

*Could our zeal no respite know   
Could our tears forever flow   
All for sin could not atone.*

But Brethren, Christ Jesus, Gods eternal Son, came into this world and was born of the virgin Mary. He lived a doleful life of misery and at last He died a death accompanied by unutterable pangsthat was the punishment of the sins of those who, as penitents, come to Christ. If you this day so repent and put your trust in Jesus, you have in your trust and repentance a sure proof that Christ was punished for you.

III. And now WHAT WAS TO BE DONE WITH THE BRAZEN SERPENT? The text says, Moses lifted it up, and we read he was to lift it up upon a pole. Ah, dear Friends, and Christ Jesus must be lifted up. He has been lifted upwicked men lifted Him up, when, with nails on an accursed tree, they crucified Him! God the Father has lifted Him up. For He has highly exalted Him, far above principalities and powers. But the ministers business is to lift Him up. There are some ministers who forget that their errand in the world is to lift up Christ.

Suppose Moses, when God told Him to lift up the bronze serpent, had said in himself, It is becoming in me, before I lift it up, that I should give some explanatory remarks. And instead of lifting it up before the vulgar crowd, I will initiate a proved few, so that they may understand about it. I will arrange around this serpent a few golden cloths, I will garnish it with silver tapestry so that it may not be looked upon by vulgar eyes and I will endeavor to explain it to them.

Now this is what many priestly persons in this age and in ages past have tried to do. They think the Gospels must not be preached to the poor! The Bible says the Church of Rome, must not be read by the vulgar crowd! How can they understand it? It is a thing too sacred for the common people to see! No, wrap up the bronze serpent! Wrap it up in a cloth, do not let it be exhibited. No, say our Protestant ministers, many of them, the Bible must be given but we must never alter the translation of it! There are some passages in the present translation that are so dark that no man can understand them without an explanation.

But no, say the Divines of this age, we will not have the Bible translated properly, the people must always put up with a faulty translation. The bronze serpent must be wrapped up because it would unsettle matters if we were to have a new translation! No, say others, we will have a new translation, if need be. But there are some parts of the Truth that ought not to be preached! I am not now misrepresenting some of my Brethren in the ministry. I know they hold that some doctrines of Gods Word ought not to be preachedevery day at least.

They say Election is true. But they never mention it. They say Predestination is no doubt a godly doctrine but it ought to be kept from the people. It must be in their creed, or else they would not be sound. But in the pulpit it must not be mentioned at all. No, says the Church of Rome, if we have a bronze serpent, we will put it in the sanctum, where it cannot be seen and we will have the smoke of incense before it, so that it shall not be plainly discerned. The pomp and ceremony and trappings of formality shall shield it from the vulgar gaze of the people. We will have it girt all round with a thousand ceremonies which will abstract the Gospel and leave the people to be content with the ceremonies!

Now in these days there are great tendencies to that. The Puseyites are trying, instead of preaching the simplicity of the Gospel, to give us figures. Oh, they say what an elevating thing is a Gothic church! How it lifts the soul to Heaven to sit in a place where there is a forest of Gothic pillars! Oh, what a sweet influence a well played organ has on the mind! They tell us there is a kind of heavenly influence poured forth from vestments when well worn and that to see the priest discharge his functions in a holy and reverent manner is a most excellent way of impressing souls.

They will have us believe that holly at Christmas time is a most Heavenly and spiritual thing. They teach us that our passions will be carried to Heaven by these little sprigs of green. That putting flowers now and then where the gas lamps should be has a most extraordinary influence in carrying away our souls to Paradise. That burning candles in the daylight is just the most splendid way in all the world of showing forth the sun of righteousness!

Now, we do not exactly fall in with their views. We believe that these places are good for children. They are not so liable to cry there, for there are more things to amuse them. But we never could see how a manwho was a mancould ever sit down to a thing so infamously namby-pamby as the religion of a Puseyite. There is nothing in it but pure nonsense and all that the Gospel may not be seen. It is as if Aaron had filled his censer full of incense and waved it before the bronze serpent and made a great smoke so that the people could not see it. And then poor Moses tarried

behind and tried to look but none of the poor souls could see because there was the smoke before them.

No, the only thing we have to do with Christ Jesus crucified is just to lift Him up and preach Him. There is many a man who can only speak in a plowmans dialect who will wear a bright and starry crown in Heaven because he lifted Christ up and sinners saw and lived. And there is many a learned doctor who spoke with the brogue of the Egyptianwith the dark and mysterious language he talkedafter having ended his course, shall enter Heaven without a solitary star in his crown, never having lifted up Christ, nor won crowns for his Master.

Let each of us who are called to the solemn work of the ministry remember that we are not called to lift up doctrine, or Church government or particular denominations. Our business is to lift up Christ Jesus and to preach Him fully. There may be times when Church government is to be discussed and peculiar doctrines are to be vindicated. God forbid that we should silence any part of Truth. The main work of the ministryits every day workis just exhibiting Christ and crying out to sinners, Believe, believe, believe on Him who is the Lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world.

And let it be remembered that if the minister does but preach Christ plainly, that is all he has to do. If with affection and prayer he preaches Christ fully, if there were never a soul savedwhich I believe would be impossiblehe would have done his work and his Master would say, well done. I have gone away from this hall, after preaching upon different doctrines and though many have complimented me, foolishly, I have said to myself, I can but groan that I had such a subject at all. And at another time, when I have been faltering in my delivery and committed a thousand blunders in my speech, I have gone away as happy as a prince, because I have said, I did preach Christ.

There was enough for sinners to be saved by. And if all the papers in the world should abuse me and all the men in the world should say, cry him down, I will still live and still breathe as long as I can feel in myself, I have preached to sinners and Christ has been preached to them so as they could understand and lay hold on Him and be saved.

IV. And now, dear Friends, I have almost concluded but I have come to that part of the discourse which needs most of power. WHAT WAS ISRAEL TO DO? What are convicted sinners to do? The Israelites were to look. The convicted sinner must believe. Do you picture Moses with his reverend head standing erect and boldly crying out with all his mightLook, look, look! Do you see him, as with his right hand he grasps the pole and lifts it up and marches with it through the camp? He is like a great standardbearer, pointing with his finger and speaking with hand and eye and lip and foot and every part of the bodyas he passionately bids poor bitten Israel to look.

You can, perhaps, conceive the scene as men roll over one another. And the dying and almost dead behold the bronze serpent and begin to live. Now note, there may be some in the camp who would not look. They obstinately shut their eyes and when the pole was brought near them they would not look. Perhaps it was through unbelief. They said, What is the use of it? It can do us no good! There is the wretch, the pole is before him and yet he will not look. Well, what will become of him? Oh, the deathpangs are upon him! See how death is twitching him! How his flesh seems to writhe in agony!

He has shut his eyes with all the force and passion he can command, lest they should be opened on that bronze serpent and he should live. Ah, my Hearers, I have such an one here today. I have many here who will not come to Christ that they may be savedmen who, when the Gospel is preached to them resist it, despise it and reject it. Though the reception of the Gospel is all of grace, yet the rejection of it is all of man. And I have some here who have often been touched in their conscience. They have often been moved to believe, but they have been desperately set on mischief and they would not come to Christ.

Ah, Sinner, you little know how direful your doom shall be. You may this day tell me you do not believe in the Savior. You may turn away your ear from the warning and say, What need to make so great a noise about it? I would rather die than believe, for I do not think that Christ can save! What good is there in it? Ah, Sir, you may reject mebut remember there is a greater preacher than I am coming to you soon. He with a skeleton arm and bony finger and cold speechhe will freeze and yet convict! It is one called Death! Look me in the face today. And tell me I preach you a lieyou can do that easily! Look Death in the face tomorrow and tell him that and you will find it harder work.

Yes and if you have the foolhardiness to do that, you will not look at the face of the Great Judge, when He shall sit upon the Throne! Tell Him that His Gospel was not true! Frightened and alarmed you shall rush here and there to hide yourselves from the face of Him that sits upon the Throne. Perhaps there were some in the camp who said they would look by-andby, Oh, said they, there is no need to look now, the venom has not yet worked its effectswe are not yet dead. A little longer! And before they uttered the last word they were stiff and cold as clay! How many do the same? They will not be religious yetanother day, another hour.

They believe they can be pious when they like, which is a fallacy. And therefore they will postpone the matter as long as they may. How many have postponed the day of salvation until the day of damnation has come before they had repented? Oh, how many have said, A little sleep, a little folding of the hands and they have been like men on shipboard, when the ship was foundering, who would not escape while they might but still tarried on deck? At last the sea swallowed them and they went down alive into the depths. Take heed of procrastination. Delays are dangerous and some delays are damnable! Look here, look here to Christ bleeding on

the Cross. Look now, for the Spirit says, today, if you will hear His voice harden not your hearts as in the day of provocation.

I doubt not, there were some there who tried physiciansLook at the bronze serpent? said they, not we. Doctor, come here, bring your balsam. Can you not take the caustic and burn out this poison from my arm and then pour in some cordial that will save me? Physician, have you no antidote that might cool my blood? Ah, I laugh at that bronze serpent. I will not look at it. I trust to your skill, O learned physician! And how many now do the same? They say I will not believe in Christ. I will try and do better, I will reform myself, I will attend to all the ceremonies of the Church. Can I not help myself and so improve myself that I shall have no need of Jesus?

Ah, you may tryyou may lay that flattering unction to your souls and film the ulcerous woundbut all the while dark corruption shall sleep within and shall at last break out in sore flames upon you. Then you shall have no time to attempt a cure but shall be swept awaynot to the hospital of mercy but like the leper without the cityyou shall be cast away from hope of blessedness.

It may be there were some who were so busy looking at their sores that they did not think of looking at the serpent. Poor creatures, they lay in their misery and kept looking first at that wound on the foot and then at that one on the hand and crying over their sores and never looked at the serpent. Scores and hundreds perish in that way. Oh, says the sinner, I have been so sinful! Man, what has that to do with it? Christ is all meritoriouslook at Him. No, no, says another, I cannot look at Christ. Oh, Sir, you do not know what crimes I have committed. I have been a drunkard, I have been a swearer, I have been a whoremongerhow can I be saved!

My dear Man, your wounds have nothing to do with itit is just Christ on the Cross. If any poor creature, bitten by the serpent, had said to me Now it is no good my looking there. See how often I have been bitten. There is a huge serpent twisting round my loins, there is another devouring my hand, how can I live? I should say to him, My dear Fellow, do not take any notice whether you have got one serpent or fifty serpents, one bite or fifty bites. All you have to do is look. You have nothing to do with these bites except that you have to feel them and perish by them unless you look. But just look straight to Christ.

And now you chief of sinners, believe in the Lord Jesus. And be your sins ever so many, He is able to save unto the uttermost them that come unto God by Him. And yet how many perish through many delusions, with the Gospel before their very eyes, lifted up on the pole so plainly that we wonder they do not see it?

And now I must tell you one or two sweet things for the encouragement of the poor sinner. Oh, you that are guilty this morning and know that you are so, let me say to you, Look to Christ. For remember the bronze serpent was lifted up that everyone in the camp who was bitten might live. And now Christ is lifted up to you that whosoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. Sinner, the devil says you are shut out. Tell him that whosoever shuts out none. Oh that precious word, whosoever! Poor soul, I see you clutch at it and say, Then, Sir, if I believe, He will not cast me away? I see the harlot in all her guilt bemoaning her iniquity. She says it is impossible that Christ should save her.

But she hears it said, Whosoever, and she looks and lives! Remember, it mattered not how old they were, nor how much bitten they were, or whereabouts in the camp they lived. They did but look and live. And now you that have grown gray in iniquity, whose hair might rather be black than white if they showed forth your characterfor it has been blackened by years of viceremember there is the same Christ for big sinners as for little sinners. The same Christ for gray heads as for babes, the same Christ for poor as for rich, the same Christ for chimney sweeps as for monarchs, the same Christ for prostitutes as for saintsWhosoever.

I use broad words that I may take a broad range and sweep the whole universe of sinners throughwhosoever looks to Christ shall live. And remember it does not say that if they looked but little they should not live. Perhaps there was some of them so bitten that their eyelids were swollen and they could   
scarcely see. Old Christopher Ness says, There may have been some of them that had so little sight that they could but squint from one eye. Says he, in his strange language, If they did but dart a little glance at the bronze serpent, they lived.

And you who say you cannot believe. If God gives you only half a grain of faith, that will carry you to Heaven. If you can only say, O Lord, I would believe, help You my unbelief, if you can but put out your hand with Simon Peter and say Lord save, or I perish, it is enough. If you can only pray that poor publicans prayerGod be merciful to me a sinner, that will do. And if you cannot sing with some of the old experienced saints

*My name from the palms of His hands,*

*Eternity cannot erase.*   
remember it is quite enough, if you can only sing   
*I can but perish if I go,   
I am resolved to try;   
For if I stay away, I know   
I must forever die.*   
And now poor Soul I have almost done. But I cannot let you go. I see you with the tear in your eye. I hear you confessing your guilt and bemoaning your sin. I bid you look to my Master and live. Be not afraid to try my Lord and Master. I know what your bashfulness is. I have felt the same and thought He never would save me. Come Soul, you are in secret now with yourselffor though there are thousands around youyou think I am speaking alone to you. And so I am. My Brother, my Sister you are weeping today on account of sinlook to Jesus.   
And for your encouragement note these three things. Note first that Jesus Christ was put on the Cross on purpose for you to look at. The only reason why He died was that poor sinners might look at Him and be saved. Now, my dear Brethren, if that was Christs purpose in being hung on the tree, you need not think you may not do it. If God sends a river and sends it for us to drink of, will you disappoint Him in not drinking? No, rather you will say, Did He design me to drink it? Then will I drink it. Now, Jesus hung on the Cross on purpose to be looked at. Look at Him, look at Him and live.

Remember again for your encouragement He asks you to look. He invites you to believe, He has sent His minister this day, even to command you to do it. He has said to me, Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believes and is baptized, shall be saved. Now I need not simply say that my Masters door is wide open for you. I will say something moreHe has told me to ask you to come in. Wisdom cries aloud, she utters her voice in the streets, she invites youshe says, My oxen and my fatlings are killed, all things are ready, come to the supper.   
Yes, my Master has given instructions to His Holy Spirit that if men will not come of themselves, He should compel them to come in that His house may be filled. Then, poor Sinner, you must be welcome, He will have enough sinners to fill His table. And if He has made you feel your sinnershipcome and welcome, Sinner, come! And my last encouragement is thisCome to my Master and try Him, because He promises to save you. The promises of Jesus Christ are all of them as good as oaths. They never fail. He saysWhosoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life.   
Now, if I had here a man who declared himself to be the vilest wretch on earth, I would say to himYoung man, I am very fond of proving the Truthfulness of Gods promises. Now God says if you believe you shall not perish. My dear Friend, when a common sinner tries and it does not fail, it is some proof of its truthfulnessbut you are an extraordinary sinner. Now, you extraordinary Sinner, venture yourself on this promiseHe says you shall not perishcome and try Him!   
And remember, God must undeify Himself and cease to be true before He can ever damn a sinner who has believed in Christ. Come risk it, you who are so laden with sin that you stagger under your burden. Fall down on the simple promise, He is able to save to the uttermost. Just cast yourself wholly on Christ and if you are not saved, Gods Book is a lie and God Himself has broken His Truth. But that cannot be. Come and try it. Whosoever believes in Christ shall not perish but have everlasting life.

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IMMEASURABLE LOVE

NO. 1850

**A SERMON INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS-DAY, JULY 26, 1885. DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON THE EVENING OF JUNE 7, 1885.

**For God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. John 3:16.**

I WAS very greatly surprised the other day, in looking over the list of texts from which I have preached, to find that I have no record of ever having spoken from this verse. This is all the more singular because I can truly say that it might be put in the forefront of all my volumes of discourses as the sole topic of my lifes ministry. It has been my one and only business to set forth the love of God to men in Christ Jesus. I heard lately of an aged minister of whom it was said, Whatever his text, he never failed to set forth God as love and Christ as the Atonement for sin. I wish that much the same may be said of me. My hearts desire has been to sound forth as with a trumpet the good news that God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

We are about to meet around the communion table and I cannot preach from this text anything but a simple Gospel sermon. Can you desire a better preparation for communion? We have fellowship with God and with one another upon the basis of the infinite love which is displayed in Jesus Christ our Lord. The Gospel is the fair white linen cloth which covers the table on which the Communion Feast is set. The higher Truths of God, those Truths which belong to a more enlightened experience, those richer Truths which tell of the fellowship of the higher lifeall these are helpful to holy fellowshipbut I am sure not more so than those elementary and foundational Truths of God which were the means of our first entrance into the Kingdom of God. Babes in Christ and men in Christ, here, feed upon one common food. Come, you aged saints, be children again! And you that have long known your Lord, take up your first spelling book and go over your A B Cs, again, by learning that God so loved the world that He gave His Son to diethat man might live through Him!

I do not call you to an elementary lesson because you have forgotten your letters, but because it is a good thing to refresh the memoryand a blessed thing to feel young again. What the old folks used to call the Christ-Cross Row, contained nothing but the letters. But all the books in the language are made out of that line and, therefore, do I call you back to the Cross and to Him who bled there! It is a good thing for us all to return, at times, to our starting place and make sure that we are in the way everlasting. The love of our espousals is most likely to continue if we, again and again, begin where God began with us and where we first began with God. It is wise to come to Him afresh, as we came in that first day when, helpless, needy and heavy-laden, we stood weeping at the Cross and left our burden at His pierced feet. There we learned to look, live and love and there would we repeat the lesson till we rehearse it perfectly in Glory!

Tonight we have to talk about the love of GodGod so loved the world. That love of God is a very wonderful thing, especially when we see it set upon a lost, ruined, guilty world. What was there in the world that God should love it? There was nothing lovable in it. No fragrant flower grew in that arid desert. Enmity to Him; hatred to His Truth; disregard of His Law; rebellion against His commandmentsthose were the thorns and briars which covered the waste landbut no desirable thing blossomed there. Yet, God loved the world, says the text. So loved it, that even the writer of the book of John could not tell us how much! But so greatly, so Divinely did He love it that He gave His Son, His only Son, to redeem the world from perishing and to gather out of it a people to His praise.

From where did that love come? Not from anything outside of God Himself. Gods love springs from Himself. He loves because it is His Nature to do so. God is Love. As I have said already, nothing upon the face of the earth could have merited His love, though there was much to merit His displeasure. This stream of love flows from its own secret source in the eternal Deity and it owes nothing to any earth-born rain or rivulet. It springs from beneath the everlasting Throne of God and fills itself full from the springs of the Infinite. God loved because He would love. When we enquire why the Lord loved this man or that, we have to come back to our Saviors answer to the question, Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight. God has such love in His Nature that He must let it flow forth to a world perishing by its own willful sin! And when it flowed forth, it was so deep, so wide, so strong that even Inspiration could not compute its measure and, therefore, the Holy Spirit gave us that great little word, SOand left us to attempt the measurement, according as we perceive more and more of Divine love.

Now, there happened to be an occasion upon which the great God could display His immeasurable love. The world had sadly gone astray. The world had lost itself. The world was tried and condemned. The world was given over to perish because of its offensesand there was need for help. The Fall of Adam and the destruction of mankind made ample room and verge enough for Almighty Love. Amid the ruins of humanity there was space for showing how much Jehovah loved the sons of men, for the compass of His love was no less than the world, the object of it no less than to deliver men from going down to the Pit and the result of it no less than the finding of a Ransom for them. The far-reaching purpose of that love was both negative and positive, so that, believing in Jesus, men might not perish, but have eternal life. The desperate disease of man gave occasion for the introduction of that Divine Remedy which God, alone, could have devised and supplied. By the plan of mercy and the great Gift which was needed for carrying it out, the Lord found means to display His boundless love to guilty men.

Had there been no Fall and no perishing, God might have shown His love to us as He does to the pure and perfect spirits that surround His Throne. But He never could have commended His love to us to such an extent as He now does. In the Gift of His only-begotten Son, God commended His love to us, in that while we were yet sinners, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. The black background of sin makes the bright line of love shine out the more clearly. When the lightning writes the name of the Lord with flaming finger across the black brow of the tempest, we are compelled to see itso when Love inscribes the Cross upon the jet tablet of our sin, even blind eyes must see that, herein is love.

I might handle my text in a thousand different ways, tonight, but for simplicitys sake and to keep to the one point of setting forth the love of God, I want to make you see how great that love is by five different particulars.

I. The first is the GIFTGod so loved the world, that He gave His onlybegotten Son. Men who love much will give much and you may usually measure the truth of love by its self-denials and sacrifices. That love which spares nothing, but spends itself to help and bless its object, is love, indeed, and not the mere name of it. Little love forgets to bring water for the feet, but great love breaks its box of alabaster and lavishes its precious ointment!

Consider, then, what this Gift was that God gave. I would have to labor for expression if I were to attempt to set forth to the fullest this priceless Giftand I will not court a failure by attempting the impossible! I will only invite you to think of the sacred Person whom the Great Father gave in order that He might prove His love to men. It was His only-begotten Son His beloved Son in whom He was well pleased. None of us had ever such a son to give. Ours are the sons of men. His was the Son of God! The Father gave His other Self, One with Himself. When the great God gave His Son, He gave God, Himself, for Jesus is not, in His eternal Nature, less than God! When God gave God for us, He gave Himself! What more could He give? God gave His allHe gave Himself. Who can measure this love?

Judge, you fathers, how you love your sonscould you give them to die for your enemy? Judge, you that have an only son, how your hearts are entwined about your first-born, your only-begotten. There was no higher proof of Abrahams love to God than when he did not withhold from God his son, his only son, his Isaac whom he loved. And there can certainly be no greater display of love than for the Eternal Father to give His onlybegotten Son to die for us! No living thing will readily lose its offspring man has peculiar grief when his son is takenhas not God yet more? A story has often been told of the fondness of parents for their children how in a famine in the East, a father and mother were reduced to absolute starvation and the only possibility of preserving the life of the family was to sell one of the children into slavery.

So they considered it. The pinch of hunger became unbearable and their children, pleading for bread, tugged so painfully at their heartstrings that they must entertain the idea of selling one to save the lives of the rest. They had four sons. Who of these should be sold? It must not be the firsthow could they spare their first-born? The second was so strangely like his father that he seemed a reproduction of himand the mother said that she would never part with him. The third was so singularly like the mother that the father said he would sooner die than that this dear boy should go into bondage! And as for the fourth, he was their Benjamin, their last, their darlingthey could not part with him. They concluded that it were better for them all to die together than willingly to part with any one of their children. Do you not sympathize with them? I see you do. Yet God so loved us that, to put it very strongly, He seemed to love us better than His only Sonand did not spare Him that He might spare us! He permitted His Son to perish from among men that whoever believes in Him might not perish, but have everlasting life.

If you desire to see the love of God in this great procedure, you must consider how He gave His Son. He did not give His Son, as you might do, to some profession in the pursuit of which you might still enjoy his company. He gave His Son to exile among men! He sent Him down to yonder manger, united with a perfect Manhood which, at the first, was in an infants form. There He slept, where horned oxen fed! The Lord God sent the Heir of all things to toil in a carpenters shopto drive nails, push the plane and use the saw. He sent Him down among scribes and Pharisees, whose cunning eyes watched Him, and where cruel tongues scourged Him with base slanders. He sent Him down to hunger, thirst and poverty so dire that He had nowhere to lay His head. He sent Him down to the scourging and the crowning with thorns, to the giving of His back to the smiters and His cheeks to those that plucked off the hair.

At length He gave Him up to deatha felons death, the death of the crucified! Behold that Cross and see the anguish of Him that dies upon it! And mark how the Father has so given Him that He hides His face from Him and seems as if He would not acknowledge Him! Lama Sabachthani tells us how fully God gave His Son to ransom the souls of the sinful! He gave Him to be made a curse for us! He gave Him that He might die, the Just for the unjust, to bring us to God.

Dear Sirs, I can understand your giving up your children to go to India on her Majestys service, or to go out to the Cameroons or the Congo upon the errands of our Lord Jesus. I can well comprehend your yielding them up, even, with the fear of a pestilential climate before you, for if they die they will die honorably in a glorious causebut could you think of parting with them to die a felons death, upon a gallows, condemned by those whom they sought to bless, stripped naked in body and deserted in mind? Would not that be too much? Would you not cry, I cannot part with my son for such wretches as these! Why should he be put to a cruel death for such abominable beings who even waste their hands in the blood of their best friend? Remember that our Lord Jesus died what His countrymen considered to be an accursed death. To the Romans it was the death of a condemned slavea death which had all the elements of pain, disgrace and scorn mingled in it to the uttermost. But God commends His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Oh, wondrous stretch of love, that Jesus Christ should die!

Yet, I cannot leave this point till I have you notice when God gave His Son, for there is love in the time. God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son. But when did He do that? In His eternal purpose, He did this from before the foundation of the world! The words here used, He gave His only-begotten Son, cannot relate exclusively to the death of Christ, for Christ was not dead at the time of the utterance of this third chapter of John! Our Lord had just been speaking with Nicodemus and that conversation took place at the beginning of His ministry. The fact is that Jesus was always the Gift of God. The promise of Jesus was made in the Garden of Eden almost as soon as Adam fell! On the spot where our ruin was accomplished, a Deliverer was bestowed whose heel should be bruised, but who should break the serpents head beneath His foot.

Throughout the ages, the great Father stood to His Gift. He looked upon His Only-Begotten as mans hope, the inheritance of the chosen seed who, in Him, would possess all things. Every sacrifice was Gods renewal of His Gift of Grace, a reassurance that He had bestowed the Gift and would never draw back from it. The whole system of types under the Law promised that, in the fullness of time, the Lord would, in very deed, give up His Son, to be born of a woman, to bear the iniquities of His people and to die the death in their behalf! I greatly admire this pertinacity of love, for many a man, in a moment of generous excitement, can perform a supreme act of benevolenceand yet could not bear to look at it calmly and consider it from year to year! The slow fire of anticipation would have been unbearable.

If the Lord should take away yonder dear boy from his mother, she would bear the blow with some measure of patience, heavy as it would be to her tender heart. But suppose that she were credibly informed that on such a day her boy must die and thus had, from year to year, to look upon him as one dead? Would it not cast a cloud over every hour of her future life? Suppose, also, that she knew that he would be hanged upon a tree to die as one condemned? Would it not embitter her existence? If she could withdraw from such a trial, would she not? Assuredly she would! Yet the Lord God spared not His own Son, but freely delivered Him up for us alldoing it in His heart from age to age. Herein is lovelove which many waters could not quenchlove eternal, inconceivable, infinite!

Now, as this Gift refers not only to our Lords death, but to the ages before it, so it includes also all the ages afterwards. God so loved the world that He gaveand still givesHis only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him might not perish, but have everlasting, life. The Lord is giving Christ away tonight! Oh, that thousands of you may gladly accept the unspeakable Gift! Will anyone refuse? This good Gift, this perfect Gift can you decline it? Oh, that you may have faith to lay hold on Jesus, for thus He will be yours! He is Gods free Gift to all free receiversa full Christ for empty sinners! If you can but hold out your empty, willing hand, the Lord will give Christ to you at this moment! Nothing is freer than a gift! Nothing is more worth having than a Gift which comes fresh from the hand of God, as full of effectual power as ever it was! The fountain is eternal, but the stream from it is as fresh as when first the fountain was opened. There is no exhausting this Gift!

*Dear dying Lamb, Your precious blood   
Shall never lose its power   
Till all the ransomed Church of God   
Is saved to sin no more.*

See, then, what is the love of God, that He gave His Son from of old and has never revoked the Gift! He stands to His Gift and continues, still, to give His dear Son to all who are willing to accept Him! Out of the riches of His Grace He has given, is giving and will give the Lord Jesus Christand all the priceless gifts which are contained in Himto all needy sinners who will simply trust Him! I call upon you from this first point to admire the love of God because of the transcendent greatness of His Gift to the world, even the Gift of His only-begotten Son!

II. Now notice secondly, and, I think I may say, with equal admiration, the love of God in THE PLAN OF SALVATION. He has put it thusThat whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. The way of salvation is extremely simple to understand and exceedingly easy to practice when once the heart is made willing and obedient. The method of the Covenant of Grace differs as much from that of the Covenant of Works as light from darkness. It is not said that God has given His Son to all who will keep His Law, for that we could not do and, therefore, the Gift would have been available to none of us! Nor is it said that He has given His Son to all that experience terrible despair and bitter remorse, for that is not felt by many who, nevertheless, are the Lords own people. But the great God has given His own Son, that, whoever believes in Him should not perish. Faith, however slender, saves the soul! Trust in Christ is the certainty of eternal happiness!

Now, what is it to believe in Jesus? It is just thisit is to trust yourself with Him. If your hearts are ready, though you have never believed in Jesus before, I trust you will believe in Him now. O Holy Spirit graciously make it so!

What is it to believe in Jesus?   
It is, first, to give your firm and cordial assent to the Truth of God that God did send His Son, born of a woman, to stand in the place of guilty menand that God did cause to put on Him the iniquities of us allso that He bore the punishment due to our transgressions, being made a curse for us. We must heartily believe the Scripture which saysThe chastisement of our peace was upon Him and with His stripes we are healed. I ask for your assent to the grand doctrine of Substitution which is the marrow of the Gospel! Oh, may God the Holy Spirit lead you to give a cordial assent to it at once, for wonderful as it is, it is a fact that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them! Oh that you may rejoice that this is true and be thankful that such a blessed fact is revealed by God, Himself!

Believe that the substitution of the Son of God is certain! Question not the plan, nor question its validity, or efficacy, as many do. Alas, they nick at Gods great Sacrifice and count it a sorry invention! As for me, since God has ordained to save man by a substitutionary Sacrifice, I joyfully agree to His method and see no reason to do anything else but admire it and adore the Author of it! I joy and rejoice that such a plan should have been thought of, whereby the justice of God is vindicated and His mercy is set free to do all that He desires! Sin is punished in the Person of the Christ, yet mercy is extended to the guilty! In Christ, mercy is sustained by justice, and justice satisfied by an act of mercy! The worldly wise say hard things about this device of Infinite Wisdom, but as for me, I love the very name of the Cross and count it to be the center of Wisdom, the focus of Love, the heart of Righteousness. This is a main point of faithto give a hearty assent to the giving of Jesus to suffer in our place and to agree, with all our soul and mind, to this way of salvation.   
The second thing is that you accept this for yourself. In Adams sin, you did not sin personally, for you were not, then, in existence. Yet you fell and neither can you now complain about itfor you have willingly endorsed and adopted Adams sin by committing personal transgressions. You have laid your hand, as it were, upon Adams sin, and made it your own by committing personal and actual sin. Thus you perished by the sin of another which you adopted and endorsedand in like manner must you be saved by the righteousness of Another which you are to accept and appropriate. Jesus has offered an atonement and that Atonement becomes yours when you accept it by putting your trust in Him. I want you now to say   
*My faith does lay her hand   
On that dear head of Yours,   
While, like a penitent, I stand   
And here confess my sin.*   
Surely this is no very difficult matter. To say that Christ, who hung upon the Cross, shall be my Christ, my Surety, needs neither stretch of intellect nor splendor of character! And yet it is the act which brings salvation to the soul!   
One more thing is necessary and that is personable trust. First comes assent to the Truth, then acceptance of that truth for yourselfand then a simple trusting of yourself wholly to Christ as your Substitute. The essence of faith is trust, reliance, dependence. Fling away every other confidence of every sort except confidence in Jesus. Do not allow a ghost of a shade of a shadow of a confidence in anything that you can do, or in anything that you can be, but look only to Him who God has set forth to be the Propitiation for sin! This I do at this very momentwill you not do the same? Oh, may the sweet Spirit of God lead you, now, to trust in Jesus!   
See, then, the love of God in putting it in so plainlyso easy a way. Oh, you broken, crushed and despairing sinner, you cannot work, but can you not believe that which is true? You cannot sigh, you can not cry. You cannot melt your stony heart, but can you not believe that Jesus died for you and that He can change that heart of yours and make you a new creature? If you can believe this, then trust in Jesus to do so and you are saved, for he that believes in Him is justified! He that believes in Him has everlasting life. He is a saved man! His sins are forgiven! Let him go his way in peace and sin no more!   
I admire, first, the love of God in the great Gift. And then in the great plan by which that Gift becomes available to guilty men.   
III. Thirdly, the love of God shines forth with transcendent brightness in a third point, namely, in THE PERSONS FOR WHOM THIS PLAN IS AVAILABLE and for whom this Gift is given. They are described in these wordsWhoever believes in Him. There is, in the text, a word which has no limitGod so loved the world. But then comes in the descriptive limit which I beg you to notice with careHe gave His only-begotten Son that whoever believes in Him might not perish. God did not so love the world that any man who does not believe in Christ shall be saved. Neither did God so give His Son that any man shall be saved who refuses to believe in Him. See how it is putGod so loved the world, that He gave His onlybegotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish. Here is the compass of the lovewhile every unbeliever is excluded, every Believer is included. Whoever believes in Him.   
Suppose there is a man who has been guilty of all the lusts of the flesh to an infamous degree. Suppose that he is so detestable that he is only fit to be treated like a moral leper and shut up in a separate house for fear he should contaminate those who hear or see him. Yet if that man shall believe in Jesus Christ, he shall, at once, be made clean from his defilement and shall not perish because of his sin! And suppose there is another man who, in the pursuit of his selfish motives, has ground down the poor, has robbed his fellow traders and has even gone so far as to commit actual crimes of which the law of the land has taken cognizance. Yet if he believes in the Lord Jesus Christ, he shall be led to make restitution and his sins shall be forgiven him!   
I once heard of a preacher addressing a company of men in chains who were condemned to die for murder and other crimes. They were such a drove of beasts, to all outward appearances, that it seemed hopeless to preach to them! Yet were I set to be chaplain to such a wretched company, I should not hesitate to tell them that, God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. O man, if you will believe in Jesus as the Christ, however horrible your past sins have been, they shall be blotted out! You shall be saved from the power of your evil habits and you shall begin, again, like a child, newly born, with a new and true life which God shall give you. Whoever believes in Himthat takes you in, my aged Friend, now lingering within a few tottering steps of the grave! O grayheaded Sinner, if you believe in Him, you shall not perish!   
The text also includes you, dear Boy, who has scarcely entered your teensif you believe in Him, you shall not perish. That takes you in, fair Maiden, and gives you hope and joy while yet young. That comprehends all of us, provided we believe in the Lord Jesus Christ! Neither can all the devils in Hell find any reason why the man that believes in Christ shall be lost, for it is written, Him that comes to Me, I will in no wise cast out. Do they say, Lord, he has been so long in coming? The Lord repliesHas he come? Then I will not cast him out for all his delays. But, Lord, he went back after making a profession. Has he, at last, come? Then I will not cast him out for all his backsliding. But, Lord, he was a foul-mouthed blasphemer! Has he come to Me? Then I will not cast him out for all his blasphemies. But, says one, I take exception to the salvation of this wicked wretch! He has behaved so abominably that in all justice he ought to be sent to Hell. Just so. But if he repents of his sin and believes in the Lord Jesus Christ, whoever he may be, he shall not be sent there! He shall be changed in character so that he shall never perish, but have eternal life!   
Now, observe, that this, whoever, makes a grand sweep, for it encircles all degrees of faith. Whoever believes in Him. It may be that he has no full assurance. It may be that he has no assurance at all! But if he has faith, true and childlike, by it he shall be saved. Though his faith is so little that I must put on my spectacles to see it, yet Christ will see it and reward it! His faith may be such a tiny grain of mustard seed that I look and look, again, but hardly discern itand yet it brings him eternal lifeand it is, itself, a living thing! The Lord can see, within that mustard seed, a tree among whose branches the birds of the air shall make their nests! *My faith is feeble, I confess,   
I faintly trust Your Word.   
But will You pity me the less?   
Be that far from You, Lord!*   
O Lord Jesus, if I cannot take You up in my arms as Simeon did, I will at least touch Your garments hem as the poor diseased woman did to whom Your healing virtue flowed! It is written, God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. That means me! I cannot preach at length to you, tonight, but I would preach with strength! Oh that this Truth of God may soak into your souls! Oh, you that feel yourselves guilty, and you that feel guilty because you do not feel guiltyyou that are broken in heart because your heart will not breakyou that feel that you cannot feel! It is to you that I would preach salvation in Christ by faith! You groan because you cannot groan! But whoever you may be, you are still within the range of this mighty Word of God, that, whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.   
Thus have I commended Gods love to you in these three pointsthe Divine Gift, the Divine method of saving and the Divine choice of the persons to whom salvation comes.   
IV. Now fourthly, another beam of Divine Love is to be seen in the negative blessing here stated, namely, in THE DELIVERANCE implied in the words, that whoever believes in Him should not perish.   
I understand that word to mean that whoever believes in the Lord Jesus Christ shall not perish, though he is ready to perish. His sins would cause him to perish, but he shall never perish. At first, he has a little hope in Christ, but its existence is feeble. It will soon die out, will it not? No, his faith shall not perish, for this promise covers itWhoever believes in Him shall not perish. The penitent has believed in Jesus and, therefore, he has begun to be a Christian. Oh, cries an enemy, let him alone! He will soon be back among us. He will soon be as careless as ever. Listen! Whoever believes in Him shall not perish and, therefore, he will

not return to his former state. This proves the final perseverance of the saints, for if the Believer ceased to be a Believer, he would perish. And as he cannot perish, it is clear that he will continue a Believer. If you believe in Jesus, you shall never leave off believing in Him, for that would be to perish! If you believe in Him, you shall never delight in your old sins, for that would be to perish. If you believe in Him, you shall never lose spiritual life. How can you lose that which is everlasting? If you were to lose it, it would prove that it were not everlasting and you would perish! And thus you would make this Word of God to be of no effect.   
Whoever, with his heart, believes in Christ, is a saved man! Not only for tonight, but for all the nights that ever shall beand for that dread night of deathand for that solemn eternity which draws so near. Whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but he shall have a life that cannot die, a justification that cannot be disputed, an acceptance which shall never cease!   
What is it to perish? It is to lose all hope in Christ, all trust in God, all light in life, all peace in death, all joy, all bliss, all union with God. This shall never happen to you if you believe in Christ! If you believe, you shall be chastened when you do wrong, for every child of God comes under disciplineand what son is there whom the father chastens not? If you believe, you may doubt and fear as to your state, as a man on board a ship may be tossed about, but you have gotten on board a ship that never can be wrecked! He that has union with Christ has union with Perfection, Omnipotence and Glory. He that believes is a member of Christwill Christ lose His members? How should Christ be perfect if He lost even His little finger? Are Christs members to rot off, or to be cut off? Impossible!   
If you have faith in Christ you are a partaker of Christs life and you cannot perish. If men were trying to drown me, they could not drown my foot as long as I had my head above waterand as long as our Head is above water, up yonder in the eternal sunshine, the least limb of His body can never be destroyed! He that believes in Jesus is united to Him and he must live because Jesus lives! Oh what a Word of God is this, I give unto My sheep eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand. My Father which gave them to Me is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of My Fathers hand.   
I feel that I have a grand Gospel to preach to you when I read that whoever believes in Jesus shall not perish! I would not give two pins for that trumpery, temporary salvation which some proclaimwhich floats the soul, for a time, and then ebbs away to apostasy! I do not believe that the man who is once in Christ may live in sin and delight in it and yet be saved. That is abominable teaching and none of mine! But I do believe that the man who is in Christ will not live in sin, for he is saved from it nor will he return to his old sins and live in them, for the Grace of God will continue to save him from his sins. Such a change is worked, by regeneration, that the new-born man cannot live in sin, nor find comfort in it, but he loves holiness and makes progress in it.   
The Ethiopian may change his skin and the leopard his spots, but only Divine Grace can work the changeand when Divine Grace has done the deed, the Blackamoor will remain white and the leopards spots will never return. It would be as great a miracle to undo the work of God as to do it! And to destroy the new creation would require as great a power as to make it! If only God can create, so only God can destroy, and He will never destroy the work of His own hands. Will God begin to build and not finish? Will He commence a warfare and end it before He has won the victory? What would the devil say if Christ were to begin to save a soul and fail in the attempt? If there should come to be souls in Hell that were Believers in Christ and yet perished, it would cast a cloud upon the diadem of our exalted Lord! It cannot, shall not, be! Such is the love of God, that whoever believes in His dear Son shall not perishin this assurance we greatly rejoice.   
V. The last commendation of His love lies in the positiveIN THE POSSESSION. I shall have to go, in a measure, over the same ground again. Let me, therefore, be far shorter. God gives to every man that believes in Christ everlasting life. The moment you believe, there trembles into your bosom a vital spark of heavenly flame which never shall be quenched. In that same moment when you cast yourself on Christ, Christ comes to you in the living and incorruptible Word which lives forever. Though there should drop into your heart but one drop of the heavenly Water of Life, remember thisHe who cannot lie, has said it The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. When I first received everlasting life, I had no idea what a treasure had come to me! I knew that I had obtained something very extraordinary, but of its superlative value I was not aware. I did but look to Christ in the little chapel and I received eternal life! I looked to Jesus and He looked on me and we were one forever! That moment my joy surpassed all bounds, just as my sorrow had, before, driven me to an extreme of grief.   
I was perfectly at rest in Christ, satisfied with Him and my heart was gladbut I did not know that this Grace was everlasting life till I began to read in the Scriptures and to know more fully the value of the Jewel which God had given me. The next Sunday I went to the same chapel, as it was very natural that I should. But I never went again, for this reason, that during my first week, the new life that was in me had been compelled to fight for its existence and a conflict with the old nature had been vigorously carried on. This I knew to be a special token of the indwelling of Grace in my soulbut in that same chapel I heard a sermon upon, O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? And the preacher declared that Paul was not a Christian when he had that experience! Babe as I was, I knew better than to believe so absurd a statement! What but Divine Grace could produce such sighs and cries after deliverance from indwelling sin?! I felt that a person who could talk such nonsense knew little of the life of a true Believer. I said to myself, What? Am I not alive because I feel a conflict within me? I never felt this fight when I was an unbeliever! When I was not a Christian, I never groaned to be set free from sin! This conflict is one of the surest evidences of my new birth and yet this man cannot see it! He may be a good exhorter to sinners, but he cannot feed Believers. I resolved to go into that pasture no more, for I could not feed there.   
I find that the struggle becomes more and more intense. Each victory over sin reveals another army of evil tendencies and I am never able to sheathe my sword, nor cease from prayer and watchfulness. I cannot advance an inch without praying my way, nor keep the inch I gain without watching and standing fast! Grace alone can preserve and perfect me! The old nature will kill the new nature if it can and, to this moment, the only reason why my new nature is not dead is thisbecause it cannot die! If it could have died, it would have been slain long ago. But Jesus said, I give unto My sheep eternal life. He that believes on Me has everlasting life. Therefore, the Believer cannot die! The only religion which will save you is one that you cannot leave because it possesses you and will not leave you! If you hold a doctrine which you can give up, give it up! But if the doctrines are burnt into you so that, as long as you live, you must hold themand so that if you were burnt, every ash would hold that same truth in it because you are impregnated with itthen you have found the right thing!   
You are not a saved man unless Christ has saved you forever. But that which has such a grip of you that its grasp is felt in the core of your being is the power of God! To have Christ living in you and the Truth of God ingrained in your very natureO Sirs, this is the thing that saves the soul and nothing short of it. It is written in the text, God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. What is this but a life that shall last through your three-score years and ten? A life that shall last you should you outlive a century? A life that will still flourish when you lie at the graves mouth? A life that will abide when you have quit the body and left it rotting in the tomb? A life that will continue when your body is raised, again, and you shall stand before the Judgement Seat of Christ? A life that will outshine those stars and yon sun and moon? A life that shall be coeval with the life of the Eternal Father?   
As long as there is a God, the Believer shall not only exist, but live! As long as there is a Heaven, you shall enjoy it! As long as there is a Christ, you shall live in His love! And as long as there is an eternity, you shall continue to fill it with delight! God bless you and help you to believe in Jesus. Amen.

**PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMONJohn 3.** HYMNS FROM OUR OWN HYMN BOOK291, 538, 539. Adapted from The C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307 Sermon #361 New Park Street Pulpit 1

NONE BUT JESUSFIRST PART   
NO. 361

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON SABBATH MORNING, FEBRUARY 17, 1861, BY THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT EXETER HALL, STRAND.

**He that believes on Him is not condemned.   
John 3:18.**

THE way of salvation is stated in Scripture in the very plainest forms and yet, perhaps, there is no Truth about which more errors have been uttered than concerning the faith which saves the soul. Well has it been proved by experience that all doctrines of Christ are mysteriesmysteries not so much in themselves but because they are hid to them that are lost, in whom the God of this world has blinded their eyes. So plain is Scripture that one may say, He that runs may read, but so dim is mans eye and so marred is his understanding that the very simplest Truth of Scripture he distorts and misrepresents.

And indeed, my Brethren, even those who know what faith is, personally and experimentally, do not always find it easy to give a good definition of it. They think they have hit the mark and then afterwards they lament that they have failed. Straining themselves to describe some one part of faith, they find they have forgotten another and in the excess of their earnestness to clear the poor sinner out of one mistake, they often lead him into another. So that I think I may say while faith is the simplest thing in all the world, yet it is one of the most difficult upon which to preach, because from its very importance our soul begins to tremble while speaking of it and then we are not able to describe it so clearly as we would.

I intend this morning, by Gods help, to put together sundry thoughts upon Faith, each of which I may have uttered in your hearing at different times but which have not been collected into one sermon before and which, I have no doubt, have been misunderstood from the want of their having been put together in their proper consecutive order. I shall speak a little on each of these points, first, the object of faith, to what it looks. Next, the reason of faith, from where it comes. Thirdly, the ground of faith, or what it wears when it comes. Fourthly, the warrant of faith, or why it dares to come to Christ. And fifthly, the result of faith, or, how it speeds when it does come to Christ.

I. First, then, THE OBJECT OF FAITH, or to what faith looks.   
I am told in the Word of God to believeWhat am I to believe? I am bid to lookto what am I to look? What is to be the object of my hope, belief and confidence? The reply is simple. The Object of Faith to a sinner is Christ Jesus. How many make a mistake about this and think that they are to believe on God the Father! Now belief in God is an after-result of faith in Jesus. We come to believe in the eternal love of the Father as the result of trusting the precious blood of the Son.   
Many men say, I would believe in Christ if I knew that I were elect. This is coming to the Father and no man can come to the Father except by Christ. It is the Fathers work to electyou cannot come directly to Himtherefore you cannot know your election until first you have believed on Christ the Redeemer. And then through redemption you can apapproach the Father and know your election.   
Some, too, make the mistake of looking to the work of God the Holy Spirit. They look within to see if they have certain feelings and if they find them their faith is strongbut if their feelings have departed from them, then their faith is weak, so that they look to the work of the Spirit which is not the object of a sinners faith. Both the Father and the Spirit must be trusted in order to complete redemptionbut for the particular mercy of justification and pardon the blood of the Mediator is the only plea.   
Christians have to trust the Spirit after conversion, but the sinners business, if he would be saved, is not with trusting the Spirit nor with looking to the Spirit, but looking to Christ Jesus and to Him alone. I know your salvation depends on the whole Trinity but yet the first and immediate object of a sinners justifying faith is neither God the Father nor God the Holy Spirit, but God the Son, incarnate in human flesh and offering atonement for sinners. Have you the eye of faith? Then, Soul, look to Christ as God. If you would be saved, believe Him to be God over all, blessed forever. Bow before Him and accept Him as being Very God of very God. If you do not, you have no part in Him.   
When you have thus believed, believe in him as man. Believe the wondrous story of His incarnation. Rely upon the testimony of the Evangelists who declare that the Infinite was robed in the infant, that the Eternal was concealed within the mortal, that He who was King of Heaven became a servant of servants and the Son of man. Believe and admire the mystery of His incarnation for unless you believe this, you cannot be saved. Then, especially, if you would be saved, let your faith behold Christ in His perfect righteousness.   
See Him keeping the Law without blemish, obeying His Father without error, preserving His integrity without flaw. All this you are to consider as being done on your behalf. You could not keep the Law, He kept it for you. You could not obey God perfectlyHis obedience stands in the place of your obedienceby it you are saved. But take care that your faith mainly fixes itself upon Christ as dying and as dead. View the Lamb of God as dumb before His shearers. View Him as the Man of Sorrows and acquainted with grief. Go with Him to Gethsemane and behold Him sweating drops of blood.   
Mark, your faith has nothing to do with anything within yourselfthe Object of your faith is nothing within you, but a something without you. Believe on Him then, who on yonder tree with nailed hands and feet pours out His life for sinners. There is the Object of your faith for justification. Not in yourself, nor in anything which the Holy Spirit has done in you, or anything He has promised to do for you but you are to look to Christ and to Christ Jesus alone.   
Then let your faith behold Christ rising from the dead. See HimHe has borne the curse and now He receives the justification. He dies to pay the debt. He rises that He may nail the handwriting of that discharged debt to the Cross. See Him ascending up on high and behold Him this day pleading before the Fathers Throne. He is there pleading for His people offering up today His authoritative petition for all that come to God by Him. And He, as God, as Man, as living, as dying, as rising and as reigning aboveHe and He alone is to be the Object of your faith for the pardon of sin.   
On nothing else must you trust. He is to be the only prop and pillar of your confidence and all you add thereunto will be a wicked antichrist, a rebellion against the sovereignty of the Lord Jesus. But take care that your faith saves you, that while you look to Christ in all these matters you view Him as being a Substitute. This doctrine of substitution is so essential to the whole plan of salvation that I must explain it here for the thousandth time. God is Just. He must punish sin. God is merciful. He wills to pardon those who believe in Jesus. How is this to be done? How can He be Just and exact the penaltymercifuland accept the sinner?   
He does it thusHe takes the sins of His people and actually lifts them up from off His people to Christ so that they stand as innocent as though they had never sinned and Christ is looked upon, by God, as though He had been all the sinners in the world robed into one. The sin of His people was taken from their persons and really and actually, not typically and metaphorically, but really and actually laid on Christ. Then God came forth with His fiery sword to meet the Sinner and to punish Him. He met Christ. Christ was not a sinner Himself, but the sins of His people were all imputed to Him. Justice, therefore, met Christ as though He had been the sinnerpunished Christ for His peoples sinspunished Him as far as its rights could goexacted from Him the last atom of the penalty and left not a dreg in the cup.   
And now he who can see Christ as being his Substitute and puts his trust in Him is thereby delivered from the curse of the Law. Soul, when you see Christ obeying the Lawyour faith is to say, He obeys that for His people. When you see Him dying, you are to count the purple drops and say, Thus He took my sins away. When you see Him rising from the dead, you are to sayHe rises as the Head and Representative of all His elect, and when you see Him sitting at the right hand of God, you are to view Him there as the pledge that all for whom He died shall sit at the Fathers right hand.   
Learn to look on Christ as being in Gods sight as though He were the sinner. In Him was no sin. He was the Just, but He suffered for the unjust. He was the Righteous but He stood in the place of the unrighteous and all that the unrighteous ought to have endured Christ has endured once and for all and put away their sins forever by the sacrifice of Himself.   
Now this is the great Object of faith. I pray you, do not make any mistake about this, for a mistake here will be dangerous, if not fatal. View Christ, by your faith, as being in His life and death and sufferings and resurrection the Substitute for all whom His Father gave Himthe vicarious sacrifice for the sins of all those who will trust Him with their souls. Christ, then, thus set forth, is the Object of justifying faith.   
Now let me further remark that there are some of you, no doubt, sayingOh, I should believe and I should be saved ifif what? If Christ had died? Oh no, Sir, my doubt is nothing about Christ. I thought so. Then what is the doubt? Why, I should believe if I felt this, or if I had done that. Just so. But I tell you, you could not believe in Jesus if you felt that, or if you had done that, for then you would believe in yourself and not in Christ. That is the English of it. If you were so-and-so, or so-and-so, then you could have confidence. Confidence in what? Why, confidence in your feelings and confidence in your doings and isnt that the contrary of fidence in Christ?   
Faith is not to infer from something good within me that I shall be saved. But it is to say that despite the fact that I am guilty in the sight of God and deserve His wrath, yet I do nevertheless believe that the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleans me from all sin. And though my present consciousness condemns me, yet my faith overpowers my consciousness and I believe that, He is able to save to the uttermost them that come unto God by Him.   
To come to Christ as a saint is very easy work. To trust a doctor to cure you when you believe you are getting better, is very easy. But to trust your physician when you feel as if the sentence of death were in your body, to bear up when the disease is rising into the very skin and when the ulcer is gathering its venomto believe even then in the efficacy of the medicine that is

faith. And so, when sin gets the mastery of youwhen you feel that the Law condemns youthen, even then, as a sinner, to trust Christthis is the most daring feat in all the worldand the faith which shook down the walls of Jericho.   
The faith which raised the deadthe faith which stopped the mouths of libelswas not greater than that of a poor sinner, when in the teeth of all his sins he dares to trust the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ. Do this, Soul, then you are saved, whosoever you may be. The Object of faith, then, is Christ as the Substitute for sinners. God in Christ, but not God apart from Christ, nor any work of the Spirit, but the work of Jesus alone must be viewed by you as the foundation of your hope.  
II. And now, secondly, THE REASON OF FAITH, or why does any man believe and from where does his faith come?   
Faith comes by hearing. Granted, but do not all men hear and do not many still remain unbelieving? How, then, does any man come by his faith? To his own experience his faith comes as the result of a sense of need. He feels himself needing a Savior. He finds Christ to be just such a Savior as he wants and therefore because he cannot help himself, he believes in Jesus. Having nothing of his own, he feels he must take Christ or else perish and therefore he does it because he cannot help doing it. He is fairly driven up into a corner and there is but this one way of escape, namely, by the righteousness of Another.  
He feels he cannot escape by any good deeds, or sufferings of his own and he comes to Christ and humbles himself, because he cannot do without Christ and must perish unless he lay hold of Him. But to carry the question further back, where does that man get his sense of need? How is it that he, rather than others, feels his need of Christ? It is certain he has no more necessity for Christ than other men. How does he come to know, then, that he is lost and ruined? How is it that he is driven by the sense of ruin to take hold on Christ the Restorer?   
The reply isthis is the gift of God. This is the work of the Spirit. No man comes to Christ except the Spirit draw him and the Spirit draws men to Christ by shutting them up under the Law to a conviction that if they do not come to Christ they must perish. Then by sheer stress of weather they tack about and run into this heavenly port. Salvation by Christ is so disagreeable to our carnal mind, so inconsistent with our love of human merit that we never would take Christ to be our All in all if the Spirit did not convince us that we were nothing at all and did not so compel us to lay hold on Christ.   
But then, the question goes further back stillhow is it that the Spirit of God teaches some men their need and not other men? Why is it that some of you were driven by your sense of need to Christ while others go on in their self-righteousness and perish? There is no answer to be given but this, Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight. It comes to divine sovereignty at the last. The Lord has hidden those things from the wise and prudent and has revealed them unto babes. According to the way in which Christ put itMy sheep hear My voice, you believe not because you are not of My sheep, as I said unto you.   
Some Divines would like to read thatYou are not My sheep, because you do not believe. As if believing made us the sheep of Christ. But the text puts itYou believe not, because you are not of My sheep. All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me. If they come not, it is a clear proof that they were never given. For those who were given of old eternity to Christ, chosen by God the Father and then redeemed by God the Son these are led by the Spirit through a sense of need to come and lay hold on Christ. No man yet ever did or ever will believe in Christ unless he feels his need of Him. No man ever did or will feel his need of Christ unless the Spirit makes him feel and the Spirit will make no man feel his need of Jesus savingly unless it be so written in that eternal bookin which God has surely engraved the names of His elect.   
So then, I think I am not to be misunderstood on this pointthat the reason of faithor why men believe, is Gods electing love working through the Spirit by a sense of need and so bringing them to Christ Jesus.  
III. But now I shall want your careful attention while I come to another point upon which you, perhaps, will think I contradict myself. And that isTHE GROUND OF THE SINNERS FAITHor on what ground does he dare to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.   
My dear Friends, I have already said that no man will believe in Jesus unless he feels his need of Him. But you have often heard me say and I repeat it again, that I do not come to Christ pleading that I feel my need of Him. My reason for believing in Christ, is not that I feel my need of Him,

but that I have a need of Him. The ground on which a man comes to Jesus is not as a sensible sinner, but as a sinner and nothing but a sinner. He will not come unless he is awakened, but when he comes, he does not say, Lord, I come to you because I am an awakened sinner, save me.

But he says, Lord, I am a sinner, save me. Not his awakening, but his sinnership is the method and plan upon which he dares to come. You will, perhaps, perceive what I mean for I cannot exactly explain myself just now. If I refer to the preaching of a great many Calvinistic Divines, they say to a sinner, Now, if you feel your need of Christ, if you have repented so much, if you have been harrowed by the Law to such-and-such a degreethen you may come to Christ on the ground that you are an awakened sinner. I say that is false.

No man may come to Christ on the ground of his being an awakened sinner. He must come to Him as a sinner. When I come to Jesus I know I am not come unless I am awakened, but still, I do not come as an awakened sinner. I do not stand at the foot of His Cross to be washed because I have repented. I bring nothing when I come, but sin. A sense of need is a good feeling, but when I stand at the foot of the Cross, I do not believe in Christ because I have got good feelings. I believe in Him whether I have good feelings or not

*Just as I am without one plea,   
But that Your blood was shed for me,   
And that You bid me come to You,   
O Lamb of God I come.*

Mr. Roger, Mr. Sheppard, Mr. Flavell and several excellent Divines in the Puritan age and especially Richard Baxter used to give descriptions of what a man must feel before he may dare to come to Christ. Now, I say in the language of good Mr. Fenner, father of those Divines, who said he was but a babe in grace when compared with themI dare to say it that all this is not Scriptural. Sinners do feel these things before they come, but they do not come on the ground of having felt it. They come on the ground of being sinners and on no other ground whatever. The gate of Mercy is opened and over the door it is written, This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.

Between that word save and the next word sinners, there is no adjective. It does not say, penitent sinners, awakened sinners, sensible sinners, grieving sinners or alarmed sinners. No, it only says, sinners. And I know thisthat when I come I come to Christ todayfor I feel it is as much a necessity of my life to come to the Cross of Christ today as it was to come ten years agowhen I come to Him I dare not come as a conscious sinner or an awakened sinner, but I have to come still as a sinner with nothing in my hands.

I saw an aged man this week in the vestry of a chapel in Yorkshire. I had been saying something to this effect. The old man had been a Christian for years and he said, I never saw it put exactly so, but still I know that is just the way I come. I say, Lord

*Nothing in my hands I bring,   
Simply to Your Cross I cling;   
Naked, look to You for dress;   
Helpless, come to You for grace;   
Black(Black enough, said the old man) I to the fountain fly,   
Wash me, Savior, or I die.*

Faith is getting right out of yourself and getting into Christ. I know that many hundreds of poor souls have been troubled because the minister has said, if you feel your need, you may come to Christ. But, say they, I do not feel my need enough. I am sure I do not. Many a score of letters have I received from poor troubled consciences who have said, I would venture to believe in Christ to save me if I had a tender conscience. If I had a soft heartbut oh, my heart is like a rock of ice which will not melt. I cannot feel as I would like to feel and therefore I must not believe in Jesus.

Oh, down with it, down with it! It is a wicked anti-Christ. It is flat Popery! It is not your soft heart that entitles you to believe. You are to believe in Christ to renew your hard heart and come to Him with nothing about you but sin. The ground on which a sinner comes to Christ is that he is black with sin. That he is dead and not that he knows he is dead. That he is lost and not that he knows he is lost. I know he will not come unless he does know it, but that is not the ground on which he comes. It is the secret reason why, but it is not the public positive ground which he understands.

Here was I, year after year, afraid to come to Christ because I thought I will not feel enough. And I used to read that hymn of Cowpers about being insensible as steel

*If anything is felt tis only pain   
To find I cannot feel.*

When I believed in Christ, I thought I did not feel at all. Now when I look back I find that I had been feeling all the while most acutely and intensely and most of all because I thought I did not feel. Generally the people who repent the most think they are impenitentand people feel most their need when they think they do not feel at all. We are no judge of our feelings and hence the Gospel invitation is not put upon the ground of anything of which we can be a judge. It is put on the ground of our being sinners and nothing but sinners.

Well, says one, but it says, Come unto Me all you that are weary and heavy-laden and I will give you restthen we must be weary and heavyladen. Just so. So it is in

that text, but then there is another. Whosoever will, let him come. And that does not say anything about weary and heavy-laden. Besides, while the invitation is given to the weary and heavy-laden you will perceive that the promise is not made to them as weary and heavy-laden but it is made to them as coming to Christ.

They did not know that they were weary and heavy-laden when they came. They thought they were not. They really were, but part of their weariness was that they could not be as weary as they would like to be and part of their load was that they did not feel their load enough. They came to Christ just as they were and He saved themnot because there was any merit in their weariness, or any efficacy in their being heavy-laden He saved them as sinners and nothing but sinners and so they were washed in His blood and made clean. My dear Hearer, do let me put this Truth home to you. If you will come to Christ this morning, as nothing but a sinner, He will not cast you out.

Old Tobias Crisp says in one of his sermons upon this very point, I dare to say it but if you do come to Christ, whosoever you may be, if He does not receive you then He is not true to His word, for He says, Him that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out. If you come, never mind qualification or preparation. He needs no qualification of duties or of feelings either. You are to come just as you are and if you are the biggest sinner out of Hell, you are as fit to come to Christ as if you were the most moral and most excellent of men. There is a bathwho is fit to be washed? A mans blackness is no reason why he should not be washed, but the clearer reason why he should be.

When our City magistrates were giving relief to the poor, nobody said, I am so poor, therefore I am not fit to have relief. Your poverty is your preparation, the black is the white here. Strange contradiction! The only thing you can bring to Christ is your sin and your wickedness. All He asks is that you will come empty. If you have anything of your own you must leave all before you come. If there is anything good in you, you cannot

trust Christyou must come with nothing in your hand. Take Him as All in all and that is the only ground upon which a poor soul can be saved as a sinner and nothing but a sinner.

IV. But not to stay longer, my fourth point has to do with THE WARRANT OF FAITH, or why a man dares to trust in Christ.   
Is it not imprudent for any man to trust Christ to save him and especially when he has no good thing whatever? Is it not an arrogant presumption for any man to trust Christ? No, Sirs, it is not. It is a grand and noble work of God the Holy Spirit. For He makes a man admit his sins and still to believe and set to his seal that God is true and believe in the return of the blood of Jesus. But why does any man dare to believe in Christ, I will ask you now. Well, says one man, I summoned faith to believe in Christ because I did feel there was a work of the Spirit in me. You do not believe in Christ at all. Well, says another, I thought that I had a right to believe in Christ, because I felt somewhat. You had not any right to believe in Christ at all on such a warrant as that.   
What is a mans warrant, then, for believing in Christ? Here it is. Christ tells him to do itthat is his warrant. Christs Word is the warrant of the sinner for believing in Christnot what he feels nor what he is, nor what he is notbut that Christ has told him to do it. The Gospel runs thus: Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved. He that believes not shall be damned. Faith in Christ, then, is a commanded duty as well as a blessed privilege and what a mercy it is that it is a dutybecause there never can be any question but that a man has a right to do his duty.   
Now on the ground that God commands me to believe, I have a right to believe, be I who I may. The Gospel is sent to every creature. Well, I belong to that tribe, I am one of the every creatures and that Gospel commands me to believe and I do it. I cannot have done wrong in doing it for I was commanded to do so. I cannot be wrong in obeying a command of God. Now it is a command of God given to every creature that he should believe on Jesus Christ whom God has sent. This is your warrant, Sinner. And a blessed warrant it is. For it is one which Hell cannot gainsay and which Heaven cannot withdraw.   
You need not be looking within to look for the misty warrants of your experience. You need not be looking to your works or to your feelings to get some dull and insufficient warrant for your confidence in Christ. You may believe Christ because He tells you to do so. That is a sure ground to stand on and one which admits of no doubt. I will suppose that we are all starving, that the city is by sin besieged and   
shut up and there has been a long, long famine and we are ready to die of hunger. There comes out an invitation to us to repair at once to the palace of some great one there to eat and drink, but we have grown foolish and will not accept the invitation.   
Suppose now that some hideous madness has got hold of us and we prefer to die and had rather starve than come. Suppose the kings herald should say, Come and feast, poor hungry souls and because I know you are unwilling to come, I add this threat, if you come not my warriors shall be upon you. They shall make you feel the sharpness of their swords. I think, my dear Friends, we should say, We bless the great man for that threat because now we need not say, I may not come, while the fact is we have to go or die. Now I need not say I am not fit to come for I am commanded to come and I am threatened if I do not come. And I will even go.   
That awful sentenceHe that believes not shall be damned was added not out of anger, but because the Lord knew our silly madness and that we should refuse our own mercies unless He thundered at us to make us come to the feast, Compel then to come in. This was the Word of the Master of old and that text is part of the carrying out of that exhortation, Compel them to come in. Sinner, you cannot be lost by trusting Christ, but you will be lost if you do not trust Him. Yes and lost for not trusting Him. I put it boldly nowSinner, not only may you come, but oh! I pray you, do not defy the wrath of God by refusing to come. The gate of mercy stands wide open. Why will you not come? Why will you not? Why so proud? Why will you still refuse His voice and perish in your sins?   
Mark, if you perish, any one of you, your blood lies not at Gods door, nor Christs door, but at your own. He can say of you, You will not come unto Me that you might have life. Oh, poor Trembler, if you are willing to come, there is nothing in Gods Word to keep you from coming, but there are both threats to drive you and powers to draw you. Still I hear you say, I must not trust Christ. You may, I say, for every creature under Heaven is commanded to do it and what you are commanded to do, you may do.   
Ah! well, says one, still I do not feel that I may. There you go again, you say you will not do what God tells you, because of some stupid feelings of your own. You are not told to trust Christ because you feel anything, but simply because you are a sinner. Now you know you are a sinner. I am, says one, and that is my sorrow. Why your sorrow? That is some sign that you do feel. Yes, says one, but I do not feel enough and that is why I sorrow. I do not feel as I should. Well, suppose you do feel, or suppose you do not, you are a sinner and this is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.   
Oh, but I am such an old sinner, I have been sixty years in sin. Where is it written that after sixty you cannot be saved? Sir, Christ could save you at a hundredyes, if you were a Methuselah in guilt. The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleans us from all sin. Whosoever will, let him come. He is able to save to the uttermost them that come onto God by Him. Yes, says one, but I have been a drunkard, a swearer, or lascivious, or profane. Then you are a sinner. You have not gone further than the uttermost. He is able to save you still. Yes, says another, but you do not know how my guilt has been aggravated.   
That only proves you to be a sinner and that you are commanded to trust Christ and be saved. Yes, cries yet another, but you do not know how often I have rejected Christ. Yes, but that only makes you the more a sinner. You do not know how hard my heart is. Just so, but that only proves you to be a sinner and still proves you to be one whom Christ came to save. Oh, but, Sir, I have not any good thing. If I had, you know, I should have something to encourage me. The fact of your not having any good thing just proves to me that you are the man I am sent to preach to.   
Christ came to save that which was lost and all you have said only proves that you are lost and therefore He came to save you. Trust Him. Trust Him. But if I am saved, says one, I shall be the biggest sinner that ever was saved. Then the greater music in Heaven when you get there, the more glory to Christfor the bigger the sinner, the more honor for Christ when at last he shall be brought home. Yes, but my sin has abounded. His grace shall much more abound. But my sin has reached even to Heaven. Yes, but His grace reaches above the heavens.   
Oh, that my guilt is as broad as the world. Yes, but His righteousness is broader than a thousand worlds. Yes, but my sin is scarlet. Yes, but His blood is more scarlet than your sins and can wash the scarlet out by a richer scarlet. Yes, but I deserve to be lost and death and Hell cry for my damnation. Yes and so they may, but the blood of Jesus Christ can cry louder than either death or Hell. And it cries today, Father, let the sinner live. Oh, I wish I could get this thought out of my own mouth and get it into your headsthat when God saves you, it is not because of anything in you. It is because of something in Himself. Gods love has no reason except in His own head. Gods reason for pardoning a sinner is found in His own heart and not in the sinner. And there is as much reason in you why you should be saved as why another should be saved, namely, no reason at all. There is no reason in you why He should have mercy on you but there is no reason wantedfor the reason lies in God and in God alone.

V. And now I come to the conclusion and I trust you will have patience with me, for my last point is a very glorious one and full of joy to those souls who as sinners dare to believe in ChristTHE RESULT OF FAITH or how it speeds when it comes to Christ.   
The text says, He that believes on Him is not condemned. There is a man here who has just this moment believed. He is not condemned. But he has been fifty years in sin and has plunged into all manner of vice. His sins, which are many, are all forgiven him. He stands in the sight of God now as innocent as though he had never sinned. Such is the power of Jesus blood, that he that believes is not condemned. Does this relate to what is to happen at the day of Judgment? I pray you look at the text and you will find it does not say, He that believes on Him shall not be condemned, but he is not. He is not now. And if he is not now, then it follows that he never shall be. For having believed in Christ that promise still stands, He that believes on Him is not condemned.   
I believe today I am not condemned. In fifty years time that promise will be just the sameHe that believes on Him is not condemned. So that the moment a man puts his trust in Christ he is freed from all condemnationpast, present and to comeand from that day he stands in Gods sight as though he were without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing. But he sins, you say. He does indeed, but his sins are not laid to his charge. They were laid to the charge of Christ of old and God shall never charge the offense on twofirst on Christ and then on the sinner.   
Yes, but he often falls into sin. That may be possiblethough if the Spirit of God is in him he sins not as he once did. He sins by reason of infirmitynot by reason of his love to sinfor now he hates it. But mark, you shall put it in your own way if you will and I will answer, Yes, but though he sin, yet is he no more guilty in the sight of God, for all his guilt has been taken from him and put on Christpositively, literally and actually lifted off from him and put upon Jesus Christ.   
Do you see the Jewish host? There is a scapegoat brought out. The high priest confesses the sin of the people over the scapegoats head. The sin is all gone from the people and laid upon the scapegoat. Away goes the scapegoat into the wilderness. Is there any sin left on the people? If there is, then the scapegoat has not carried it away. Because it cannot be here and there, too. It cannot be carried away and left behind too.   
No, you say, Scripture says the scapegoat carried away the sin. There was none left on the people when the scapegoat had taken away the sin. And so, when by faith we put our hand upon the head of Christ, does Christ take away our sin, or does He not? If He does not, then it is of no use our believing in Him. But if He does really take away our sin, our sin cannot be on Him and on us, too. If it is on Christ, we are free, clear, accepted, justified and this is the true doctrine of justification by faith. As soon as a man believes in Christ Jesus, his sins are gone from him and gone away forever. They are blotted out forever.   
What if a man owes a hundred pounds, yet if he has got a receipt for it, he is free, it is blotted out,   
there is an erasure made in the book and the debt is gone. Though the man commit sin yet the debt having been paid before even the debt was acquired, he is no more a debtor to the Law of God. Does not Scripture say that God has cast His peoples sins into the depths of the sea? Now, if they are in the depths of the sea, they cannot be on His people. Blessed be His name, in the day when He cast our sins into the depth of the sea He views us as pure in His sight and we stand accepted in the Beloved.  
Then He says, As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us. They cannot be removed and be here still. Then if you believe in Christ, you are no more in the sight of God a sinner, you are accepted as though you were perfect, as though you had kept the Lawfor Christ has kept it and His righteousness is yours. You have broken it, but your sin is His and He has been punished for it. Mistake not yourselves any longeryou are no more what you were. When you believe you stand in Christs place even as Christ of old stood in yours. The transformation is complete. The exchange is positive and eternal. They who believe in Jesus are as much accepted of God the Father as even His Eternal Son is accepted and they that believe not, let them do what they will, they shall but go about to work out their own righteousness, but they abide under the Law and still shall they be under the curse.   
Now, you that believe in Jesus walk up and down the earth in the glory of this great Truth. You are sinners in yourselves but you are washed in the blood of Christ. David says, Wash me and I shall be whiter than snow. You have lately seen the snow come downhow clear! How white! What could be whiter? Why, the Christian is whiter than that. You say, He is black. I know he is as black as anyoneas black as Hellbut the blood drop falls on him and he is as whitewhiter than snow. The next time you see the snow-white crystals falling from Heaven, look on them and say, Ah! though I must confess within myself that I am unworthy and unclean, yet, believing in Christ, He has given me His righteousness so completely that I am even whiter than the snow as it descends from the treasury of God.   
Oh, for faith to lay hold on this! Oh, for an overpowering faith that shall get the victory over doubts and fears and make us enjoy the liberty wherewith Christ makes men free! Go home, you that believe in Christ go to your beds this night and say, If I die in my bed I cannot be condemned. Should you wake the next morning, go into the world and say, I am not condemned! When the devil howls at you, tell him, Ah, you may accuse, but I am not condemned.   
And if sometimes your sins risesay, Yes, I know you, but you are all gone forever. I am not condemned. And when your turn shall come to die, shut your eyes in peace   
*Bold shall you stand in that great day,   
For who anything to your charge can lay?*

Fully absolved by grace you shall be found at last and all sins tremendous curse and blame shall be taken away, not because of anything you have done.

I pray you to do all you can for Christ out of gratitude, but even when you have done all, do not rest there. Rest still in the Substitution and the Sacrifice. Be what Christ was in His Fathers sight and when conscience awakens, you can tell it that Christ was for you all that you ought to have beenthat He has suffered all your penalty and now neither mercy nor justice can smite you, since justice has clasped hands with mercy in a firm decree to save that man whose faith is in the Cross of Christ. The Lord bless these words for His sake. Amen.

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PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #362 New Park Street Pulpit 1

NONE BUT JESUSSECOND PART   
NO. 362

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON SABBATH EVENING, FEBRUARY 17, 1861, BY THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT NEW PARK STREET, SOUTHWARK.

**He that believes on Him is not condemned.   
John 3:18.**

IN the morning sermon our time was mainly taken up with the description of Faithwhat it is. We had only a few minutes left at its close to describe what it leads tothe privilege of justification which is a gift to the soul as the result of Faith. Let this high privilege, then, occupy our attention tonight. The text says, He that believes on Him(that is on Christ Jesus)is not condemned.

To take up the subject in order, we shall notice first the satisfactory declaration here made. Secondly, we shall endeavor to correct certain misapprehensions respecting it, by reason of which the Christian is often cast down. We shall close with some reflections, positive and negative, as to what this text includes and what it excludes.

1. First of all, then, WHAT A SATISFACTORY DECLARATION!He that believes on Him is not condemned.   
You are aware that in our courts of law a verdict of not guilty amounts to an acquittal and the prisoner is immediately discharged. So is it in the language of the Gospel. A sentence of not condemned implies the justification of the sinner. It means that the believer in Christ receives now a present justification. Faith does not produce its fruits by-and-by, but now. So far as justification is the result of faith, it is given to the soul in the moment when it closes with Christ and accepts Him as its All-inAll.   
Are they who stand before the Throne of God justified tonight?So are weas truly and as clearly justified as they who walk in white and sing His praises above. The thief upon the Cross was justified the moment that he turned the eye of faith to Jesus who was just then, hanging by his sideand Paul, the aged, after years of service was not more justified than was the thief with no service at all. We are today accepted in the Beloved, today absolved from sin, today innocent in the sight of God. Oh, ravishing, soul-transporting thought! There are some clusters of this vine which we shall not be able to gather till we go to Heaven, but this is one of the first ripe clusters and may be plucked and eaten here.   
This is not as the corn of the land which we can never eat till we cross the Jordan. But this is part of the manna in the wilderness and part, too, of our daily raiment with which God supplies us in our journeying to and fro. We are noweven now pardoned. Even now are our sins put away. Even now we stand in the sight of God as though we had never been guiltyinnocent as father Adam when he stood in integritybefore he had eaten of the fruit of the forbidden tree, pure as though we had never received the taint of depravity in our veins.  
There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus. There is not a sin in the Book of God, even now, against one of His people. There is nothing laid to their charge. There is neither speck, nor spot, nor wrinkle, nor any such thing remaining upon any believer in the matter of justification in the sight of the Judge of all the earth.

But to continue, the text evidently means not simply present, but continual justification. In the moment when you and I believed it was said of us, He is not condemned. Many days have passed since then, many changes we have seen. But it is as true of us tonightHe is not condemned. The Lord alone knows how long our appointed day shall be how long before we shall fulfill the hirelings time and like a shadow flee away. But this we knowsince every Word of God is assured and the gifts of God are without repentancethough we should live another fifty years, yet would it still be written here, He that believes on Him is not condemned.   
No, if by some mysteries dealing in Providence our lives should be lengthened out to ten times the usual limit of man and we should come to the eight or nine hundred years of Methuselah, still would it stand the same He that believes on Him is not condemned. I give unto My sheep eternal life and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of My hand. The just shall live by faith. He that believes on Him shall never be confounded. All these promises go to show that the justification which Christ gives to our faith is a continual one which will last as long as we shall live.   
And remember, it will last in eternity as well as in time. We shall not in Heaven wear any other garment but that which we wear here. Today the righteous stand clothed in the righteousness of Christ. They shall wear this same wedding dress at the great wedding feast. But what if it should wear out? What if that righteousness should lose its virtue in the eternity to come? Oh Beloved, we entertain no fear about that! Heaven and earth shall pass away, but this righteousness shall never wax old. No moth shall eat it. No thief shall steal it. No weeping hand of lamentation shall rend it in two.   
It is, it must be, eternaleven as Christ HimselfJehovah our righteousness. Because He is our righteousness, the self-existent, the everlasting, the immutable Jehovah, of whose years there is no end and whose strength fails not, therefore of our righteousness there is no end. And of its perfection and of its beauty there shall never be any termination. The text, I think, very clearly teaches us that he who believes on Christ has received forever a continual justification.  
Againthink for a momentthe justification which is spoken of here is complete. He that believes on Him is not condemnedthat is to say not in any measure or in any degree. I know some think it is possible for us to be in such a state as to be half-condemned and half-accepted. So far as we are sinners so far condemned and so far as we are righteous so far acaccepted. Oh Beloved, there is nothing like that in Scripture. It is altogether apart from the doctrine of the Gospel. If it is of works, it is no more of grace and if it is of grace, it is no more of works.   
Works and grace cannot mix and mingle any more than fire and water. It is either one or the other, it cannot be both. The two can never be allied. There can be no admixture of the two, no dilution of one with the other. He that believes is free from all iniquity, from all guilt, from all blame. And though the devil bring an accusation, yet it is a false one, for we are free even from accusation, since it is boldly challenged, Who shall lay anything to the charge of Gods elect? It does not say, Who shall prove it? but Who shall lay it to their charge?   
They are so completely freed from condemnation that not the shadow of a spot upon their soul is found. Not even the slightest passing by of iniquity to cast its black shadow on them. They stand before God not only as half-innocent, but as perfectly so. Not only as half-washed, but as whiter than snow. Their sins are not simply erased, they are blotted outnot simply put out of sight, but cast into the depths of the sea. Not merely gone and gone as far as the east is from the westbut gone forever, once and for all. You know, Beloved, that the Jew in his ceremonial purification never finds his conscience free from sin. After one sacrifice he needed still another, for these offerings could never make the comers thereunto perfect.   
The next days sins needed a new lamb and the next years iniquity needed a new victim for an atonement. But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God. No more burnt-offerings are needed. No more washing, no more blood, no more atonement, no more sacrifice. It is finished! hear the dying Savior cry. Your sins have sustained their death-blow, the robe of your righteousness has received its last thread. It is done, complete, perfect. It needs no addition. It can never suffer any diminution.   
Oh, Christian, lay hold of this precious thought!. I may not be able to state it except in weak terms, but let not my weakness prevent your apprehending its glory and its preciousness. It is enough to make a man leap, though his legs were loaded with irons and to make him sing though his mouth were gagged, to think that we are perfectly accepted in Christ, that our justification is impartial. It does not go to a limited extent, but goes the whole way. Our unrighteousness is covered. From condemnation we are entirely and irrevocably free once more.   
The non-condemnation is effectual. The royal privilege of justification shall never miscarry. It shall be brought home to every believer. In the reign of King George the Third, the son of a member of this Church lay under sentence of death for forgery. My predecessor, Dr. Rippon, after incredible exertions obtained a promise that his sentence should be remitted. By a singular occurrence the present senior deaconthen a young manlearned from the governor of the jail that the reprieve had not been received. And the unhappy prisoner would have been executed the next morning had not Dr. Rippon gone post-haste to Windsor, obtained an interview with the king in his bed-chamber and received from the monarchs own hand a copy of that reprieve which had been negligently put aside by a thoughtless officer.   
I charge you, Doctor, said his majesty, to make good speed. Trust me, Sire, for that, responded your old pastor and he returned to London in time, just in time and only just in time, for the prisoner was being marched with many others on to the scaffold. Yes, that pardon might have been given and yet the man might have been executed if it had not been effectually carried out. But blessed be God our non-condemnation is an effectual thing. It is not a matter of letter. It is a matter of fact.   
Ah, poor Souls, you know that condemnation is a matter of fact. When you and I suffered in our souls and were brought under the heavy hand of the Law we felt that its curses were no mock thunders like the wrath of the Vatican, but they were real. We felt that the anger of God was indeed a thing to tremble at. A real substantial fact. Now, just as real as the condemnation which Justice brings, just so real is the justification which Mercy bestows. You are not only nominally guiltless, but you are really so, if you believe in Christ. You are not only nominally put into the place of the innocent, but you are really put there the moment you believe in Jesus.   
Not only is it said that your sins are gone, but they are gone. Not only does God look on you as though you were accepted, you are accepted. It is a matter of fact to you, as much a matter of fact as that you sinned. You do not doubt that you have sinned, you cannot doubt thatdo not doubt, then, that when you believe your sins are put away. For as certain as ever the black spot fell on you when you sinned, so certainly and so surely was it all washed out when you were bathed in that fountain filled with blood which was drawn from Emanuels veins.  
Come, my Soul, think of this! You are actually and effectually cleared from guilt. You are led out of your prison. You are no more in fetters as a bond-slave. You are delivered now from the bondage of the Law. You are freed from sin and you can walk at large as a free man. Your Saviors blood has procured your full discharge. Come, my Soulyou have a right now to come to your Fathers feet. No flames of vengeance are there to scare you now. No fiery sword. Justice cannot smite the innocent. Come, my Soul, your disabilities are taken away. You were unable once to see your Fathers face. You can see it now. You could not speak with Him, nor He with you. But now you have access with boldness to this grace wherein we stand.   
Once there was a fear of Hell upon you. There is no Hell for you now. How can there be punishment for the guiltless? He that believes is guiltless, is not condemned and cannot be punished. No frowns of an avenging God now. If God is viewed as a Judge, how should He frown upon the guiltless? How should the Judge frown upon the absolved one? More than all the privileges you might have enjoyed if you had never sinned are yours now that you are justified. All the blessings which you would have had if you had kept the Law and more are yours tonight because Christ has kept it for you. All the love and the acceptance which a perfectly obedient being could have obtained of God belong to you, because Christ was perfectly obedient on your behalf and has imputed all His merits to your account that you might be exceeding rich through Him, who for your sake became exceedingly poor.   
Oh that the Holy Spirit would but enlarge our heartsthat we might suck sweetness out of these thoughts! There is no condemnation. Moreover, there never shall be any condemnation. The forgiveness is not partial, but perfect. It is so effectual that it delivers us from all the penalties of the Law, gives to us all the privileges of obedience and puts us actually high above where we should have been had we never sinned. It fixes our standing more secure than it was before we fell. We are not now where Adam was, for Adam might fall and perish.   
We are rather where Adam would have been if we could suppose God had put him into the garden for seven years and said, If you are obedient for seven years, your time of probation shall be over and I will reward you. The children of God in one sense may be said to be in a state of probationin another sense there is no probation. There is no probation as to whether the child of God should be saved. He is saved already. His sins are washed awayhis righteousness is completeand if that righteousness could endure a million years probation, it would never be defiled. In fact, it always stands the same in the sight of God and must do so forever and ever.

II. Let me now endeavor to CORRECT SOME MISAPPREHENSIONS BY REASON OF WHICH CHRISTIANS ARE OFTEN CAST DOWN.   
What simpletons we are! Whatever our natural age, how childish we are in spiritual things! What great simpletons we are when we first believe in Christ! We think that our being pardoned involves a great many things which we afterwards find have nothing whatever to do with our pardon. For instance, we think we shall never sin again. We fancy that the battle is all fought. That we have got into a fair field with no more war to wage that we have got the victory and have only just to stand up and wave the palm branch. That all is over, that God has only got to call us up to Himself and we shall enter into Heaven without having to fight any enemies upon earth.   
Now, all these are obvious mistakes. Though the text has a great meaning, it does not mean anything of this kind. Observe that although it does assert, He that believes is not condemned, it does not say that he that believes shall not have his faith exercised. Your faith will be exercised. An untried faith will be no faith at all. God never gave men faith without intending to try it. Faith is received for the very purpose of endurance. Just as our Rifle Corps friends put up the target with the intention of shooting at it, so does God give faith with the intention of letting trials and troubles and sin and Satan aim all their darts at it.   
When you have faith in Christ it is a great privilege. But recollect that it involves a great trial. You asked for great faith the other nightdid you consider that you asked for great troubles, too? You cannot have great faith to lay up and rust. Mr. Great-Heart in John Bunyans Pilgrim was a very strong man but then what strong work he had to do. He had to go with all those women and children many scores of times up to the Celestial City and back again. He had to fight all the giants and drive back all the lions, to slay the giant Slay-Good and knock down the Castle of Despair.   
If you have a great measure of faith, you will have need to use it all. You will never have a single scrap to spare. You will be like the virgins in our Lords parableeven though you are a wise virginyou will have to say to others who might borrow of you, Not so, lest there be not enough for us and for you. But when your faith is exercised with trials, do not think you are brought into judgment for your sins. Oh, no, Believer, there is plenty of exercise, but that is not condemnation. There are many trials, but still we are justified. We may often be buffeted but we are never accursed. We may oftentimes be cast down but the sword of the Lord never can and never will smite us to the heart.   
Yet morenot only may our faith be exercised but our faith may come to a very low ebb and still we are not be condemned. When your faith gets so small that you can not see it, even then you still are not condemned. If you have ever believed in Jesus, your faith may be like the sea when it goes out a very long way from the shore and leaves a vast track of mud and some might say the sea was gone or dried upbut you are still not condemned when your faith is almost dried up. Yes! and I dare to say it when your faith is at the flood-tide, you are not more accepted then, than when your faith is at the lowest ebb.   
Your acceptance does not depend upon the quantity of your faithit only depends upon its reality. If you are really resting in Christ, though your faith may be but as a spark and a thousand devils may try to quench that one spark, yet you are not condemnedyou shall stand accepted in Christ. Though your comforts will necessarily decay as your faith declines, yet your acceptance does not decay. Though faith does rise and fall like the thermometer, though faith is like the mercury in the bulb, all weathers change ityet Gods love is not affected by the weather of earth, or the changes of time. Until the perfect righteousness of Christ can be a mutable thinga football to be kicked about by the fleet of fiendsyour acceptance with God can never change. You are, you must be perfectly accepted in the Beloved.  
There is another thing which often tries the child of God. He at times loses the light of his Fathers countenance. Now, remember, the text does not say, He that believes shall not lose the light of Gods countenance. He may do so, but he shall not be condemned for all that. You may walk, not only for days, but for months in such a state that you have little fellowship with Christ, very little communion with God of a joyous sort. The promises may seem broken to you, the Bible may afford you but little comfort. And when you turn your eye to Heaven you may only have to feel more of the smarting that is caused by your Fathers rod. You may have vexed and grieved His Spirit and He may have turned away His face from you. But you are not condemned for all that.   
Mark the testimonyHe that believes is not condemned. Even when your Father smites you and leaves a welt at every stroke and brings the blood at every blowthere is not a particle of condemnation in any one stroke. Not in His anger, but in His dear Covenant love He smites you. There is an unmixed and unalloyed affection in every love-stroke of chastisement from your Fathers hand as there is in the kisses of Jesus Christs lips. Oh, believe thisit will tend to lift up your heartit will cheer you when neither sun nor moon appear!   
It will honor your God. It will show you where your acceptance really lies. When His face is turned away believe Him still and say, He abides faithful though He hides His face from me. I will go a little further still. The child of God may be so assaulted by Satan that he may be well-nigh given up to despair and yet he is not condemned. The devils may beat the great Hell-drum in his ear till he thinks himself to be on the very brink of perdition. He may read the Bible and think that every threat is against him and that every promise shuts its mouth and will not cheer himand he may at last despond and despond and despondtill he is ready to break the harp that has so long been hanging on the willow.   
He may say, The Lord has forsaken me. My God will be gracious no more, but it is not true. Yes, he may be ready to swear a thousand times that Gods mercy is gone forever and that His faithfulness will fail forever more, but it is not true, it is not true. A thousand liars so swearing to a falsehood could not make it true and our doubts and fears are all of them liars. If there were ten thousand of them and they all professed the same, it is a falsehood that God ever did forsake His people, or that He ever cast from Him an innocent manand you are innocent, remember, when you believe in Jesus.  
But, you say, I am full of sin. Yes, I say, but that sin has been laid on Christ. Oh, you say, but I sin daily. Yes, I say, but that sin was laid on Him before you committed it, years ago. It is not yours. Christ has taken it away once and for all. You are a righteous man by faith and God will not forsake the righteous nor will He cast away the innocent. I say, then, the child of God may have his faith at a low ebb. He may lose the light of his Fathers countenance and he may even get into thorough despair. But yet all these cannot disprove my textHe that believes is not condemned.   
But what, you say, if the child of God should sin? It is a deep and tender subject, yet must we touch it and be bold here. I would not mind Gods Truth lest any should make a bad use of it. I know there are some, not the people of God, who will say, Let us sin, that grace may abound. Their condemnation is just. I cannot help the perversion of Truth. There ARE always men who will take the best of food as though it were poison and make the best of Truth into a lie and so be damning their own souls.   
You ask, What if a child of God should fall into sin? I answer the child of God does fall into sin. Every day he mourns and groans because when he would do good, evil is present with him. But though he falls into sin, he is not condemned for all thatnot by one of them, or by all of them put together, because his acceptance does not depend upon himself, but upon the perfect righteousness of Christ. And that perfect righteousness is not invalidated by any sins of his. He is perfect in Christ. And until Christ is imperfect, the imperfections of the creature do not mar the justification of the believer in the sight of God.   
But oh, if he falls into some glaring sinO God, keep us from it!if he falls into some glaring sin, he shall go with broken bones, but he shall reach Heaven for all that. Though, in order to try him and let him see his vileness, he is allowed to go far astray, yet He that bought him will not lose him. He that chose him will not cast him awayHe will say unto him, I, even I, am He that blots out your transgressions for My own sake and will not remember your sins. David may go ever so far away, but David is not lost. He comes back and he cries, Have mercy upon me, O God! And so shall it be with every believing soulChrist shall bring him back. Though he slip, he shall be kept and all the chosen seed shall meet around the Throne.   
If it were not for this last Truththough some may stick at itwhat would become of some of Gods people? They would be given up to despair. If I have been speaking to a backslider, I pray he will not make a bad use of what I have said. Let me say to him, Poor Backslider! Your Fathers heart yearns over you. He has not erased your name out of the registry. Come back, come back now to Him and say, Receive me graciously and love me freely. And He will say, I will put you among the children. He will pass by your backsliding and evil. He will heal your iniquities and you shall yet stand once more in His favor and know yourself to be still accepted in the Redeemers righteousness and saved by His blood. This text does not mean that the child of God shall not be tried, or that he shall not even sometimes fall under the trial. But it does mean thisonce and for allhe that believes on Christ is not condemned. At no time, by no means is he under the sentence of condemnation, but is evermore justified in the sight of God.

III. Now, dear Brethren, but little time remains for the last points. Therefore, in a hurried manner let me notice WHAT THIS TEXT EVIDENTLY INCLUDES. And may God grant that these few words may nevertheless do good to our souls!  
He that believes on Him is not condemned. If we are not condemned then at no time does God ever look upon His children, when they believe in Christ, as being guilty. Are you surprised that I should put it so? I put it so againfrom the moment when you believe in Christ, God ceases to look upon you as being guilty. For He never looks upon you apart from Christ. You often look upon yourself as guilty and you fall upon your knees as you should do and you weep and lament. But even then, while you are weeping over inbred and actual sin, He is still saying out of Heaven, So far as your justification is concerned, you are all fair and lovely.   
You are black as the tents of Kedarthat is yourself by nature. You are fair as the curtains of Solomonthat is yourself in Christ. You are black with sinthat is yourself in Adam. But lovelythat is yourself in the Second Adam. Oh, think on that!that you are always in Gods sight lovely, always in Gods sight as though you were perfect. For you are complete in Christ Jesus and perfect in Christ Jesus, as the Apostle puts it in another place. Always do you stand completely washed and fully clothed in Christ. Remember this. For it is certainly included in my text.   
Another great thought included in my text is this. You are never able as a believer to be punished for your sins. You will be chastised on account of them, as a father chastises his child. That is a part of the Gospel dispensation. But you will not lie smitten for your sins as the law-giver smites the criminal. Your Father may often punish you as He punishes the wicked. But never for the same reason. The ungodly stand on the ground of their own demeritstheir sufferings are awarded as their due deserts. But your sorrows do not come to you as matter of desert. They come to you as a matter of love.   
God knows that in one sense your sorrows are such a privilege that you may account them as a blessing you do not deserve. I have often thought of that when I have had a sore trouble. I know some people say, You deserved the trouble. Yes, my dear Brethren, but there is not enough merit in all Christians put together to deserve such a good thing as the loving rebuke of our heavenly Father. Perhaps you cannot see that. You cannot think that a trouble can come to you as a real blessing in the Covenant.   
But I know that the rod of the Covenant is as much the gift of grace as the blood of the Covenant. It is not a matter of desert or merit. It is given to us because we noted it. But I question whether we were ever so good as to deserve it. We were never able to get up to so high a standard as to deserve so rich, so gracious a Providence as this Covenant blessingthe rod of our chastening God. Never at any time in your life has a law-stroke fallen upon you. Since you believed in Christ you are out of the Laws jurisdiction. The law of England cannot touch a Frenchman while he lives under the protection of his own Emperor. You are not under the Lawyou are under Grace.   
The Law of Sinai cannot touch you, for you are out of its jurisdiction. You are not in Sinai or in Arabia. You are not the son of Hagar or the son of a handmaidyou are the son of Sarah and are come to Jerusalem and are free. You are out of Arabia and are come to Gods own happy land. You are not under Hagar, but under Sarahunder Gods Covenant of Grace. You are a child of Promise and you shall have Gods own inheritance. Believe this, that never shall a law-stroke fall on younever shall Gods anger in a judicial sense drop on you. He may give you a chastising strokenot as the result of sinbut rather as the result of His own rich grace. That would only get the sin out of you that you may be perfected in sanctification, even as you are now perfect and complete before Him in the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ.   
I was about to go into a list of things which this text includes, but the time fails metherefore I must spend the last minute or two in saying WHAT THIS TEXT EXCLUDES.   
What does it exclude? Well I am sure it excludes boasting. He that believes is not condemned. Ah, if it said, He that works is not condemned, then you and I might boast in any quantity. But when it says, He that believeswhy, there is no room for us to say half a word for old self. No, Lord, if I am not condemned, it is Your free grace, for I have deserved to be condemned a thousand times since I have been in this pulpit tonight.   
When I am on my knees and I am not condemned, I am sure it must be sovereign grace, for even when I am praying I deserve to be condemned. Even when we are repenting we are sinning and adding to our sins while we are repenting of them. Every act we do, as the result of the flesh, is to sin again and our best performances are so stained with sin that it is hard to know whether they are good works or bad works.   
So far as they are our own, they are bad and so far as they are the works of the Spirit they are good. But then the goodness is not ours, it is the Spirits and only the evil remains to us. Ah, then, we cannot boast! Be gone, pride! Be gone! The Christian must be a humble man. If he lifts up his head to say something, then he is nothing indeed. He does not know where he is, or where he stands, when he once begins to boastas though his own right hand had gotten him the victory. Leave off boasting, Christian. Live humbly before your God and never let a word of selfcongratulation escape your lips. Sacrifice self and let your song be before the ThroneNot unto us, not unto us, but unto Your name be glory forever.   
What next does the text exclude? Methinks it ought to excludenow I am about to smite myselfit ought to exclude doubts and fears. He that believes is not condemned. How dare you and I draw such long faces and go about as we do sometimes as though we had a world of cares upon our backs! What would I have given ten or eleven years ago if I could have known this text was sure to me that I was not condemned? Why, I thought if I could feel I was once forgiven and had to live on bread and water and be locked up in a dungeon and every day be flogged with a cato-nine tails, I would gladly have accepted it if I could have once felt my sins forgiven.   
Now you are a forgiven man and yet you are cast down! Oh, shame on you! No condemnation! And yet miserable? Fie, Christian! Get up and wipe the tears from your eyes. Oh, if there is a person lying in jail now, to be executed next week, if you could go to him and say, You are pardoned, would he not spring up with delight from his seat? And although he might have lost his goods and though it would be possible for him, after pardon, to have to suffer many things, yet, so long as life was spared, what would all this be to him? He would feel that it was less than nothing.   
Now, Christian, you are pardoned. Your sins are all forgiven. Christ has said to you, Your sins, which are many, are all forgiven youand are you yet miserable? Well, if we must be so sometimes, let us make it as short as we can. If we must be sometimes cast down, let us ask the Lord to lift us up again. I am afraid some of us get into bad habits and come to make it a matter of practice to be downcast. Mind Christian, mind, it will grow upon youthat peevish spiritif you do not resist that sinfulness at first, it will get worse with you. If you do not come to God to turn these doubts and fears out of you, they will soon swarm upon you like flies in Egypt.   
When you are able to kill the first great doubt, you will perhaps kill a hundred. For one great doubt will breed a thousand and to kill the mother is to kill the whole brood. Therefore look with all your heart against the first doubt lest you should become confirmed in your despondency and grow into sad despair, He that believes on Him is not condemned. If this excludes boasting, it ought to exclude doubts, too.  
Once moreHe that believes on Him is not condemned. This excludes sinning any more. My Lord, have I sinned against You so many times and yet have You freely forgiven me all? What stronger motive could I have for keeping me from sinning again? Ah, there are some who are saying this is a licentious doctrine. A thousand devils rolled into one must the man be who can find any licentiousness here. What? Go and sin because I am forgiven? Go and live in iniquity because Jesus Christ took my guilt and suffered in my place?  
Human nature is bad enough but methinks this is the very worst state of human nature when it tries to draw an argument for sin from the free grace of God. Bad as I am I do feel thisthat it is hard to sin against a pardoning God. It is far harder to sin against the blood of Christ and against a sense of pardon than it is against the terrors of the Law and the fear of Hell itself. I know that when my soul is most alarmed by a dread of the wrath of God, I can sin with comfort compared with what I could when I have a sense of His love shed abroad in my heart. What more monstrousto read your title clearand sin?   
Oh, vile reprobate! You are on the borders of the deepest Hell. But I am sure if you are a child of God, you will say when you have read your title clear and feel yourself justified in Christ Jesus   
*Now, for the love I bear His name,   
What was my gain, I count my loss;   
My former pride I call my shame,   
And nail my glory to His Cross.*   
Yes and I must and will esteem all things but loss for Jesus sake. O may my Soul be found in Him, perfect in His righteousness!   
This will make you live near to Himthis will make you like unto Him. Do not think that this doctrine by dwelling on it will make you think lightly of sin. It will make you think of it as a hard and stern executioner to put Christ to deathas an awful load that could never be lifted from you except by the eternal arm of God. And then you will come to hate sin with all your soul because it is rebellion against a loving and gracious God and you shall by this means, far better than by any Arminian doubts or any legal quibbles, be led to walk in the footsteps of your Lord Jesus and to follow the Lamb wherever He goes.

I think this whole sermon, though I have been preaching to the children of God, is meant for sinners, too. Sinner, I would that you did say so. If you know this, that he that believes is not condemned, then, Sinner, if you believe, you will not be condemned and may all I have said tonight help you to this belief in your soul.   
Oh, but you say, May I trust Christ? As I said this morning, it is not a question of whether you may or may not, you are commanded. The Scripture commands the Gospel to be preached to every creature and the Gospel isBelieve in the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved. I know you will be too proud to do it unless God by His grace should humble you. But if you feel tonight that you are nothing and have nothing of your own, I think you will be right glad to take Christ to be your All-in-All.   
If you can say with poor Jack the Huckster   
*Im a poor sinner and nothing at all,*   
You may go on and say with him, this night   
*But Jesus Christ is my All-in-All.*   
God grant that it may be so, for His names sake. Amen.

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THE ESSENCE OF THE GOSPEL   
NO. 964

**DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, DECEMBER 4, 1870, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**He that believes on Him is not condemned. But he that believes not is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.   
John 3:18.**

I MAY have preached from this text before. I may have done so several times. If I have not, I ought to have. It is the whole Bible in miniature. We may say of it so many words, so many volumes, for every single syllable here is charged to the full with meaning. We may read it, and re-read it, and continue still to read it day and night, yet ever find some fresh instruction in it. It is the essence of the Gospel. The good news in brief. When our Lord Jesus Christ shall come a second time, before Him shall be gathered all nations, and He shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd divides the sheep from the goats.

That will not, however, be the first time in which the Presence of the Lord Jesus has acted as a separator. It is always so wherever He comes. Men are as one body in their fallen conditionall alike estranged from God until He appears. But His coming finds out the chosen and calls them apart, and on the other hand, the unbelievers are discovered. Two camps are formed out of the once-mingled multitude. Each goes to each, each one after its own kind finds its fellows, and between the two fellowships there is a deep gulf which divides them as clearly as light is distinct from the darkness, or death is divided from life.

Other distinctions sink into insignificance in the Presence of Jesus riches or wealth, learning or ignorance, power or weaknessare matters of too small account to divide mankind in the Presence of the great Discerner of spirits. Only these two charactersBelievers and unbelievers stand out in clear relief. As it is in our text, so is it as a matter of fact in the entire universethe only two really vital distinctions for time and for eternity are just theseBelievers and Unbelievers, receivers of Christ and rejecters of Him.

Furthermore, as today the Presence of Christ divides the masses, and gathers men into assorted companies, so also does that Presence ensure a present judgment. It is written that He shall say to them on His right hand, Come, you blessed, and to those on His left, Depart, you cursed. And even so at this moment His Presence, with equal certainty, produces a judging. For here in the text we find Believers not condemned, or in other words, acquitted, and we find Unbelievers condemned already.

The, Come, you blessed, is anticipated in the non-condemnation, and the, Depart, you cursed, is, as it were, already heard in the verdict,

Condemned already. I charge you, therefore, this morning, while the Word is preached in your hearing, to remember that a clear and allimportant division will be worked while this sermon is being delivered. This day the Son of David holds His Throne, and in this house He sits in judgment. In the preaching of the Gospel at this moment His majestic voice divides the sinners from the saints, and if sensitive to His Presence, we shall either tremble or rejoice.

God grant that while this division shall go on, as it must go on, for He will be this day a savor of death unto death or a life unto life to every one of our souls, we may all be found among Believers, and none of us shut out as condemned already by being Unbelievers.

I. I shall ask you, this morning, first, to CONSIDER TO WHICH OF THE TWO CLASSES MENTIONED IN THE TEXT WE BELONG. He that believes on Him is not condemned. Have we a share in that character? Let us see to it. What is meant by believing on Him, or rather in Him, for the word eis is rather in Him than on Him. If I mistake not, the word, believes in Him, means a great deal more than most of us have seen in it.

I think I see many shades of believing. There are some who believe concerning Christ, that is to say, they believe that He is the Messiah and is the Savior of men. Many accept this for a Truth of God because their fathers did so, and it is to them a matter of unquestioned tradition. They are born in what is commonly thought to be a Christian country, and therefore have they taken up with the Christian faith, and theoretically and notionally they believe that Jesus is the Son of God and the Redeemer of the world. They would not hesitate to stand up and say, I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was begotten of the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried, and so on.

But remember, you may believe all that is orthodox concerning the Lord Jesus, and yet it will be no token that you are justified in Him. No one may dare to say that a belief in the Athanasian creed will ensure us of salvation. If you reject His Deity, if you deny His Atonement, such errors will be conclusive evidence that you are not a believer in Him, because you are not a believer of the Truth of God concerning Him. Therefore you must take your place among unbelievers, who are condemned already.

But on the other hand, if you hold the Scriptural Truth, and believe accurately concerning the Lord Jesus, yet if you go no further, your mere faith about Him, or concerning Him, will not bring you salvation. To know Christ is of no avail, unless it can be said, Flesh and blood has not revealed this unto you.

It is a step further when we have come to believing Him. This is sometimes mentioned in Scripturebelieving Him. I know whom I have believed. Believing concerning Him that He is Gods Christ, His Anointed, His Sent One, His Messiah, we therefore should, as a matter of course, accept whatever He says as being true. And if with our hearts we do this, I think we are saved. But we may think we do this and notionally may give our assent to His teaching, and yet, notwithstanding, we may not have attained unto His salvation. We may still be condemned Unbelievers, though we may think, and say, and profess that we believe Him.

Frequently in Scripture there is another form of the believing which clusters about the Greek word, epi, believing upon Him. Our translators seem to have placed the word on here as though it were in our text, but it is hardly so in the Greek. There is a difference between believing on Him and believing in Him. To believe on Jesus is, indeed, a saving faith, for He that believes on Him shall not be confounded. To believe on Him is, as it were, to lean upon Him, to receive Him as God has set Him forth, and, in consequence, to make Him the foundation of our hope.

Believing concerning Him, and believing Him, we then come to repose upon Him, and to make Him our confidence. We believe that He can save us, we trust in Him to save us, and this is the essence of saving faithto believe upon the appointed Redeemer. But in this particular case our text speaks of believing in Him, and this is something more than believing upon Him. Every man who really believes upon Christ will before long come to believe in Him. But there is a growthbelieving in Him is more than believing upon Him.

How is that? If I thoroughly believe in a man, what is the result of it? Is he an advocate, and am I immersed in law? Then I trust my case to himI leave the affair in his hands without fearfor I believe in my advocate. Very good. So far that may be believing upon him. But now he gives me directions and rules of action. If I believe in him I shall certainly follow those rules to the letter, being fully convinced that they will lead me to a right issue. I commit the matter practically as well as theoretically to the man whom I have chosen to represent me, and I do so cheerfully, for I believe in him.

I am like a man on board a vesselI believe in him who is the captain. What then? If he bids me do this, or that, or the other, I may hear someone call his orders foolish, but I believe in him, and I do, at once, whatever he bids me. His bidding may appear absurd to one who has no faith in him, but to me it is wise and right. Suppose there should be raised up at this juncture for poor unhappy France, a man of high military genius, a man who shall be capable with such material as may come to hand to meet the terrible foe, and to disperse the cloud which now hangs over the capital city.

If the people shall believe in the man, what then? Why they will surrender the direction of affairs to him. They will implicitly follow his lead. Does he command a sortie, does he bid the army advance? They believe in him, and the sortie is made, and the troops advance gallantly to the conflict. Should he counsel delay, and the avoidance of a great battle, those who believe in him will entrench themselves, or retire before the foe.

If they are absolutely sure in their hearts that he is the man who guarantees victory, they will be certain to obey his orders. He will be their oracle, their dictator, and that most joyfully on their parts. So that to believe in our Lord means thisthat I believe Him to be the Son of God, and believe all other Truths of God concerning Him. That I also believe whatever

He says to be the Truth of God. In other words, I believe Him. Yet more than this, I cast my soul upon His atoning merits that He may save it, and so believe upon Him.

And furthermore, having so done I give myself up entirely to the Saviors holy guidance. I believe Him to be infallible as the director of my spirit. I feel a union with Him. I come to be in HimHis cause is my cause, my cause His causeI believe in Him. Now this is the Man of whom the text says, He that believes in Him is not condemned, and the question I put this morning to myself and to you is, Have we believed in Jesus? Do we really take Him to be our All in All? Do we consent that He should guide and lead us till He brings us to eternal felicity?

The connection of our text will help us to form a judgment as to whether we are, indeed, Believers in Jesus. Brothers and Sisters, have you realized, by a true exercise of faith, what is meant by the fourteenth and fifteenth verses of the present chapter? As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up: that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life. As the serpent-bitten Israelite looked to the bronze serpent when it was uplifted, have you, in the same way, looked to Jesus and found healing through looking to Him?

By this you may judge yourselves. Have you been healed of the wounds of sin and quickened into a new and heavenly life? Have you in very deed made the crucified Savior your souls resting place? In the verses which follow the text, you find such words as these, He that does the truth comes to the light. Do you, my Brethren, as the result of having trusted in Christ come to the light? Is it your desire to know Gods Truth, Gods will, Gods Law, Gods Word? Are you seeking after the light, and are you desirous that the works worked in you should be seen to be the fruit of Gods own Spirit? By this, also, can you judge yourself?

It is vain to say, I trust in Christ, if you have never looked to Him with that same childlike look with which the Israelite looked to the bronze serpentand equally vain for you to profess to be a believer in Him, unless you desire the light. You may be in partial darkness still, as doubtless you are, but are you seeking more light, seeking God, seeking Truth, seeking right? By this shall you know whether the Father has begotten you unto a new birth, whether you are to a certainty a new man, no longer a lightshunner but a light-seeker. No longer, because your deeds are evil, seeking to conceal yourself from the convicting Word of God, but because your deeds are truthful, seeking to receive more light, that your works may be made manifest to your own conscience as being truly worked of God in your soul.

The consideration which I proposed just now has to be taken up with regard to the second class. Are we Unbelievers? It is to be feared that there are some such here. If that is so, it may be of some service to them to know where they are, and what they are. He that believes not is condemned already. Some of you here are very inconsistent, because though you believe not in Christ Jesus, that is to say, do not trust your souls with Him, nor give yourselves up obediently to serve Him, yet you believe concerning Him that He is the Christ of God.

And if He were here today and spoke to you, you would believe His Words, though I cannot say you would so believe them as to act upon them. It is so very strange that you should believe Him to be the Son of God and yet should not trust Him! You believe what He speaks is true, and after He has warned you of the wrath to come you still sit down in stolid indifference and do not seek the salvation which He provides. Instead of looking to the bronze serpent, you act as the Israelites would have done had they sought out another remedy.

You have not believed in Christ, but if you have any belief that you need a Savior, I suppose your own common reason makes you seek one. You are evidently, therefore, seeking another salvation than that which God provides. You are refusing what God has ordained, that you may find something of your own. There is but one Saviorthat Savior this day you will not trust inyou are refusing Him to your own destruction. You are this day shutting your eyes to the one only Light, and though you have some desire towards light at times, yet you love darkness rather than light, and still continue as you weredark, dark, darkfor you do not like to be reproved.

You cannot bear that the Gospel should come too cuttingly home to touch you in your conscience and rebuke you for your sins. To this day you remain an Unbeliever and a lover of the darkness. Search, I pray you, and look! While this heart which now addresses you will pity you, I trust Gods heart may pity you, too, and may you yet escape out of the condition of the Unbeliever, and yet be numbered with the Believers in Christ.

Thus much on our first point, which I leave to your earnest selfexamination, hoping that it may not be treated lightly.   
II. Now, secondly, and for a very short time, let us CONSIDER THE CONDITION OF THE BELIEVER. He that believes on Him is not condemned. What a joyful sentence is this! Provided you have ascertained that you do believe in Jesus, turn this sweet word over and over in your souls, my Brethren. Is it not delightful to think that you have it from Gods own mouth by inspiration, and to note that the inspiration is of a remarkable kind, for you have it not only by the Spirit of God, but you have from Jesus Christ Himself the sweet assurance that you are not condemned!   
What joy, what peace this Word should speak unto your soul! Let me show you for a minute how the Believer escapes condemnation. He that believes on Him is not condemned. One reason is because he does not offer himself for judgment. He that believes in Christ does not present himself to be tried. He says, No, my Lord, I have no argument with You, I plead guilty, I confess the condemnation. There is no need of trial. You are justified when You speak, and clear when You condemn. There sits the Judge, and the prisoner should stand opposite to him, for they are two parties. But behold, in this case the prisoner leaves the place, declines a trial, falls at the Judges feet, acknowledges that the sentence, if carried out, would be just, and pleads guilty.   
Having done this the Believer sees that the sentence which he acknowledges and confesses to be right has been already laid upon his Surety and in that Surety he believes. What does he believe about Him? Why, that God, that He might magnify His Justice and His Grace, was in Christ Jesus! And that the Son of God did hang upon the Cross, and bleed and die, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God. The Believer confesses the justice of the sentence, and therefore is at one with God. He comes to the Light, and his deeds are reproved, and he accepts the reproof, and acknowledges it to be true.   
Then he looks to the Cross, and he says, This very sentence to which I do subscribe with my own hands that it is just, has been laid upon my ever glorious and blessed Surety, the Only Begotten of the Father, and He has been punished instead of me. And I am therefore free, since Christ died as my ransom. This is the way in which the Believer comes not to be condemnedhe accepts the condemnation, and then sees it laid upon his Surety! This brings him peace. The Justice of God would have disturbed his mind. He sees that Justice satisfied, and he declares in his own heart that if God is satisfied, he is satisfied.   
If Gods Justice is honored, then conscience feels that all is well. And now what happens? Why this believer in Christ, not being condemned, seeks the lightfrom this day forward he desires more and more to walk in the light of knowledge, the light of the Divine Presence, the light of Divine holiness. O my Brethren, there was a time when our souls inclined after sin! But now, though we sin, we mourn over it, and because we mourn it we have evidence that it is no longer I, as the Apostle says, but sin that dwells in me.   
The very inmost I, the true, most real ego within my soul now desires holiness. If we could be as we would, we would be pure as God is pure. Our heart hungers and thirsts after righteousness. We come to the Light, and now, having believed, we are in such a condition that our deeds, though discovered, do not bring us shame and confusion. In that very Light our works are made manifest that they are worked in Godand we rejoice that God is working in us by His Spirit holy desires, emotions, and actionswhich shall go on increasing until we shall be perfectly delivered from sin.   
This is the condition of the man who believes in Christ! It is a very happy condition, a very hopeful condition, a very heavenly conditionwho would not desire to be in it? It all hinges upon the believing, for with the believing in Jesus there comes the new birth. With the new birth comes the desire after Light. With the desire after Light there arises a progress towards itand a manifestation of the secret working of the Holy Spirit within the soul. Happy Believers, thrice happy in what you are as well as in what you shall be!   
III. And now, thirdly, and here comes our most solemn workmay Gods Holy Spirit help us in it. CONSIDER THE CONDITION OF THE UNBELIEVER. He that believes not is condemned already, because he has not believed on the name of the only begotten Son of God. Observe the fact, itself, which is here stated! He that believes not is condemned already. Let me enlarge upon this very solemn Truth of God.   
First, the Unbeliever offers himself for judgment. He has not believed on the namewhat is the name? It is the Savior, Jesus. He who believes on Jesus, the Savior, confesses that he needs saving and declines to stand on the footing of Law. But he who refuses the Savior does in effect say, I do not require a Savior, I am willing to stand my trial by the Law. I tell you, every soul that declines a Savior, does, in effect, ask to be judged by the Law. There stands the alternativeare you guiltywill you confess it? If so, accept the Savior.

But if, on the other hand, you say, I will not accept the Savior, in the bottom of your soul there lies the presumptuous conceit, I can stand the judgment. I do not want pardon and Grace. Then, Sir, if you ask for judgment you shall have it! And behold the result of itGod declares you to be condemned already. You have not believed, you have asked for judgment, you shall have it, but it is your ruin.   
The Unbeliever, himself, gives personal evidence to his own condemnation. Do you enquire how he does this? The text points us to his not believing. Is yonder person a condemned or not condemned man? Ask him what he thinks of Christ. If he replies honestly, he says, I do not accept Gods testimony about Jesus Christ. I do not receive Jesus as my Savior. Either he claims that he does not need a Savior or else he does not feel that Jesus is the Savior he needs. He rejects the testimony of God concerning Christis not that enough to condemn a man? If a man, in the very presence of the judge, committed theft or murder, he would condemn himself. But is it not a still higher offense than this, in the very Presence of God to do despite to His Son by practically declaring His work and blood to have been unnecessary?   
Is it not the height of daring that a soul should stand in the Presence of the God of Mercy and hear Him say in His Word, Behold the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world, and that the soul should reply, I have nothing to do with the Lamb of God? What further witness do we want with regard to your enmity to God? He that will not believe in Christ would murder God if He could. His not believing in Christ is virtually to make God a liar.   
Still further, he that believes not in Christ gives evidence against himself, for he rejects the name. Observe the text, He has not believed on the name. As I had already hinted, that name is Jesus, the Savior. The man says, I will not have the Savior. Many of you have not said so much in words, but you practically say it. For you do not believe in the Savior. You remain at this moment Saviorlessout of Christwithout hope, without pardon, without mercy. And you have continued to do so under the preaching of the Gospel now for many years.   
What more evidence do you want? If a man will reject God, even as a Savior, there must be a dreadful venom in his heart against God. If God appoints Christ to be King, and I reject Him, that rejection shows that I dislike God. But when He appoints Him to be a Savior, the errand being one entirely of mercy and goodness, if I reject Him I must in my soul have an amazing depth of enmity against God. By this clear proof I condemn myself!   
My Brothers and Sisters, if you look at the text again you will see that he who believes not, rejects a most exalted Person. For he has not believed on the name of the only begotten Son of God. What a word is that, On the Jesus, who is Gods only begotten Son. I wish I had language suitable for the utterance of a thought which presses down my very spirit, as it did last Sunday evening. That God should send a Savior, and for a Savior the Only Begotten, the Lord of Heaven and earth, without whom was not anything made that is made, and that He should come with testimony of love, the love of God to sinners, and seal that testimony with His blood. And that men should refuse to believe in Him!   
It is the most monstrous iniquity that could be imagined! I cannot see that Satan, himself, with all his blasphemy, has ever gone this length. He was never placed where he could reject, as a Savior, the only begotten Son of God. When men rejected Moses they perished without mercy, for he was sent of God. But when a man despises the Only Begotten, in whom dwells the fullness of the Godhead bodily, we may well sayCall no witnesses against the man, rake up none of the details of his past life, this is quite evidence enough.   
If he has not believed on such a One as this, he is condemned already. There is no need of a trial. Unbelief itself is the vilest of all treasonsout of his own mouth the sinner is condemned. Do you not see, O Sinner, how the matter stands? The infinite Lord of Mercy, that you might not perish, has devised a wondrous way of salvation which has astonished cherubim and seraphim, and made Heaven ring with song, and this you utterly reject! The plan so stupendous in conception is briefly thisthat the Creator should suffer that the created rebel might escapethat the Infinite should come into this world and be put to shame that the guilty might be clear! And all you are asked to do, all that is demanded of you is that you submit to be saved by this planthat you do but trust in the Jesus who is Divine, who is also Mando but trust Him to save you.!   
Will you not? Oh, will you not? Sirs, will you spurn almighty love? Can you turn away from boundless mercy? Then what shall I say of you, but just what the text saysyou condemn yourselves, you are condemned already? You must be infinitely wicked! You must be enormously, monstrously, diabolically at enmity with God, or else, surely, a benefit so precious you would not slight! Surely a plan of mercy so adapted to your condition you could not have the impertinence to reject! Condemned already because he has not believed on the name of the only begotten Son of God. Solemn words! Hear them and tremble!   
From the verses following the text we gather that you Unbelievers go on to give further evidence against yourselves, for every man who rejects Christ, the true Light, always goes on to reject other forms of the Light of Gods Word, Gods Spirit, and his conscience. He loves darkness rather than light, and comes not to the Light lest his deeds should be reproved. You quench the Spirit, I know you do, if you reject the Savior. You turn a deaf ear to your conscience, you do violence to your own judgment. The Truth of God you do not wish to learn. It is not possible that you can be a candid seeker after light if you refuse to receive Him who is Truths central Sun.   
Your further rejection of Light is confirmatory evidence that you are condemned already though your not believing is, in itself, evidence enough. And now solemnly, and in the name of Him that lives, and was dead, and is alive forevermore, speaking for that Christ who, though once He was slain, now sits at the right hand of God, I ask those who are under this second character to listen to these simple but weighty words of admonition. Consider, I pray you, O Unbeliever, that the condemnation which is pronounced upon you already is no matter of form. Our judges sometimes read out sentences of death upon a certain order of criminals. And the sentence is recorded though it is never intended that the sentence shall be executed.   
But from Gods bar there never proceeds a sentence that is meant needlessly to alarm. You are condemned already, and as surely as you live, and as surely as God lives, He will not let His Word remain a dead letter. That sentence shall be no idle threat! In your proper person you shall be made to know what the power of His wrath is. Who knows the power of your anger? says the Psalmist. They only know it who feel it, and you will feel it before long, for the sentence will assuredly be fulfilled.   
The Lord has power at this or any moment to fulfill His sentence. What power have you to resist it? Who is there that can help you to withstand Him? You are utterly in His hands, you cannot escape from His prison. If you climbed up to Heaven He is there. If you dove to Hell He is there. The whole universe is but one great prison for an enemy of God. You cannot escape Himneither can you resist Him. If your bones were granite and your heart were steel, His fires would melt down your spirit. Against Him you can no more stand than the chaff against the fire or the dust against the whirlwind. O that you would feel this and desist from your insane rebellion!   
Remember, there is no promise given to you that He will not execute the sentence of His wrath this very day. You have no warrant either from His Word or from His angels to assure you that God has suspended the sentence even for the next hour. You are living by His forbearance, spared by the Divine Sovereignty. Some rave against Sovereignty, but in this case it is not Justice that spares you, it is the mere will of God that for awhile keeps you out of Hell. You tell me that nothing endangers your life at this momenthow do you know that?   
The arrows of death often fly imperceptibly. I have stood in congregations preaching on two occasions when the unseen darts of death struck one of my hearers, so that one died on each occasion while listening to the Word of the Gospel. God needs no miracle to put His sentence into execution at this moment. He need not disturb the natural order of affairs for you to die instantly. And if He so willed it, your souls destruction would, without the slightest effort on His part, take place at this very moment, even where you are.   
Remember with deep concern that God is angry with you right now. This statement is no invention of mineit is written by the pen of Inspiration that, God is angry with the wicked every day. If he turns not He will whet His sword. He has bent His bow, and made it ready. God is more angry with some of you than He is with some in Hell. Are you startled by the assertion? It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the Day of Judgment than for you. The sins you have already committed are greater than those of Sodom and Gomorrah, and the anger is in proportion to the guilt.   
An angry God holds you over the gulf of Hell. Justice demands that you fall into itand it is nothing but His merciful will that keeps you out of it. He has but to will it and you who are condemned already would be forever where the worm dies not and the fire is not quenched, before next time the clock shall tick.   
Up to this time, let me remind you, you have done nothing to appease the Divine wrath. You have gone on sinning. Or if you tell me you have reformed, that you have thought of these things, that you have prayeddo you think that such things will remove the Divine wrath? The Lord has told you that the only way of salvation is to believe in Jesus, but you try to find another. Do you think that such conduct will please Him, that such a procedure will make Him less angry with you? You insult His Son when you suppose that you can save yourself by your tears and prayerswill this turn away the Lords anger?

When you imagine that your Church attendance and Chapel attendance will save you, you set a low estimate upon what Jesus did. You do despite to the Cross as long as you remain Unbelievers. You say, We are doing what we can. You are doing nothing, I tell you, that can appease the anger of God! You are rather, by these very actions of yours, which you think to be good, setting up in opposition to Him an Antichrist upon which He will look with abhorrence. He says He will save by Christ, and no way else. And so long as you seek another way, you, as it were, spit into the very face of the Only Begotten by the insolence of your selfrighteousness.   
Meanwhile, let me remind you that Gods wrath, though it comes not on you yet, is like a stream that is dammed up. Every moment it gathers forceif it bursts not the dykeyet every hour is swelling. Each day and each moment of each day in which you remain an Unbeliever, you are treasuring up wrath against the Day of Wrath when the measure of your iniquity is full. How earnestly would I persuade you to escape from condemnation! If you dream that to be condemned of God is a trifle, undeceive your souls, for those who have passed where the sentence is executed, could they come back to you, need not tell the tale of woe, the very sight of them would convince you that to be lost is an awful thing!   
On their heads must fall the wrath of God, who, by softening down the punishment, become the means of hardening sinners in their sins. It is not within the power of thought to conceive what Gods wrath is. No language, even though it should make both ears tingle, can ever fully express it. I am not one of those who would so delude your poor souls, O Unbelievers, as to make you think it a light thing to fall into the hands of the living God.   
O turn, turn, turn! Why will you die? Why will you reject Him whom you have such reasons to receive? Concerning whom His very Person is the best argument for love? The Christ of God must be worthy of our hearts affectionsHis very errand on earth, as it seems to me, would, if we were not mad, ensure our confidence. For He came to SAVE, to PARDON, to pass by the sin of the past! Oh, why do you stand out against Him, and in this way pull down upon your heads the wrath of an angry God?   
Let me point out to you the way to escape. The only way of escape for any man or woman here is to believe in Jesus Christ. I am praying about it, says one. My text says nothing of the sort. I will think of it. Think of it? You will think yourself into Hell before long! Immediate faith is what I, as Gods ambassador, demand of you in the name of the Christ of God immediate, instantaneous faith in Jesus! Behold the emblem of the Gospel minister and of his message! Moses lifted up the bronze serpent in the wilderness upon the great central standard in the very midst of the camp where men were dying all around him. They are bitten with the serpent, and what has Moses to declare to them as a remedy? He bids them look and live!  
Some of them will think of it, some of them will consider it, others of them will pray about it. But he has no commission to console any of thesehis one command is an immediate lookhe has no promise to those who will not look. Even thus is Jesus lifted up among you. There is life in a look, life now, life at this moment. I cannot guarantee you that the serpents bite shall not be your eternal ruin if you linger for a single hour. The Prophets one word is, Look now. Today, God in mercy sends to everyone in this house this messageThe times of your ignorance God winked at, but now commands all men everywhere to repent. He sends His Gospel message, Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved.   
That message I cannot be certain will ever come to you again. Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation. Every moment you do not believe, you are sinning against God by that unbelief. I cannot, therefore, tolerate that you should wait a moment. Jesus is God! He became Man! He died! He lives and bids you trust Himpromising that you shall live. Trust Him now, then! He is worthy of your confidence. Sin not against Him. Sin not against your own souls by rejecting Him. Remember what it was which Moses lifted upit was a serpentthe image of that same serpent which bit them.   
Were they healed by looking to that which poisoned them? Assuredly they were. What is that which has poisoned you, Sinner? It is the curse of sin. What is that which I hold up today in the Gospel? It is Christ made a curse for us! He takes upon Himself our sin! Though in Him was no sin, yet He was made sin for usand if you trust Him to be the sin-offering for you, to suffer for you, to bleed for youand so trust in Him as to take Him from now on as your standard, resolving to follow the uplifted Crucified One throughout life, even until He brings you to God Himself in Heaven, you are NOT condemned!  
But if Jesus is lifted up and you refuse to believe, on your heads is your guilt, I say, with trembling solemnity, on your own heads is your guilt! Those words of mine, O Unbelievers, will be swift witnesses against you at the Last Great Day. As truly as ever Christ came to Jerusalem, so truly does He come to you, this morning, in the preaching of the Word. I am a poor feeble man, but I speak to you as best I can. Nevertheless, if you refuse my word it is not me you reject, that were nothingyou reject the Gospel which I preach to you. In the name of Him that made Heaven and earth, that made you, and holds you in life, against whom you have sinned, these terms of mercy are presented to youwill you have them?   
This Grace is brought home to you, and I am bid to press it upon you, even as the Word says, to compel them to come in. If you reject the only begotten Son of God there must still abide against you this solemn sentence, He that believes not is condemned already, because he has not believed. Did I hear you say, I hope I shall believe. Sir, I have nothing to do with that, and I have no hope for you. I hope I shall repent one day. I despair of you while you talk so. It is TODAY that God separates this congregation into the two parts, the Believer and the Unbeliever.   
Today He blesses the Believer and testifies that he is not condemned! Today He curses the Unbeliever and tells him he is condemned already. My business is not with tomorrows, nor can I promise that the white flag of mercy will be hung out tomorrow. Today the Cross is the banner of Grace. Look to it and live! It is the ladder which reaches to Heaven. The crucified Savior is the gate of salvation. O that you would receive Him! May God grant you may, and He shall be glorified by you in this life and in the world to come. God bless you. Amen.

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CHRISTS TESTIMONY RECEIVED   
NO. 2158

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, AUGUST 10, 1890, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**He that has received His testimony has set to his seal that God is true. John 3:33.**

IN opening this discourse I would call your attention to the different statistics given by Johns disciples and by John himself. In the 26th verse, the disciples say, All men come to Himthat is their judgment of how the ministry of Jesus was succeeding. John, in the 32nd verse, said, And no man receives His testimony. If we view them as both correct, then the disciples looked at outward appearances and in their view the cause of Jesus seemed to be prospering to an overwhelming degreeAll men come to Him. But John looked below the surface, at the true spiritual results and his verdict was, And no man receives His testimony.

Be very doubtful of statisticsthey depend very much upon the person compiling them. Some, with sanguine spirit, say everything that is delightful and encouraging. Others, with more serious and with, perhaps, more severe judgment, say much that is depressing. I am inclined to take both these opinions with a grain of salt. Each one was intended for truth, but neither of them was exact. We often hear persons say that there are crowds attending such a ministry, the people block up the gangways, they fill every seat and the preacher is very useful for all men come to him. This may be true and yet there may be few conversions and little spiritual results so that another may as truly say, No man receives his testimony.

Ah, dear Friends, we can never be satisfied with a numerous congregationwe want souls to receive the testimony of Christ! Even though we may thank God that all sorts and conditions of men lend willing ears to our teaching, yet only one note sounds the knell of our joy! If we hear it said, No man receives His testimony, we are sad at heart. Forgetting what the disciples reported, let us now look at what John said, No man receives His testimony. He did not mean, literally, that no one received the Truth of God, for his next word was, He that has received His testimony. He meant that comparatively none received it. Compared with the crowds who came to Him, compared with the nation of Israel, compared with the human race, those who received Christs testimony were so few that his sadness made him call them none.

John, though he went a little below the mark, was not far from the truth when he said, No man receives His testimony. In these profound and wordy days, this is called the pessimist view of things. However, if it were not precisely the truth, it was mournfully near it. Today, Christ is preached and many will come to hear about Him but, alas, few receive the

Gospel into their hearts! Go through these crowded streets and mark how few receive the sacred testimony! Go into our provincial towns and country villages and note how few receive the Truth as it is in Jesus. When you look at the denominational rolls at the end of the year, what small additions have been made! I think one section of the Church reports one addition for the year. If any community reports as high as three or four per cent, people think wonders are accomplished!

The world can never be converted at the rate at which we are now going, for the increase of population is greater than the increase of the Churches. We are relatively further back than we were. There are more Christians, but there are fewer Christians in proportion to the population! There is much reason for crying earnestly to God to work more mightily upon the hearts of men. How glad was John to think that some had received Christs testimony! How hungry he was that there should be more! In what earnest tones does he set forth his Lords claims in the verses around our text! He would have men go beyond himself and find Christ and receive His testimony. This is how the case stands. Men had wandered far from God. God desired that men should come back to Him and therefore He sent a witness to men to tell them of His kindly feelings towards them and to show in His own Person, teaching, life and death how really and truly God desired that men should be at peace with Him.

The only-begotten Son was born into our world and took our Nature, that He might be a witness to the people of the Character of God towards us, that we, knowing how God felt, might be led to cry, Come, and let us return unto the Lord. He would have us touched with tender relentings when we discover the greatness of the love and mercy of God towards us by seeing Him seeking and saving the lost in the Person of His onlybegotten Son. Of that subject I am going to speak this morning, keeping as closely as I can to the text and crying to the Holy Spirit for aid.

First, observe the Testifier carefully. Look at Him and see who it is that has come to reveal the Father unto us. Secondly, hearken to His testimony. What is it? Know it and believe it. Thirdly, note the rejecters No man receives His testimony. How sad is the fact! Then, coming closer, still, to the text, commune with those who do receive His Heaven-given testimony. Of these it is said that they have set to their seal that God is true.

I. First, let us OBSERVE THE TESTIFIER. Jesus, our Lord, as a Witness, is so wrapped up with the testimony which He bears, that you have to know Him before you can understand His witnessin fact, to receive Him is the same thing as to receive His testimony! If we have received Christ as what He is, we have received the testimony which He came to bear. Who is this Testifier? This Witness? We answer that, according to the context, it is He that comes from above. To save us there has not come to us a man whose origin was at his birth, but One who existed long before and descended from above! It is true that Jesus was born at Bethlehem, but it is equally true that He had a preexistence from before all worlds! The Word was from the beginning with Godwithout Him was not anything made that was made.

He was God as truly before He became Man as ever He was afterwards. He that has come to save us has, in the highest sense, come from above. Let this kindle hope in the sinners mind and let it draw forth faith in the Divine Ambassador. One has come from the highest heavens to lift those up, who, apart from Him must have sunk into the lowest Hell. Nearly 1,900 years have passed since He came and trod the roughest ways of this world and lived, sorrowed and suffered here below. From the hills of Heaven He came to this land of sin that He might lift us up and give us a Divine inheritance.

He was one of the very highest Character . ObserveHe that comes from above is above all: he that is of the earth is earthly and speaks of the earth: He that comes from Heaven is above all. All other messengers that God has sent have had much earthliness about them and, assuredly, we who are now His messengers have much of it. We have this treasure in earthen vessels, but there was nothing in our Lord Jesus that could debase the Messenger. He was pure, perfect, heavenlyand though He bore our Nature, yet He shared not our sinfulness. And though He spoke in our tongue and brought down the mysteries of Heaven to our comprehension, yet still He spoke them in a heavenly stylea style to which a mere man could never have reached!

Moses wrote as a man and the Spirit of God only revealed Truth measurably by him. But our Lord Jesus Christ was full of Grace and Truth and He spoke with a Manhood united to Godhead, having the Spirit without measure. In all Jesus said there was a fullness, a power, a reality which mere men were not capable of containing. He was above all and others derived their authority from Him, for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. Will you not listen to one so supreme? God, who at sundry times and in different manners spoke in time past unto the fathers by the Prophets, has in these last days spoken unto us by His Son. Surely it shall go ill with him that refuses such a Messenger!

As He was above all in Character, so was He above all in rank. None can be compared with Him for dignitythe angels may be peers of the heavenly realm, but He is the Crown Prince of the blood-royal of eternity! He is God over all, before whom cherubim and seraphim veil their faces. He deigned to become subject to parents, but He was, none the less, above allLord, Ruler, Head over all things! Though He stooped to seek and save the lost, He was still higher than the highest! Though He laid His Glory by, that He might wash His disciples feetyes, and wash our sins away in His own bloodyet He was still Master and Lord. See that you refuse not Him that speaks. For if they escaped not who refused him that spoke on earth, much more shall not we escape if we turn away from Him that speaks from Heaven.

I cannot too highly speak of the Glory and honor and majesty which belong to our Emmanuel! If I had the tongue of men and of angels I could not sufficiently extol Him. He is the First-Born of every creature, yes, the Creator Himself! King of kings and Lord of lords is He and it is through so glorious a Person as this that God has sent to us a message of peace. Our ambassador is of a rank above all ranks that the Lord may show how

highly He esteems His chosen of the race of man. We are greatly honored by dealing with so august a Messenger. Come, you willing hearts, and gladly receive the testimony of Him who is above all!

We are further told by John a very important fact which ought to weigh with every thoughtful mind. The testimony of Jesus is Personal testimony what He has seen and heard, that He testifies. The Prophets received their prophecies from the Holy Spirit who spoke to them of things which they had not seen. Sometimes they did not even understand what they wrote. They did not see those things of which they wrote for it is written that many Prophets and kings have desired to see those things, but have not seen them. These things even angels desired to look into, but they were too mysterious for them. Our Lord Jesus Christ knows heavenly things of His own proper knowledge, for He has ever dwelt in the bosom of the Father. He knows the mind of God, for He is God. The secret intent and purpose of the Most High God are with His Son Jesus.

All that He reveals to men of the mercy of God He has Himself seen and heard. He was an eye and ear witness of the mind and will of Jehovah. Christs teaching is not second-handNo man knows the Father, save the Son. Who taught Him wisdom? From where has this Man knowledge? From Himself, from His own eternal experienceas dwelling with God before all worlds He speaks to us. Do you want a better Messenger, my Hearers? How can the Lord serve you better than by sending One who knows what He declaresknows it by having heard and seen and handled it? With the God who made the heavens and fashioned the earth He ever dwelt, as One brought up with Him and He was daily His delight. The Lord God has sent as Ambassador to you One whom He possessed in the beginning of His way, before His works of old. What more can you desire?

And then, further, the Baptist goes on to tell us that the testimony of Jesus is identical with the Words of God Himself. He that has received His testimony has set to his seal that Christ is true. Do you think I am reading amiss? The Scripture says, that God is true. The testimony of Jesus and the testimony of God are oneand when you believe Christ Jesus, you believe God! Further on we read, for He whom God has sent speaks the Words of God: for God gives not the Spirit by measure unto Him. If you deny what Christ says, you make God a liar, for you have not believed His testimony concerning His Son. So fully is the witness of Jesus backed up and supported by the Words of Godso fully does Jesus represent the purpose and the mind of the Fatherthat to doubt Him is to doubt the Eternal God!

Now, if you have a plan of salvation put before you by Gods Messengerwhich is most assuredly the very mind of God Himselfwill you reject it? Will you fly in the face of God by rejecting salvation which comes stamped in every letter of it with Divine authority? I pray you, my Hearers, if you have not yet believed in Jesus, remain no longer in unbelief of Him, for it is unbelief of the Lord God, unbelief of the Triune Jehovah who made you and who keeps the breath in your nostrils! See what a Messenger we have, then, who speaks not His own words, but the words of Him that sent Him. Those words are full of Grace and Truth for they are full of God.

Read a little further on, in the next verse and you will see that this Messenger whom God has sent is One in high esteem with God. The Father loves the Son. To show His great love of Him, He has given all things into His hands. You have not, now, to deal with God out of Christ, for all things are now put under the mediatorial government of the Son of God. Christ Jesus, the Mediator between God and men, has all things in His powerthe government is upon His shoulder. It has pleased the Father to put all things under the Man Christ Jesus

*Life, death, and Hell,   
And worlds unknown   
Hung on His sacred will.*

Jesus is absolute Master of all things. Angels fly and devils tremble at His nod and all the wheels of Providence revolve in perfect order according to His will. If you listen to His testimony of Grace, remember that He has all power to back it up and make it true to you. He is able to save to the uttermost. All power is given unto Him in Heaven and in earth. God has put all things under His feetand He who is thus the Lord of Allhas come to treat with you concerning reconciliation. Turn not on your heels, you busy men! Say not that you have no time to attend to Him! You must attend to One whose kingdom rules over all. Dare you treat Him with indifference? Will not the awe of His majesty constrain you to hearken to His voice?

Once more only. Concerning this Testifier, we learn that He is the Lord and Giver of life and if we will but accept His testimony we shall live thereby. He has life in Himself and He has power to quicken whomever He will. He that believes on the Son has everlasting life. And to make the matter still more pressing, the word of warning is added, He that believes not the Son shall not see life but the wrath of God abides on him. God can never be pleased with a person who gives the lie to His own Son. He has, in boundless pity, sent His Son, His only-begotten Son, to live and die that men might be savedhow shall He endure to see Him rejected? God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

And if this Son of His love is refused. If the guilty insult the Father by rejecting the Son, what can remain but righteous wrath? If a deed of mercy, unspeakable, immeasurable, comes to be despised by you, then the anger must abide upon you. There is no hope for those who refuse Jesus. Flatter not yourselves that there is another way of escape, in some future state, for if there could have been another way, God would not have given up His Son to shame, suffering and death! Faith in Jesus is the only door of hope! Shut that upon yourselves and you shut yourselves in utter darkness, in helpless, hopeless misery! What can help you if the wrath of God abides on you? This must mean a misery unspeakable, without the slightest alleviation.   
O my dear Hearers, I wish I had the power to set forth my Lord as the

Witness! As I cannot do this as I would, I commend to you the passage of Scripture itself. The sentences are short, sharp, crisp, clearand they show you who He is whom God has sent on the great errand of Divine love. Refuse Him not, I implore you!

II. Secondly, HEARKEN TO HIS TESTIMONY. What is the testimony of Jesus? What has the Christ to tell us concerning God? I will only use the three chapters which precede my text and I shall gather enough from them to give a fair outline of what Jesus tells us of the Father and His willingness to forgive and save. First, he tells us, God has provided an Atonement. Look at the 29th verse of the first chapter, where John says, Behold the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world. The very fact that the Son of God came here as Man to suffer for our sin proves that God has provided a great and all-sufficient Sacrifice.

God could not deal with a sinful worldit was too defiled with sin for Him to look upon itbut that sin of the world which prevented a holy God from dealing with a condemned race has been taken away by Jesus, so that now the Lord can visit man and favor him with the Gospel of peace and the work of salvation. This was necessary before a single individual could be saved. God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself. The death of Jesus has enabled God to commune with men. Oh, hear this! There is a Sacrifice for sin! My Hearers, believe it and make much if it. The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin! Jesus has died and in that death He has finished transgression, made an end of sin, and brought in everlasting righteousness. All Believers are forgiven through His death. God is willing that you, believing in His dear Son, should be so forgiven as to be washed whiter than snow. That is Christs testimony to you and he that receives it has set to his seal that God is true.

The next testimony of Jesus is that the Lord has made a way of access between man and God. Look at the 51st verse of the first chapter. He said to Nathanael, Verily, verily, I say unto you, hereafter you shall see Heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man. Jacobs ladder is not now before you as a dream, but as a reality. The Son of Man, the Incarnate God, God in Christ Jesus, is the way by which there can be commerce between man and God. We can go up to God and the angels of God, loaded with blessings, can come down to men. The gulf is bridgeda glorious stairway has been made across the dread abyss which separated guilty man from his offended God. Jesus Christ Himself, in His own Person, is that ladder and He bears witness thereof to you. Sin is put away and distance is removed.

What is the next part of His testimony? You will find it in the third chapterGod is only to be approached in a spiritual way. To come to God, you must be born again. That which is born of flesh is flesh and cannot commune with God, who is a Spirit. That which is born of the Spirit is spirit and can commune with the holy God and understand spiritual things. My Hearers, there is no coming to God by a priest of human consecration! There is no coming by outward ritual, form, or ceremonyGod is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth. You must have a spiritual Nature, that the Spirit of God may commune with you. Only by a spiritual Nature can you have communion with the great Invisible.

Your spirit can be in fellowship with God, the mighty Spirit, but what can you do till a spirit is created in you? This was our Lords testimony to Nathanael and I suppose that, by some means, John the Baptist had heard of it. But whether he had or had not does not matter to my purpose at this timeit is certainly a part of the testimony of Jesus. Furthermore, our Lord bore testimony to the great fact that God gives salvation to all Believers in Jesus and to make that very plain, He puts it thusAs Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up: that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.

You know the type. Bitten by the fiery serpents, the people looked to the bronze serpent and they were healed. Now, bitten by sin, you look to Him who was made sin for us and, looking to Him, your guilt passes away and the poison of your sinfulness meets its antidote. We look to Jesus and live! Our Lord bore witness to this with His own lips and then by the lips of His Apostles. He still cries, Look unto Me, and be you saved, all the ends of the earth. Yes, there is life in a look at the Crucified One! Believing is receiving. Accept Christ, whom God sends as a Messenger to you and in accepting Him you shall be saved.

Jesus also testified plainly that from all who believe in Him the Lord has removed condemnation. It is written, He that believes on Him is not condemned. He that believes is justified and, being justified by faith, we have peace with God. Guilty and condemned as you may be at this hour, if you accept the Son of God to stand for you, you are not condemned! There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus. Though your sins are as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow. Though by nature robed in rags, the Lord says, Take away the filthy garments from him. Your glorious challenge is, who shall lay anything to the charge of Gods elect? Who is he that condemns? It is Christ that died.

Oh, this message of mercy from Jesus, is it not full and blessed? If I had the time I should like to have enlarged much upon the testimony of God in Christ Jesus, but here it means just this, that you, being guilty and condemned, can be justly forgiven through the sacrifice of Jesus! You may be beloved of God because of His love to Jesus. You may be delivered from all the evil results of sin because of the death of the Well-Beloved. You can be saved! Yes, if you now believe in Christ Jesus, you are saved. All heavenly privileges are yours nowwhere you now sitand shall be yours world without end. Glory be to God!

II. With great heaviness we have now to NOTICE THE REJECTERS No man receives His testimony. You would have thought that the moment this testimony was delivered to the world every man would have hastened to hear it and would have believed it with joyful readiness! But alas, the very reverse happened! If I went to fish with such bait as this, I

should expect to have a sea full of fish rushing towards me, but it was not so. Men, as a rule, will not accept this heavenly salvationno man will receive it except moved by God the Holy Spirit. Why is this? In the case of many, it is because they are earthly and the message and the messenger are too heavenly for them.

They are earth-bound and earth-buried. They are so busyhow can they consider the grand fact that God has come down to save men? They will think of that great spiritual Truth of God one of these days when they have made sufficient money and can retirewhen they have nothing better to do than to attend to the claims of God. God is second-rate, no, seventh-rate in their esteem! They are really so occupied and their thoughts are so taken up with daily cares of this life that Gods Grace must wait their convenience. I fear they will never be startled into thought until it is said of each one of them, In Hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments. The rich man had kept his eyes downward upon his sumptuous fare and had never looked up to heavenly thingsbut the realities of eternity have awakened him. O God, grant that none of my hearers may keep their eyes down until they lift them up in Hell!

Some rejecters of the Word of our Lord, I have no doubt, were too learned to believe in anything so simple as the statement that God was among them in human form to live and die for men. Though this is, in very truth, the most sublime of all mysteries, yet human pride counts it a small matter. It is to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness. Men know so much that they will not know God! I am struck every day, when reviewing books of the present period, with how wise fools are nowadays. Pardon me. I will put it differently and sayhow foolish the wise are nowadays. I mean the same thing whichever way I say it. They get a hold of the tail of a dead thing and they shout like men that find great spoil! Here is a great discoverya discovery of nothing!

At one time they find Deuteronomy to be a fraud. Now there are two Isaiahs. Then the book of Ruth was written far down in the centuries after the exile. Jonah is a myth. Esther is a romance and so forth. Their criticisms are all false, as others of the same breed soon show. They are always finding some dead oat or other and setting it out on the table where the childrens bread ought to be. What mighty discoveries of mans nests we have lived to see! Men of this nature will not receive the witness of Jesusit is a pity that they shouldHe is honored by their rejection. You can scarcely read a book nowadays but you come across a bit of rotten stuff, the fondly-cherished nonsense of some writer who has a taste for that which is far gone in decay. They will not believe God. How can they while they receive honor one of another, as learned critics?

It is today as it was in our Lords time, not many wise men after the flesh are called. Still have we to ask, Where are the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? Those who glory in fleshly wisdom cannot receive the testimony of the carpenters Sona testimony so plain that the poor and illiterate can understand it and enter into eternal life! I hope this will not be the case with any of the more cultured among you. Be willing to take Christs yoke upon you and learn of Him.

Certain people did not receive the testimony of Jesus because they were too proud. Pedigree and privilege kept many away. Read this verse in the first chapterHe came unto His own and His own received Him not. Why? Because they thought they were Gods own already! Did they not wear a text of Scripture between their eyes? Had they not broad fringes of blue on their dress? Did they not tithe mint, anise, cumin and other pennyworths of herbs? Did they not fast thrice in the week and so on? What did they want with Jesus? Those who professed to belong to God and cried, The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are we, were too good to accept a Saviortoo near to Heaven to need a Messenger from God.

But the real reason for rejecting the testimony of Jesus was this they were too evil to receive it. Read verse 19Light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For everyone that does evil hates the light, neither comes to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. Ah, my unbelieving Hearers, if you were better men you would more readily accept the light of Christ! If men were not such sinners as they are, they would come to Him to learn the way of the Lord. Alas, the depth of mans guilt has hardened his heart and darkened his perceptionsand made him prefer darkness to light! Men do not see that they need deliverancethey hear music in the rattle of their chairs. May the Spirit of God come and convict men of sinand when they are once convicted of it and foresee their doom, they will change their minds towards the Savior and be willing to hear the message of Divine Grace!

May God, of His boundless Grace, save every man and woman and child to whom this sermon shall come! [And may He be as merciful to those who read this in the 21ST Century!] I am greatly pleased to see so many of you present on such a wet and stormy day as thisI hope the Lord means to bless you now that you are here. I remember going to the house of God one morning when there were only a few persons able to reach the place, there being a heavy snowstorm at the time. That morning I found the Savior by looking to Him upon the Cross and now I look with great interest upon services which are held in rough weather. I hope that those who have had the determination to come are more than common hearersI trust that they have hearts that the Lord God has touched.

I hope you have come here with a desire to find salvation and if so, may you find it in the Lord Jesus at once! O Lord, grant it, I beseech You! All the while, remember, these rejecters of Christ were under the wrath of God. What a terrible condition! I will not dwell upon the awful fact, but let a man only know the meaning of these words and he will tremble in his seatHe that believes not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abides on him. O Souls, how can you bear it?

IV. We will conclude by speaking upon the fourth point. Let US COM

MUNE WITH THOSE WHO RECEIVE CHRISTS TESTIMONY. The text says, He that has received His testimony has set to his seal that God is true. To receive is, in still plainer Saxon, to take in. There is here the

idea of retaining as well as receiving. We take in the testimony of Jesus that it may abide in us. We hear what Jesus says and we answer to it, Lord, I believe. Our word is, Master, say on. Whatever You say, I believe. We take in all that Jesus witnesses and we hold to it. We believe and we keep on believing. We come to Jesus and we are always coming to Him.

Some people begin with believing in Jesus and then turn aside to believe in their own feelings, but you must not do soyou must believe and keep right on believing. The just shall live by faith. We receive Christ and keep on receiving Him. He that receives His testimony. Do you refuse anything to which Jesus witnesses? This is evil! Receive His testimony with unquestioning faith. Some men will believe any monstrous assertion of scientists, or spiritualists, or rationalistsbut they cannot believe the plain witness of the Lard Jesus Christ! The man who takes in the teaching of Jesus and keeps to it, he is the blessed man!

He takes in the testimony of Jesus for himself and receives it as his own possession. That Jesus saves from sin is true. That He saves me from sin is a more personal truth! Christ will save those who believe. This is good. But, I believe and therefore I am saved, is better. Personal appropriation is the best receiving! Accept the Truth of Jesus for your own soulseize it by the grip of a personal faith and then you have it! You have seen a boy with a burning-glasshe concentrates all the rays of the sun so as to produce a fire. Even so, by faith, concentrate the testimony of Jesus upon your own case and you will soon feel a wonderful power working in your soul! He that receives the testimony of Jesus makes it his own, feeds on it and is saved thereby.

Receivers of Christs testimony allow nothing to make them doubt what He has said. When the Believer is down in the dumps and is passing through a dark time, he says, What Jesus has said is true for all this. He has told me that if I believe in Him I have eternal life and I have it, however gloomy things may appear. I have a sluggish liver and it makes me feel low and miserable, but I have eternal life! My wife is sick to death and I have buried child after child and lost friend after friendbut I have eternal life! Gods waves and billows go over me, but I have eternal life, for He says it and I cannot doubt Him. It is a grand thing to have your confidence outside yourself! It is glorious to have it all in Christ!

As long as you keep your confidence in your own self it will be a very poor stay for you. There is a ship at sea and a foolish landsman feels very confident of the safety of the vessel because they have a big anchor on board. My dear Man, what is the good of that anchor while it is on board? It would rather tend to sink the ship by its weight than to be of service to it. Oh, he says, but it is one of the best Admiralty anchors and we are safe while that is on board!

O simple Soul, an anchor is of no use while you can see it! Drop it down into the deep sea, out of sight, and then it will be of service. Hear the chain run out! Now the anchor is far down. It grips and holds the vessel. You must fix your confidence within the veil. Your anchorage of hope must be where mortal eyes can never see. Our rest lies in simply believing the Word of the Lord Jesus. I believe it though I do not feel it. I believe it though I cannot argue the matter out logically. I believe it because God says it to me through His great Witness, the Lord Jesus Christ. The foregoing will enable you to see the truth of the statement, He that has received His testimony has set to his seal that God is true.

In the olden time men did not often write their names because they could not write at all! Even kings set their seals because they could not give a signature. To this day, how often does it happen to me, as a trustee to a chapel or a school, to have a paper laid before me and I not only sign my name, but I put my finger on that red wafer which represents my seal and I say, This is my act and deed? When you believe in Jesus you have set your seal to the testimony of Jesus, which is the Revelation of the Lord. You have certified that you believe in God as true. What does that mean? It means not only that He has kept His promise as made to the fathers in the Old Testament and will keep it in Christ Jesus, but it means, also, that to you God is real. By faith in Jesus you have come to know the reality of God.

Before, you talked about an unknown God, but now you know Him and declare your faith in His reality and fidelity. Now you perceive substance and not shadow. Now you see mystery, but not myth. God is Truth and all that Jesus said of Him is Truth. He says, He that believes on the Son has everlasting life, and you find that God is true, for you live in newness of life! Jesus says, He that believes on Him is not condemned, and you know it is so, for you enjoy a sense of pardoned sin! You have sealed the testimony of God by resting your own soul upon it. It seems a very joyful thing to me that I should be allowed to be a witness to the Truth of God. I feel honored by being allowed to subscribe my name to the testimony of Jesus.

Can you not do the same? Remember what it involves. You doubting Christians, what are you doing? You have already put your hand and seal to the promise of God and are you going to contradict your own signature and seal? When you first believed in Jesus you set to your seal that God is true. And now, because you have met with a little trouble, are you going to retract your witness? Do you fear that the Lord will not help you and save you? What are we to understand by that seal of yours? Is it, after all, untrue, or unreal? You know better! Shame on you for contradicting yourself! Remember, when you make God a liar you make yourself a liar, for you have already set your hand and seal to it that God is trueand seals and handwritings remain. You accepted the real Savior for your real sin and you believed in the real death of Christ for youare you going to run back? Will you doubt your Lord after this?

God grant you may not, but, on the contrary, may you go on confirming the testimony of Jesus and setting it to your seal again and again that God is true! Give glory to God believing that what He has promised He is able also to perform. Never stagger at the promise through unbelief. All

the promises of God are yes and amen in Christ Jesus to the glory of God by uswhy, we set to our seal that God is true!

I have done, when I have said just this. Avoid, dear Hearers, anxiously, the double sin of unbelief. If you do not believe Jesus, you do not believe God. If you reject His Son, you reject Him. If you give the lie to the teaching of Christ, you give the lie to God. Flee from this deadly sin! Note well the simple matter upon which eternal life depends. He that believes on the Son has everlasting life. He has it now. It is in his heart now and it is not for a time, for it is everlasting life. Note that as soon as a man believes God, he sets to his seal that God is true and then away flies all suspicion of his God!

Our sins are largely caused by our mistrust of God. You think that God denies you something that would be good for you and therefore you go and take it. You suspect God of being so cruel as to command you to do that which is to your injury and so you refuse to obey Him. Now if you believe that God is true, you will from now on give up what He bids you give up because you feel that it is well to do so. And you will act as He bids you because you are sure His command is wise and good. Between you and God there will be, from now on, a holy confidenceand what will that lead to? It will lead to holiness of life and earnest seeking to please God in whom you unreservedly believe.

You will love Him with all your heart and with all your soul, now that confidence is created. See what a change faith makes! Have you ever heard of a servant who believed hard things of her mistress? She thought her a tyrant and resolved that she would do nothing to please her. When she did her work, she did it very badly and thought it was quite good enough for such a creature as her mistress. But she heard something about her which entirely changed her opinion. Instead of thinking her a demon, she judged her to be little less than an angel! It might have seemed a small matter, but it was not so. She did her work zealously and gladly now that her suspicions were ended. Faith in her mistress affected her whole life.

So is it in spiritual things! Faith in Christ Jesus is the fountain of obedience, the ensign of a change of heart. God grant it to you all! Amen. **PORTION OF SCRIPTURES READ BEFORE SERMONJohn 3:13-36.** HYMNS FROM OUR OWN HYMN BOOK909, 249, 631. Adapted from The C.H. Spurgeon Collection, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307. Sermon #1012 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

THE UNBELIEVERS UNHAPPY CONDITION   
NO. 1012

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, SEPTEMBER 24, 1871, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**He that believes not the Son shall not see life.   
But the wrath of God abides on him.   
John 3:36.**

THIS is a part of a discourse by John the Baptist. We have not many sermons by that mighty preacher, but we have just sufficient to prove that he knew how to lay the axe at the root of the tree by preaching the Law of God most unflinchingly. And also that he knew how to declare the Gospel, for no one could have uttered sentences which more clearly contain the way of salvation than those in the text before us. Indeed, this third chapter of the Gospel according to the Evangelist John is notable among clear and plain Scripturesnotable for being yet clearer and more plain than almost any other.

John the Baptist was evidently a preacher who knew how to discriminatea point in which so many failhe separated between the precious and the vile, and therefore he was as Gods mouth to the people. He does not address them as all lost nor as all saved, but he shows the two classes. He keeps up the line of demarcation between him that fears God and him that fears Him not. He plainly declares the privileges of the Believer. He says he has even now eternal life. And with equal decision he testifies to the sad state of the unbelieverhe shall not see life. But the wrath of God abides on him.

John the Baptist might usefully instruct many professedly Christian preachers. Although he that is least in the kingdom of Heaven is greater than John the Baptist, and ought, therefore, more clearly to bear witness to the Truth, yet, there are many who muddle the Gospel, who teach philosophy, who preach a mingle-mangle which is neither Law nor Gospel. And these might well go to the school of this rough preacher of the wilderness, and learn from him how to cry, Behold the Lamb of God which takes away the sin of the world.

I desire this morning to take a leaf out of the Baptists lesson book. I would preach as he did the Gospel of the Lord Jesus, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear. It is my earnest desire to enjoy the delight of expounding to you the deep things of God. I feel a profound pleasure in opening up the blessings of the Covenant of Grace and bringing forth out of its treasury things new and old. I should be very happy to dwell upon the types of the Old Testament, and even to touch upon the prophecies of the New. But, while so many yet remain unsaved, my heart is never content except when I am preaching simply the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

My dear unconverted Hearers, when I see you brought to Christ I will then advance beyond the rudiments of the Gospel! Meanwhile, while Hell is gaping wide, and many of you will certainly help to fill it, I cannot turn aside from warning you. I dare not resist the sacred impulse which constrains me to preach over and over again to you the glad tidings of salvation. I shall, like John, continue laying the axe at the root of the trees and shall not go beyond crying, Repent, for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand. As he did, we shall now declare the sad estate of him who believes not the Son of God.

This morning, with the burden of the Lord upon us, we shall speak upon the words of the text. Our first point shall be a discovery of the guilty one, he that believes not the Son. Next, we shall consider his offense. It lies in not believing the Son. Thirdly, we shall lay bare the sinful causes which create this unbelief. And, fourthly we shall show the terrible result of not believing in the Sonhe shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him. May the Spirit help us in all.

I. To begin, then, who is THE GUILTY ONE? Who is the unhappy man spoken of here? Is he a person to be met with only once in a century? Must we search the crowds through and through to find an individual in this miserable plight? Ah, no. The persons who are here spoken of are common. They abound even in our holy assemblies. They are to be met with by thousands in our streets. Alas, alas, they form the vast majority of the worlds population! Jesus has come unto His own and His own have not received Him. The Jewish race remain unbelievingwhile the Gentiles, to whom He was to be a Lightprefer to sit in darkness and reject His brightness.

We shall not be talking, this morning, upon a recondite theme with only a remote relation to ourselves. There are many here of whom we shall be speaking, and we devoutly pray that the Word of God may come with power to their souls. The persons here spoken of are those who believe not the Son of God. Jesus Christ, out of infinite mercy, has come into the world, has taken upon Himself our nature, and in that nature has sufferedthe Just for the unjustto bring us to God. By reason of His sufferings, the Gospel message is now proclaimed to all men, and they are honestly assured that, whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life.

The unhappy persons in this text will not believe in Jesus Christthey reject Gods way of mercy. They hear the Gospel, but refuse obedience to its command. Let it not be imagined that these individuals are necessarily avowed skeptics, for many of them believe much of the revealed Truth of God. They believe the Bible to be the Word of God. They believe there is a God. They believe that Jesus Christ is come into the world as a Savior. They believe most of the doctrines which cluster around the Cross. Alas, they may do this, but yet the wrath of God abides on them if they believe not the Son of God!

It may surprise you to learn that many of these persons are very much interested in orthodoxy. They believe that they have discovered the Truth and they exceedingly value those discoveries, so that they frequently grow very warm in temper with those who differ from them. They have read much and they are masters of argument in the defense of what they consider to be sound doctrine. They cannot endure heresyand yet, sad is the fact that believing what they do, and knowing so muchthey have not believed the Son of God! They believe the doctrine of election, but they have not the faith of Gods elect. They swear by final perseverance, but persevere in unbelief. They confess all the five points of Calvinism but they have not come to the one most necessary point of looking unto Jesus that they may be saved.

They accept in creed the Truths of God that are assuredly believed among us, but they have not received that faithful saying, worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. At any rate, they have not received it personally and practically for their souls salvation. It must be admitted that not a few of these persons are blameless as to their morals. You could not, with close observation, find either dishonesty, falsehood, uncleanness, or malice in their outward life. They are not only free from these blots, but they manifest positive excellences. Much of their character is commendable. They frequently are courteous and compassionate, generous and gentle-minded.

Often times they are so amiable and admirable that, while looking upon them, we understand how our Lord, in a similar case, loved the young man who asked, what do I lack? The one thing necessary they are destitute of is they have not believed in Christ Jesus, and loath as the Savior was to see them perish, yet it cannot be helpedone doom is common to all who believe not. They shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on them.

In many cases these persons are, in addition to their morality, religious persons after a fashion. They would not absent themselves from the usual service of the place of worship. They are most careful to respect Sundays. They venerate the Book of God. They use a form of prayer, they join in the songs of the Sanctuary. They sit as Gods people sit, and stand as Gods people stand. But, alas, there is a worm in the center of that fair fruit they have missed the one essential thing, which, being omitted, brings certain ruinthey have not believed on the Son of God.

Ah, how far a man may go, and yet, for lack of this one thing, the wrath of God may still abide upon him! Beloved of parents who are hopeful of the conversion of their boy. Esteemed by Christians who cannot but admire his outward conversation, yet for all that, the young man may be under the frown of God, for God is angry with the wicked every day. The wrath of God abides on the man, whoever he may be, that has not believed in Jesus!

Now, if our text showed that the wrath of God was resting on the culprits in our jails, most persons would assent to the statement and none would wonder at it. If our text declared that the wrath of God abides upon persons who live in habitual unchastity and constant violation of all the laws of order and respectability-most men would say, Amen. But the text is aimed at another character. It is true that Gods wrath does rest upon open sinners. But, oh Sirs, this, too, is truethe wrath of God abides upon those who boast of their virtues but have not believed in Jesus, His Son!

They may dwell in palacesbut if they are not Believersthe wrath of God abides on them. They may sit in the senate house and enjoy the acclamations of the nationbut if they believe not on the Sonthe wrath of God abides on them. Their names may be enrolled in the peerage and they may possess countless wealthbut the wrath of God abides on themif they believe not on the Son of God. They may be habitual in their charities, and abundant in external acts of devotionbut if they have not accepted the appointed Savior, the Word of God bears witness thatthe wrath of God abides on them.

II. Now let us, with our hearts awakened by Gods Spirit, try to think upon THEIR OFFENSE. What is this peculiar sin which entails the wrath of God upon these people? It is that they have not believed the Son of God. What does that amount to? It amounts to this, first of all, that they refuse to accept the mercy of God. God made a Law, and His creatures were bound to respect and obey it. We rejected it, and turned aside from it. It was a great display of the hearts hatred, but it was not, in some respects, so thoroughly and intensely wicked a manifestation of enmity to God as when we reject the Gospel of Grace.

God has now presented not the Law, but the Gospel to us. He has saidMy Creatures, you have broken My Law. You have acted very vilely towards Me. I must punish your sin, else I were not God, and I cannot lay aside My justice. But I have devised a way by which, without any injury to any of My attributes, I can have mercy upon you. I am ready to forgive the past and to restore you to more than your lost position, so that you shall be My sons and my daughters. My only command to you is believe in My Son. If this command is obeyed, all the blessings of My new Covenant shall be yours. Trust Him and follow Him, for, behold, I give Him as a Leader and Commander to the people. Accept Him as making Atonement by His Substitution, and obey Him.

Now, to reject the Law of God shows an evil heart of unbelief. But who shall say what a depth of rebellion must dwell in that heart which refuses not only the yoke of God, but even the gift of God? The provision of a Savior for lost men is the free gift of God! By it all our wants are supplied, all our evils are removed, peace on earth is secured to us, and Glory forever with Godthe rejection of this gift cannot be a small sin! The All-Seeing One, when He beholds men spurning the supreme gift of His love, cannot but regard such rejection as the worst proof of the hatred of their hearts against Himself.

When the Holy Spirit comes to convict men of sin, the special sin which He brings to light is thus describedOf sin, because they believed not on Me. Not because the heathen were licentious in their habits, barbarians in their ways, and bloodthirsty in their spirit. NoOf sin, because they believe not on Me. Condemnation has come upon men, but what is the condemnation? That Light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than Light, because their deeds are evil. Remember, also, that expressive textHe that believes not is condemned already. And what is he condemned for! Because he has not believed in the name of the onlybegotten Son of God.

Let me remark, further, that in the rejection of Divine Mercy as presented in Christ, the unbeliever has displayed an intense venom against God, for observe how it is. He must either receive the mercy of God in Christ, or he must be condemnedthere is no other alternative. He must trust Christ whom God has set forth to be the Propitiation for sin, or else he must be driven from the Presence of God into eternal punishment. The unbeliever in effect says, I had sooner be damned than I would accept Gods mercy in Christ.

Can we conceive a grosser insult to the infinite compassion of the great Father? Suppose a man has injured another, grossly insulted himand that repeatedly. And yet the injured person, finding the man at last brought into a wretched and miserable state, goes to him and simply out of kindness to him, says, I freely forgive you all the wrong you ever did me, and I am ready to relieve your poverty, and to succor you in your distress. Suppose the other replies, No, I would sooner rot than take anything from you. Would not you have in such a resolve a clear proof of the intense enmity that existed in his heart?

And so when a man says, and every one of you unbelievers do practically say so, I would sooner lie forever in Hell than honor Christ by trusting Him, this is a very plain proof of your hatred of God and His Christ. Unbelievers hate God. Let me ask for what do you hate Him? He keeps the breath within your nostrils. He it is that gives you food and clothing, and sends fruitful seasons. For which of these good things do you hate Him? You hate Him because He is good. Ah, then, it must be because you, yourself, are eviland your heart very far removed from righteousness. May God grant that this great and crying sin may be clearly set before your eyes by the light of the Eternal Spirit! And may, by His Grace, you repent of it, and turn from your unbelief and live this day!

But yet further, the unbeliever touches God in a very tender place by his unbelief. No doubt it was to the great Maker a joyous thing to fashion this world, but there are no expressions of joy concerning it at all equal to the joy of God in the matter of human redemption. We would be guarded when we speak of Him, but as far as we can tell, the gift of His dear Son to men, and the whole scheme of redemption is the master work even of God Himself. He is infinite in POWER, and wisdom, and love. His ways are as high above our ways as the heavens are above the earth. But Scripture, I think, will warrant me in saying

*That in the Grace which rescued man   
His brightest form of Glory shines.   
Here on the Cross it is fairest writ,   
In precious blood and crimson lines.*

Now, the man who says, There is no God is a fool. But he who denies God the glory of redemption, in addition to his folly, has robbed the Lord of the choicest jewel of His regalia and aimed a deadly blow at the Divine honor. I may say of him who despises the great salvation, that, in despising Christ, he touches the apple of Gods eye. This is My Beloved Son, says God, hear Him. Out of Heaven He says it, and yet men stop their ears and say, We will not have Him. No, they wax wrath against the Cross and turn away from Gods salvation. Do you think that God will always bear this? The times of your ignorance He has winked at, but, now commands all men everywhere to repent.

Will you stand out against His love? His love that has been so inventive in ingenious plans by which to bless the sons of men? Shall His choicest work be utterly despised by you? If so, it is little wonder that it is written, The wrath of God abides on him. I must, still further, unveil this matter by saying that the unbeliever perpetrates an offense against every Person of the blessed Trinity. He may think that his not believing is a very small business, but, indeed, it is a barbed shaft shot against the Deity.

Take the Persons of the blessed Trinity, beginning with the Son of God who comes to us most nearly. It is to me the most surprising thing I ever heard of that, the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us. I do not wonder that in Hindustan the missionaries are often met with this remarkIt is too good to be true that God ever took upon Himself the nature of such a thing as man! Yet, more wonderful does it seem to be that, when Christ became Man, He took all the sorrows and infirmity of man, and, in addition, was made to bear the sin of many. The most extraordinary of all facts is thisthat the infinitely Holy should be numbered with the transgressors, and, in the words of Isaiah, should bear their iniquities.

The Lord has made Him who knew no sin, to be made sin for us. Wonder of wonders! It is beyond all degree amazing that He who distributes crowns and thrones should hang on a tree and diethe Just for the unjustbearing the punishment due to sinners for guilt. Now, knowing this, as most of you do, and yet refusing to believe, you do, in effect, say, I do not believe that the Incarnate God can save. Oh no, you reply, we sincerely believe that He can save. Then it must be that you feel, I believe He can, but I will not have Him save me. Wherein I excuse you in the first place, I must bring the accusation more heavily in the second.

You answer that you do not say you will not believe Him. Why do you, then, remain in unbelief? The fact is you do not trust Himyou will not obey Him. I pray you account for the fact. May I believe Him? asks one. Have we not told you ten thousand times over that whoever will, may take the Water of Life freely? If there is any barrier, it is not with God, it is not with Christit is with your own sinful heart. You are welcome to the Savior now, and if you trust Him now He is yours forever.

But oh, Unbeliever, it appears to be nothing to you that Christ has died! His wounds attract you not. His groans for His enemies have no music in them to you. You turn your back upon the Incarnate God who bleeds for men, and in so doing you shut yourselves out of hope, judging yourselves unworthy of eternal life. Furthermore, the willful rejection of Christ is also an insult to God the Father. He that believes not has made God a liar, because he has not believed the record that God gave of His Son. God has Himself often borne testimony to His dear Son. Him has God the Father set forth to be a Propitiation for our Sins.

In rejecting Christ, you reject Gods testimony and Gods gift. It is a direct assault upon the truthfulness and loving kindness of the gracious Father when you trample on or cast aside His priceless, peerless gift of love. And, as for the blessed Spirit, it is His office here below to bear witness to Christ. In the Christian ministry, the Holy Spirit daily cries to the sons of men to come to Jesus. He has strived in the hearts of many of you, given you a measure of conviction of sin, and a degree of knowledge of the glory of Christbut you have repressed ityou have labored to your utmost to do despite to the Spirit of God.

Believe me, this is no slight sin. An unbeliever is an enemy to God the Father, to God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Against the blessed Trinity in Unity, O Unbeliever, your sin is a standing insultyou are now to Gods face insulting Him by continuing an unbeliever. And, I must add that there is also in unbelief an insult against every attribute of God. The unbeliever in effect declares, If the justice of God is seen in laying the punishment of sin upon ChristI do not care for His justiceI will bear my own punishment. The sinner seems to say, God is merciful in the gift of Christ to suffer in our placeI do not want His mercyI can do without it. Others may be guilty, and they may trust in the Redeemer, but I do not feel such guilt and I will not ask for pardon.

Unbelievers attack the wisdom of God, for, whereas the wisdom of God is in its fullness revealed in the gift of Jesus, they say, It is a dogma, unphilosophical and worn out. They count the wisdom of God to be foolishness, and thus cast a slight upon another of the Divine attributes. I might in detail mention every one of the attributes and prerogatives of God, and prove that your refusal of the Savior is an insult to every one of them, and to God Himselfbut the theme is too sad for us to continue upon it. Therefore let us pass to another phase of the subject, though I fear it will be equally grievous.

III. Thirdly, let us consider THE CAUSES OF THIS UNBELIEF. In a great many, unbelief may be ascribed to a careless ignorance of the way of salvation. Now I should not wonder if many of you imagine that if you do not understand the Gospel, you are therefore quite excused for not believing it. But, Sirs, it is not so! You are placed in this world, not as heathens in the center of Africa, but in enlightened England, where you live in the full blaze of Gospel days. There are places of worship all around you, which you can without difficulty attend. The Book of God is very cheap you have it in your houses. You can all read it or hear it read.

Is it so, then, that the King has been pleased to reveal Himself to you, and tell you the way to salvation, and yet you, at the age of twenty, thirty, or forty, do not know the way of salvation? What do you mean, Sir? What can you mean? Has God been pleased to reveal Himself in Scripturetell you how to escape from Hell and fly to Heavenand yet have you been too idle to inquire into that way? Dare you say to God, I do not think it worth my while to learn what You have revealed, neither do I care to know of the gift which You have bestowed on men. How can you think that such ignorance is an excuse for your sin? What could be a more gross aggravation of it?

If you do not know, you ought to know. If you have not learned the Gospel message, you might have learned itfor there are some of us whose language it is not difficult for even the most illiterate to understand, and who would, if we caught ourselves using a hard word, retract it, and put it into little syllables so that not even a childs intellect need be perplexed by our language. Salvations way is plain in the Book. Those wordsBelieve and liveare in this Christian England almost as legible and as universally to be seen as though they were printed on the sky. That trust in the Lord Jesus saves the soul is well-known news.

But, if you still say you have not known all this, then I reply, Dear Sir, do try to know it. Go to the Scriptures, study them, see what is there. Hear, also, the Gospel, for it is written, Incline your ear to come unto Me. Hear, and your soul shall live. Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God. For your souls sake I charge you, be no longer ignorant of that which you must know, or else must perish. In some others, the cause is indifference. They do not think the matter to be of any very great consequence. They are aware that they are not quite right, but they have

a notion that somehow or other they will get right at last. And meanwhile, it does not trouble them.

Oh Man, I pray you, as your fellow creature, let me speak with you a word of expostulation. God declares that His wrath abides upon you as an unbeliever, and do you call that nothing? God says, I am angry with you, and you say to Him, I do not care, it is of very small importance to me. The rise or fall of the government bonds is of much more consequence than whether God is angry with me or not. My dinner being done to a turn concerns me a great deal more than whether the Infinite God loves me or hates me.

That is the English of your conduct, and I put it to you whether there can be a higher impertinence against your Creator, or a direr form of arrogant revolt against the eternal Ruler? If it does not trouble you that God is angry with you, it ought to trouble you! It troubles me that it does not trouble you. We have heard of persons guilty of murder whose behavior during the trial has been cool and self-possessed. The coolness with which they pleaded, not guilty, has been all of a piece with the hardness of tears which led them to the bloody deed. He who is capable of great crime is also incapable of shame concerning it. A man who is able to take pleasure and be at ease while God is angry with him shows that his heart is harder than steel.

In certain cases, the root of this unbelief lies in another direction. It is fed by pride. The person who is guilty of it does not believe that he needs a Savior. His notion is that he will do his very best, attend the Church or the meeting house very regularly, subscribe occasionally or frequently, and go to Heaven partly by what he does, and partly by the merits of Christ. So that not believing in Christ is not a matter of any great consequence with him because he is not naked, and poor, and miserable. He is rich, and increased in goods in spiritual things. To be saved by faith is a religion for harlots, and drunkards, and thieves. But for respectable persons such as he is, who have kept the Law from their youth up, he does not see any particular need of laying hold upon Christ. Such conduct reminds me of the words of Cowper

*Perish the virtue, as it ought, abhorred,   
And the fool with it that insults his Lord.*

God believed it necessary, in order to save man, that the Redeemer should die. Yet you self-righteous ones evidently think that death a superfluityfor if a man could save himself, why did the Lord descend and die to save him? If there is a way to Heaven by respectability and morality without Christ, what is the good of Christ? It is utterly useless to have an expiator and a Mediator, if men are so good that they do not require them. You tell God to His face that He lies to you, that you are not so sinful as He would persuade you, that you do not need a Substitute and Sacrifice as He says you do. Oh, Sirs, this pride of yours is an arrogant rebellion against God! Look at your fine actions, you that are so goodyour motives are base, your pride over what you have done has defiled, with black fingers, all your acts. In as much as you prefer your way to Gods way, and prefer your righteousness to Gods righteousness, the wrath of God abides on you.

Perhaps I have not hit the reason of your unbelief, therefore let me speak some more. In many, love of sin, rather than any boasted selfrighteousness keeps them from the Savior. They do not believe in Jesus because they have any doubt about the truths of Christianity, but because they have an enslaving love for their favorite sin. Why, says one, if I were to believe in Christ, of course, I must obey Himto trust and to obey go together. Then I could not be the drunkard I am, I could not trade as I do, I could not practice secret licentiousness, I could not frequent the haunts of the ungodly where laughter is occasioned by sin, and mirth by blasphemy. I cannot give up these my darling sins.

Perhaps, this sinner hopes that one day, when he cannot any longer enjoy his sin, he will meanly sneak out of it and try to cheat the devil of his soul. But meanwhile he prefers the pleasures of sin to obedience to God, and unbelief to acceptance of his salvation. O sweet Sin! O bitter Sin! How are you murdering the souls of men! As certain serpents before they strike their prey fix their eyes upon it and fascinate it, and then at last devour it, so does sin fascinate the foolish sons of Adam. They are charmed with it, and perish for it. It yields but a momentary joy, and the wage thereof is eternal misery, yet are men enamored of it.

The ways of the strange woman, and the paths of uncleanness lead most plainly to the chambers of deathyet are men attracted to them as moths to the blaze of the candleand so are they destroyed. Alas, that men wantonly dash against the rocks of dangerous lusts and perish willfully beneath the enchantment of sin! Sad pity it is to prefer a harlot to the eternal God, to prefer a few pence made by dishonesty to Heaven itself, to prefer the gratification of the belly to the love of the Creator, and the joy of being reconciled and saved. It was a dire insult to God when Israel set up a golden calf, and said, These are your gods, O Israel.

Shall the image of an ox that eats grass supplant the living God! He that had strewn the earth with manna, had made Sinai to smoke with His Presence, and the whole wilderness to tremble beneath His marchingis He to be thrust aside by the image of a bullock that has horns and hoofs? Will men prefer molten metal to the infinitely holy and glorious Jehovah? But, surely, the preference of a lust, to God, is a greater insult stillto obey our passions rather than His will, and to prefer sin to His mercy this is the crime of crimes. May God deliver us from it, for His mercys sake.

IV. We have heavy tidings in the last head of my discourse, THE TERRIBLE RESULT of unbelief. He shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him. The wrath of God! No words can ever fully explain this expression. Holy Whitfield, when he was preaching, would often hold up his hands, and, with tears streaming down his eyes, would exclaim, Oh, the wrath to come! The wrath to come!

Then he would pause because his emotions checked his utterance. The wrath of God! I confess I feel uneasy if anybody is angry with me, and yet one can bear the auger of foolish, hot-tempered persons with some equanimity. But the wrath of God is the anger of One who is never angry without a cause. One who is very patient and long suffering. It takes much to bring anger into Jehovahs face, yet is He angry with unbelievers. He is never angry with anything because it is feeble and little, but only because it is wrong.

His anger is only His holiness set on fire. He cannot bear sin! Who would wish that He should? What right-minded man would desire God to be pleased with evil? That were to make a devil of God! Because He is God, He must be angry with sin wherever it is. This makes the sting of it that His wrath is just and holy anger. It is the anger, remember, of an Omnipotent Being who can crush us as easily as a moth. It is the anger of an Infinite Being, and therefore Infinite anger, the heights and depths and breadths and lengths of which no man can measure. Only the Incarnate God ever fully knew the power of Gods anger. It is beyond all conception, yet the anger rests on you, my Hearer. Alas for you, if you are an unbeliever, for this is your state before God! It is no fiction of mine, but the Word of inspired Truththe wrath of God abides on him.

Then notice the next word, it abides. This is to say, it is upon you now. He is angry with you at this momentand always. You go to sleep with an angry God gazing into your face. You wake in the morning, and if your eyes were not dim you would perceive His frowning countenance. He is angry with you, even when you are singing His praises, for you mock Him with solemn sounds upon a thoughtless tongue. He is angry with you on your knees, for you only pretend to prayyou utter words without heart. As long as you are not a Believer, He must be angry with you every moment. God is angry with the wicked every day. That the text says it abides, and the present tense takes a long sweep, for it always will abide on you.

But may you not, perhaps, escape from it, by ceasing to exist? The test precludes such an idea. Although it says that you, shall not see life, it teaches that Gods wrath is upon you so that the absence of life is not annihilation. Spiritual life belongs only to Believers. You are now without that life, yet you exist, and wrath abides on you, and so it ever must be. While you shall not see life, you shall exist in eternal death, for the wrath of God cannot abide on a non-existent creature. You shall not see life, but you shall feel wrath to the uttermost. It is horror enough that wrath should be on you nowit is horror upon horrors, and Hell upon Hell that it shall be upon you forever! And notice that it must be so because you reject the only thing that can heal you.

As George Herbert says, Whom oils and balsams kill, what salve can cure? If Christ Himself has become a savor of death unto death to you, because you reject Himhow can you be saved? There is but one door, and if you close it by your unbelief, how can you enter Heaven? There is one healing medicine, and if you refuse to take it, what remains but death? There is one Water of Life, but you refuse to drink it. Then must you thirst forever. You put from you, voluntarily, the one only Redeemer how, then, shall you be ransomed? Shall Christ die again, and in another state be offered to you once more?

O Sirs, you would reject Him then as you reject Him now! There remains no more sacrifice for sin. On the Cross Gods mercy to the sons of men was fully revealedand will you reject Gods ultimatum of Grace His last appeal to you? If so, it is at your own perilChrist being raised from the dead dies no more. He shall come again, but without a sin offering unto the salvation of His people. Remember, Sirs, that the wrath of God will produce no saving or softening effect. It has been suggested that a sinner, after suffering Gods wrath awhile, may repent, and so escape from it. But our observation and experience prove that the wrath of God never softened anybodys heart yet, and we believe it never willthose who are suffering Divine wrath will go on to harden, and harden, and harden.

The more they suffer, the more they will hatethe more they are punished, the more will they sin. The wrath of God abiding on you will produce no good results in you, but rather you shall go from evil to evil, further and further from the Presence of God. The reason why the wrath of God abides on an unbeliever is partly because all his other sins remain on him. There is no sin that shall damn the man who believes, and nothing can save the man who will not believe. God removes all sin the moment we believe. But while we believe not, fresh cords fasten upon us our transgressions. The sin of Judah is written as with an iron pen, and engraved with a point of a diamond. Nothing can release you from guilt while your heart remains at enmity with Jesus Christ your Lord.

Remember that God has never taken an oath, that I know of, against any class of persons, except unbelievers. To whom swore He that they should not enter into His rest, but to them that believed not? Continued unbelief God never will forgive, because His Word binds Him not to do so. Does He swear an oath, and shall He go back from it? It cannot be! O that you might have Grace to relinquish your unbelief, and close in with the Gospel and be saved!

Now, I hear someone object, You tell us that certain people are under the wrath of God, but they are very prosperous. I reply that yonder bullock will be slaughtered. Yet it is being fattened. And your prosperity, O ungodly Man, is but a fattening of you for the slaughter of justice. Yes, but you say, They are very merry, and some of those who are forgiven are very sad. Mercy lets them be merry while they may. We have heard of men who, when driven to Tyburn in a cart, could drink and laugh as they went to the gallows. It only proved what bad men they were. And so, whereas the guilty can yet take comfort, it only proves their guiltiness.

Let me ask what ought to be your thoughts concerning these solemn Truths of God which I have delivered to you? I know what my thoughts were. They made me go to my bed unhappy. They made me very grateful because I hope I have believed in Jesus Christ. Yet they made me start in the night, and wake this morning with a load upon me. I come here to say to youmust it be so that you will always remain unbelievers and abide under the wrath of God? If it must be so, and the dread conclusion seems forced upon me, at any rate, to look it in the face, to consider it. If you are resolved to be damned, know what you are doing. Take advice and consider.

O Sirs, it cannot need an argument to convince you that it is a most wretched thing to be now under the wrath of God? You cannot want any argument to show that it must be a blessed thing to be forgivenyou must see that! It is not your reason that wants convincingit is your heart that wants renewing. The whole Gospel in a nutshell is this: Come, you guilty One, just as you are, and rest yourself upon the finished work of the Savior, and take Him to be yours forever. Trust Jesus now. In your

present position it may be done. Gods Holy Spirit, blessing your mind, you may at this moment say, Lord, I believe, help you my unbelief.

You may now confide in Jesus, and some who came in here unforgiven, may make the angels sing because they go down yonder steps saved soulswhose transgressions are forgivenand whose sins are covered! God knows that if I knew by what study and what art I could learn to preach the Gospel so as to affect your hearts I would spare no cost or pains. For the present I have aimed simply to warn you, not with adornment of speech, lest the power should be the power of man.

And now I leave my message, and commit it to Him who shall judge the quick and the dead. But this know, if you receive not the Son, I shall be a swift witness against you! God grant it be not so, for His mercys sake. Amen.

PORTIONS OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON Hebrews 2:14-18; Hebrews 3.

THE SWORD AND THE TROWEL edited by C. H. Spurgeon, CONTENTS FOR OCTOBER, 1871: The Pastors Wife. A True Narrative, Translated from the German by Mary Weitbrecht. Among the Rookeries of Smithfield, by Edward Leach. On the Religion of Childhood, by Vernon J. Charlesworth, of Stockwell Orphanage.

Prayer: The Primitive Church of Ireland, A Visit to Christs Hospital, being a short sermon by C. H. Spurgeon. Waiting for the VerdictThe Acquittal, by John Aldis, Jun. Spasmodic Workers and Baptist Country Mission Reviews. Memoranda. Pastors College Account. College Buildings Fund. Stockwell Orphanage. Colportage Association. Golden Lane Mission. Annual Report of the Stockwell Orphanage. (Supplement Gratis.) Price 3d. Post free, 4 stamps. London Passmore & Alabaster, 18 Paternoster Row, and all Booksellers.

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JESUS SITTING ON THE WELL   
NO. 2570

A SERMON   
INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS-DAY, MAY 15, 1898.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, FEBRUARY 25, 1883.

**Jesus therefore, being wearied with His journey, sat thus on the well: and it was about the sixth hour.   
John 4:6.**

IF we were wise, dear Friends, we would find a thousand things in the world to remind us of our blessed Lord. It is well to form the habit of connecting things that are seen with Him, whom, having not seen, we love. If we do so, there will not be an hour in the day when we shall not be helped to think of Him and scarcely anything that we see in our trade, or in the street, or in the field, or in our house which will not be the means of reminding us of Him. When we rise in the morning, would it not be well to think of how He rose a great while before day that He might have time for private prayer? He had a hard days work before Him and, therefore, He needed strength with which to do it. And He gained it, not by a longer sleep, but by stealing time from sleep in which to draw near the strengthening Father in prayer! Even when the morning is ended and we come to the middle of the day, if we are hot and weary and the sun scorches us, we shall do well to think of our text, Jesus therefore, being wearied with His journey, sat thus on the well.

When the clock strikes three, Christians should not forget that it was about that hour when He yielded up the ghost and passed away. When it comes to eventide and we go to our comfortable bed, or to our hard pallet, as the case may be, would it not be sweet to remember Him who said, Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has not where to lay His head? The whole world might constitute a system of helps to memory if we were but wise enough to use it so. The stars speak of Him to those who have but ears to hear. The morning sun reveals Him and even the setting of the sun is not without instruction concerning Him. As God is everywhere, so are the footprints of the OnlyBegotten. He has so taken up materialism into connection with His spiritual and Divine Nature that He has left His impress upon all materialism and in His temple of Creation everything speaks of His Glory!

Our second observation shall be how truly Human was the Lord Jesus Christ! Nowadays, we do not have to insist much upon that because it is not often deniedwe have to fight for His Deity, but not often for His Humanity. Perhaps it is none the better for us that it is so. You know that there were some, soon after the Apostle Johns days, who denied that Christ took upon Himself a real body. They believed that He existed as a phantom. I will not go into the philosophical way in which they put it, but their main attack was against the Humanity of the Son of God. Now, times have changed and men admit that He existed and they admit His Humanityyes, they so much admit it that they deny that He was anything more than Man! We must fight against that thrice-accursed doctrine as long as we have any being, but we must not forget how truly Human Jesus was. How really Human He appears when the burning sun smites Him, the sweat rolls off Him and He is thoroughly weary! And, being weary, He must do what we do when we are tired and worn-outHe must sit down. And the sun is so hot that He thirstsHe is parched with heat and there is the water in the well, but He has nothing to draw with, so He must sit there in the heat and bear the thirst.

You remember also, dear Friends, how He hungered. You will never forget how Jesus wept. You all know how He suffered and how, at last, He died. Treasure up in your mind and heart the assured fact that Christ was most really and truly Manand though the Godhead was most mysteriously united to His ManhoodHe was none the less completely and intensely Man. Because He was perfectly and supremely God, His Godhead did not take away from Him His power to suffer and to be wearied.

It seems rather singular, but it is worthy of notice that our Lord appears to have been more weary than His disciples were, for they had gone away into the city to buy food. I suppose that He might have gone with them if He had not been more fatigued than they were. He was quite worn out and thoroughly weary, and so, while they went into Sychar to purchase provisions, He sat down on the well. I take it that, in all probability, the reason is thisHe had mental weariness associated with His bodily fatigueand when the two things come together, they make a man wearied, indeed. I know that there are some who fancy that to think and to care for others, to preach and to teach, is not much of work. Well, my dear Brothers and Sisters, I can assure you that you may keep on working much longer with your arms than you can with your brain! And I am speaking from experience when I say that careful thought and great anxiety to do good bring much wear and tear with them to a mans whole constitution. And if the life is taken out of a man in two ways at onceby fatigue of body and by fatigue of mind, toothen you will see that such a man will necessarily be the first to give way. The disciples had little to do but to follow implicitly as their Master led them. He had to be the Leader and upon the leader comes the strain and stress of thought and care. No man knows what were the cares that agitated the great heart of Christ. Surely, in one sense, He never restedHe was constantly thinking, not only of the twelve, but of all those who were with Him. And not merely of them, but it was as He said in His great intercessory prayer, Neither pray I for these, alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word. All Believers had a share in His thoughts of love even then, for He was bent upon no less a mission than the salvation of a countless number who shall be His in the day of His appearing!

His mind and heart were always at work. That busy brain of His was never still, so I do not wonder that though the disciples could go into the city to buy food, their Master could not go, but He must sit down on the well. Jesus therefore, being wearied with His journey, sat thus on the wellin a thoroughly exhausted condition. He sat down as if He could go no further, could do no moreand there it was that the Samaritan woman found Him. How perfectly human all this proves our Lord to have been!

I want you, while we are speaking of that fact, to admire the great selfconstraint which our Divine Master put upon Himself in bearing weariness, because, although He was Man and could be weary, I have also reminded you that He was God and, therefore, He could have refreshed Himself if it had been right for Him to do so. According to the Divine order of things, it would not have been right. When our Lord was in the wilderness 40 days, He hungered. Why did He not turn the stones into bread? He certainly could have done so, but to do so was evidently quite out of order with Him who had come to be a Servant and to suffer as a Man. The devil tempted Him to do it, which proves to us that it would have been wrong for Christ to do it. But, only thinkif you and I were hungry and we could turn stones into breadwould we not do it? If we were weary and could immediately give ourselves the rest we required, would we not do so? Why, I think the water would have been glad to leap out of the well to refresh the lips of Him who had created it! That well would have been honored by suddenly pouring forth all its liquid refreshment that He might drink and be satisfied, but Jesus never worked a miracle merely for His own comfort. He felt that His miraculous power was to be used for others in His great work, but as for Himself, His Humanity must bear its own infirmity, it must support its own trialsso He keeps His hands back from relieving His own necessities. Oh, I never imagined how strong Christ was till I saw His love hold back His Deity! That Omnipotence which restrains Omnipotenceit cannot be something more than Omnipotence and yet, in a sense, it must be! The Love of Christ restrains the Omnipotence of Christ! He might have broken through all the infirmities of manhood, but He must not do so if He is to be perfectly bone of our bone and flesh of our fleshand He does not do it. He bears exhaustion, He bears deprivation of comfort, He bears, in fact, the very curse of labor which our father Adam brought upon us, that in the sweat of our brow we should eat our breadand He bears it still with a magnanimity of condescension which cannot be imitated. It is far beyond our conception and infinitely beyond our venturing to follow this. We can only admire and adore. We worship You, O Son of God, that for our sins You could even deign to be wearied and to sit thus on the well!

Another thought I put before you is this. Behold the wonderful sympathy of the Lord Jesus Christ with us. You have been on a very long journey, and your feet are tired and you are weary and wornyou could not go a step further. Now Christ, in the days of His flesh, was like you. He knows what is meant by all that heaviness and heat of the feet, that blistering of the soles, that drawing of the sinews, that testing of every muscle! And the next time you go a long tramp and sit down because you are weary, think to yourself, He who is at the right hand of God remembers when He felt as I do, and He sympathizes with me in this, my present distress. Or take it to be another case, that your daily work is very hardand I know that I speak to many who earn their bread with very severe toil and laborand when the hour, at last, comes (alas! alas! how late it often is!) when the shop can be closed, or when your work is finished, you are thoroughly exhausted. You can scarcely crawl up to your bed, you feel so weary. It is often so with you and getting to be more often so, now that you are growing old and years are telling upon your once stalwart frame. Well, the next time you sit down, say to yourself, Jesus, my Lord, You know all about this and You can pity Your poor servant, and help and comfort me as I have to bear it.

Do you not remember the story about Alexanders soldiers? When they went on long, forced marches, they, none of them, grew weary because although Alexander had a horse, he never rode. He said, No, not while one man walks shall Alexander ride. So he tramped side by side with them and once, when a cup of water was brought for the king, he said, There is a soldier who looks more faint than I am; pass it over to him. And every man felt strong because of that sympathy. Now, you who toil, think of Him who is the King Eternal, Immortal, Invisible, the Prince of the kings of the earthand for your comfort read the text againJesus therefore, being wearied with His journey, sat thus on the well.

Yes, but there are other kinds of toilers beside these. There are holy workers who, I think, ought to have a drink of water out of this well. You try and speak for Christ, or you go about and visityou are very earnest to bring sinners to Jesus and, sometimes, you feel as if you could not do any more. You have not succeeded, perhaps, and you are disappointed and heart-weary. Well, when you are so, say to yourself, My Lord knows all about His servant. Jesus therefore, being wearied with His journey, sat thus on the well. Or, perhaps, your weariness comes of suffering. The pain is very sharp, you get very little rest, it seems to you as if all night long you had never slept. You steal a little sleep and when you wake again, in the morning, you feel more tired than when you went to bed. And sometimes you say to yourself, I am so weary and worn. Will these pains never end? Is there no release from this, my chain? Must I always drag it with me? But when you fall back upon the pillow, oh so wearyand some of us know all about this weariness, for we have many times felt as if we could not even breathe, or lift a fingerremember, then, Jesus being wearied with His journey, sat thus on the well. Oh, the deep sympathy of Christ! He knows it, not only by having heard of it, and seen it, but by having felt it. Go to Him without any fear, with a childlike confidence that He who has been tried in all points like as we are, and who was, Himself, compassed with infirmity, is able to succor us in all times of weariness! And be assured that if we come to Him, He will give us rest.

I am just getting into my sermon, nowall these observations which I have made are only preliminary, but the discourse, itself, will be a short one.

First, dear Friends, if I have, here, a weary sinner who longs to find rest, I want his conscience to paint a picture. And after his conscience has painted it, I want his faith to come and study it. And when that has been done, I want his gratitude and his love to remove that picture and to paint another.

I. First, then, I want every conscience here that is awakened, but has never been quieted by the blood of Christ, to PAINT A PICTUREand that picture is the portrait of a wearied Savior, a Savior wearied by you, worn out by youwearied, not with His journey, but wearied with your sin.

Can that be? someone asks. Yes, the Lord has said it in Isaiah. You have wearied Me with your iniquities. You have wearied Christ by doing wrong and doing it again and again, and sinning against conscience and against light. You are wearying my Lord, my loving Lord! In the Book of Amos He says, I am pressed under you, as a cart is pressed that is full of sheaves. You know how they heap the sheaves on till the wagon creaks and the axle is ready to breakdo you treat my Lord like an old wagon and load on your sins, sheaf upon sheaf, till He can bear no more? He says that it is so with some of you and I want you to paint the picture of a wearied Christ, wearied with your sin.

Perhaps in the case of some of you Christ is wearied with your religion. Wearied with our religion? asks one. When you get home, will you read the first chapter of the Book of the Prophet Isaiah and you will see there how God declares Himself to be tired of the empty formalism of the people? Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto Me. The new moons and Sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot endure. It is iniquity, even the solemn meeting. Your new moons and your appointed feasts My soul hates: they are a trouble unto Me; I am weary to bear them. It was a weariness to Him and, if you pray, but do not pray sincerely, my Lord will be tired of hearing your mockery of prayer! If you go to sacraments, or come to public worship and think that this will save you, my Lord will be weary of you, for it is all a sham! There is a shell, but there is no kernel. You mock Him with the solemn sound upon a thoughtless tongue. You sit as His people sit and your minds are far away on the mountains of vanity. You hear, you join in the hymn and listen to the prayer, but there is no true worship, praise, or supplication. I tell you, Sirs, my Lord is getting weary of yougetting sick and tired of your religion! What a picture! Christ wearied with sin and wearied with dead religion!

I fear that I might also say that there are some here of whom Christ is weary because of their broken promises. When they were sick, they said, We will repent if the Lord will spare our lives. They vowed, when they were in danger, that they would turn to Him if He delivered thembut nothing of the kind has happened. My dear Friend, you are still here undecided! Twelve months ago you would not have believed that another year would have passed and found you just where you are. The wheels of time are running round swiftly as flames of lightning, but you make no advance whatever! On the contrary, I am afraid that you are going backward. My Lord is getting wearied of your excuses and your procrastination! You have lied to Me, says the Lord, and He will not always endure this treatment from you.

With some, my Lord is getting weary because of their resistance to His Spirit. Remember that God said of some who rebelled and vexed His Holy Spirit, My Spirit shall not always strive with man. He shall not always be put to the indignity of striving with men who resist Him, as did their fathers. When holy thoughts arise, you quench themand you have done this, oh, so long! How many years has this been the case with some of you? If some persons whom I know are provoked for only five minutes, their anger boils over. If they stood to be insulted for half-an-hour, they would count it a miracle! I know some with whom it is a word and a blow and, often, the blow comes faster than the word! But only think of anyone having lived to provoke God for five years, 10 years, 20 years, 30 years, 40 years! Shall I go further? I believe that there are some here who have outdone the Israelites in the wilderness, for they provoked God 40 years, but these people have provoked Him 50, sixty, or even 70 years!

My Lord is weary! My Lord is weary! You remember, when He grew weary with the Israelites, He lifted His hand to Heaven and swore that they should not enter into His rest. What was the sin that shut them out? So then, says the Apostle, they could not enter in because of unbelief. Christ will not always be quibbled at, nor have His promises belied, nor His sweet invitations cast behind your backs. He is getting very tired and very weary of youand I fear that He will one day say, I will ease Me of My adversaries. Be thankful that He has not said it, yet, and turn to Him with true repentance and faith!

But there is the picture and to me it is a very pitiful picture, to see Jesus sitting down by the well of Eternal Life, wearied by men whom He came to bless.

II. Now I want you to STUDY THAT PICTURE of the wearied Christ. Look closely at itnot merely with the eyes of your conscience, but with the eyes of faithand if you have not any, I must try to lend you mine. For a few minutes I must believe for you, in the hope that what I tell youand know to be trueGod the Holy Spirit may enable you to believe, too, that you may, yourselves, spiritually see. Yes, I can see Jesus Christ, very weary, sitting on the well. Let me look at Him a while. I like the picture so, it seems to comfort me as I look at the well, for, albeit that He is very weary, yet I perceive that He is waiting. He sits on the well, for there is a woman cominga poor fallen womanand He is waiting to bless her. She ought to have been here early in the morning, and it is now twelve oclock. The sun has reached its zenith and is shining at its hottest. The woman will be here soon. Jesus is very weary, but He still waits. Sinner, that is just the attitude of my Lord towards you! You say you cannot see Himyou have not the eyes of faith, but I can see Him. I remember when I first saw Him that He had long been waiting for Me. He waits to be gracious. He is in no hurry, He allows the sinner time, wicked though the spending of that time is on the sinners partbut Christ spends that time in patiently waiting.   
I must look again at the picture. As I look, I can see that He is not only waiting, but He is watching. I can see that He is turning His eyes toward the city gate. She will be out very soon, He says to Himself. She must come here and I know that she is coming. He is not looking round at the scenery. That is not the chief thing to Him, just nowHe is looking for this poor soul that is coming. Oh, my dear Friend, though you have wearied Christ, yet He is still waiting and watching for you! There is many an elect soul that my Lord is spying out over there in the first gallery, or up there in those boxes almost in the roof, or down below in that area! And Jesus is waiting and watching for them.   
Now I must look again, for my Lord, though He is very weary, has at last spied out the person for whom He is waiting and watching. Here she comes! And now I perceive how willing He is. His heart seems to beat more quickly, His eyes are brighter than usual, He is not half as weary as He was. You may have seen the faint and tired hunter suddenly grow strong when, at last, he spies on the crag, the deer he has come to seek. Or the fisherman standing wearily in the stream, holding his rod, but ready to go home to his long-needed meal, but, at last, the salmon begins to part away at his linenow how strong a man he is! He will go on for an hour at that work and he will not need to eat or drink. The whole of his being is in the fishing. So was it with my blessed Master. That woman was coming and Christ was all there, as we say. He was ready to speak the right wordsa word in season to one who was wearyto speak the word of admonition, or of comfort, or of invitation. And He is all here at this moment. I thought, when I stood here tonight, to speak to you, I am constantly coming to the Tabernacle to talk to this great throng, and something seemed to say to me, You ought to be glad to have such an opportunity! I thought, Yes, and I

am glad, and I will try my very best to preach Christ to them as long as this tongue can move, for it is a delightful privilege to be allowed to tell men about my Masters pardoning love. But, oh, if He were here in bodily Presence, He would do it so much better than any of us can, for His heart is so much more full of love than our poor hearts are!   
He was at the well, waiting, and watching, and willing. And though He was very weary, yet, when the woman came to Him and she believed His message, He saved her right away. A weary Christ is most willing to save a weary sinner! Though He was tired, yet He could save that great sinner and now, exalted in the highest heavens, though you have wearied Him with your sins, yet He will blot out those sins, even now, the moment you put your trust in Him! And even with His weary hands He will wipe away your transgressions. He is, in fact, so weary with your sins that He will put them away, that He and you, too, may never be wearied with them again! He is so sick of your wanderings that He will end them and receive you into His heart, that you may never wander again!   
This picture looked very sad when I saw it at a distance and when you saw it with the eyes of your conscience, but, oh, if you can put on the blessed glasses of faith and see it as I have tried to describe it, the picture grows very lovely! Jesus therefore, being wearied with His journey, sat thus on the wellwaiting, watching, willing and able to saveyes, to so save the woman as to make her the means of saving others! And, maybe He will now save you who have wearied Him, and start you at once to bringing others to Him. I shall not be surprised if it is so! I shall be concerned if it does not happen, for we have sought it at His hands and we expect to have it!   
III. Now I want to ALTER THE PICTURE ON THE CANVAS.   
I suppose I have not an artist here who can help me with his brush. I want to take a little out and put a little in, for the new picture is to be a portrait of the weary Savior sitting on the well, refreshed by the very sinner who had helped to weary Him! A woman must be put into the picture now, Mr. Painter. There she is and the Master is saying to her, Give Me a drink. And did she do it? She did not dip her water pot into the well, but did she give Him a drink? Yes, that she did! I am sure she refreshed Him even more than she would have done by a draught of water, because when the disciples came back to their Master, He said to them, I have meat to eat that you know not of, so that He had evidently been refreshed. And how was it done? Why, by that woman! What had she given Him which had so refreshed Him?   
Well, first, she had put to Him various enquiries. She began asking Him a number of questions and the Lord Jesus Christ is always refreshed when He meets with enquirers. If you only want to know all you can about Christ, that will be some sort of refreshment to Him, for the mass of men pass by Him with indifference, so that He has to say

*Is it nothing to you, all you that pass by? Is it nothing to you that Jesus should die?*

I am sure that my Master will be glad if some of you will begin to enquire, as the woman did, Are You greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well? Or, From where, then, have You that living water? I do not mind even if your question is a foolish one, because that will only show the state of mind you are inand Christ can cure the foolishness and give you wisdom. Read the New Testament carefully. Go down on your knees and say, Lord, teach me what the meaning of this passage is. You will thus refresh my Masters heart and I shall expect to see you, before long, among the saved!

Next, this woman refreshed the Saviors heart with prayer, for when she had asked Him questions, she prayed in her poor way, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come here to draw. She hardly knew what she said, but, as far as she knew anything, she meant to ask Jesus to give her what He had to give! Dear Heart, may the Lord help you to begin to pray even now! The Masters spirit will be wonderfully refreshed by your supplication. He will have a deep draught of cold water from the well when He gets to hear your voice in prayer. Take with you words, says the Prophet Hosea, and turn to the Lord. Say to Him, Take away all our iniquity and receive us graciously. If one poor soul in this Tabernacle, far away at the back, there, who cannot see, and perhaps can hardly hear, is moved to pray, God be merciful to me a sinner, that petition will touch the heart of the Son of God! Even on the Throne of the highest heavens, He will be refreshedHe always is when He hears a sinner pray!

But, further, this woman not only prayed, but she confessed her sin. The confession was not very explicit, but she acknowledged that what the Lord laid to her charge was true. Sir, she said I perceive that You are a Prophet. And to the men of the city she said, Come, see a Man who told me all things that ever I did. A hearty confession to God, while it is good for your soul, is good for Christs soul, tooHe gets refreshed thereby.

Best of all, this woman believed in Jesus. When He said that He was the Christ, she accepted His declaration as true and, therefore, she said to the men of the city, Is not this the Christ? O my Lord, You will again see of the travail of Your soul and You will be once more satisfied if some poor sinner does but receive You! Does not a mother rejoice when, after her pangs, she fixes her eyes upon her first-born child? That is the very picture that Isaiah drew of the Lord Jesus ChristHe shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied. Oh, to think that you and I can give satisfaction to the heart of Christ for all the anguish that He bore when He poured out His soul unto death! That is no metaphor of mine it is a Scriptural symbol! I have only given you what the Holy Spirit, Himself, has said and, oh, dear Friends, I do pray that some of you may thus gratify, satisfy, refresh, invigorate, delight and glorify the Christ who now, though He reigns on high, has never forgotten that He did once sit on the well and thirst! And while He so thirsted, saved a Samaritan sinner and found Himself refreshed in the doing of it!

God bless you, Beloved, and bring you to the Savior, for His names sake! Amen.   
EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **JOHN 4:1-29.**

I have often read this chapter in your hearing and you have often read it yourselves, but the Word of God is not like the grapes of an earthly vine which, when once trodden, are exhausted. You may come to Holy Scripture again and againit is like an ever-flowing fountainthe more you draw from it, the more you may draw.

Verses 1-3. When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, (though Jesus Himself baptized not, but His disciples), He left Judaea and departed again into Galilee. Observe, here, that our Lord at first shunned conflict with the Pharisees. When He knew that they were jealous of Him, He went away from Judaea to a more remote district, into Galilee. May He help us always to take that which may be the wiser course in every emergency! He was not guilty of cowardicethat He could not befor He was the bravest of the brave, but sometimes it will be most courageous on our part to shun a conflict. When you believe it is right to do so, never mind what anybody may say, but do as your Master did on this occasion.

4 *.* And He must go through Samaria. It is true that it was the nearest way, yet He might have gone round about. But He would not do so, for there were souls in Samaria who were to be blessed by His Presence. He had a constraint upon Him, an inward impulse, so that, He must go through Samaria. Dear Friends, whenever you feel the drawings of the Spirit in any particular direction, do not resist them, but yield yourself entirely to His gracious influence, even as your Lord did.

5, 6. Then He came to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Now Jacobs well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with His journey, sat thus on the well: and it was about the sixth hour. About twelve oclock, in the middle of the day, at high noon. You will observe, dear Friends, that our Lord spoke to Nicodemus at night, but when He was about to talk to a fallen woman, alone, He did it in the middle of the day. There is a time for everythingso let those who serve God be careful as to the best time of their service. Our Lord had a tender delicacy about Him which led Him instinctively to do the right thing at the right time.

7 *.* There came a woman of Samaria to draw water. That was not the usual time for drawing water. Women generally went to the well in the morning and in the evening, but this poor fallen creature was not one with whom other women would associate, so she came alone, at the hour when the sun was hottestand when nobody else would likely to be there.

7 *.* Jesus said unto her, Give Me a drink. This was quite a natural way of beginning a conversation and they will best touch other peoples minds and hearts who do not harshly interject religion, but who wisely introduce it, leading up to it with a holy dexterousness such as our Lord always exhibited. He begins not with any remarks about the womans life, or her sin, or even about His great salvation, but with the simple request, Give Me a drink.

8, 9. (For His disciples were gone away unto the city to buy food). Then said the woman of Samaria unto Him, How is it that You, being a Jew, ask a drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? For the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans. But our Lord did not come to maintain these distinctions of race and caste. It is altogether foreign to the spirit of Christianity for nationalities to be despised! We sometimes hear people say of a person, Oh, he is only a So-and- So! mentioning some nation that happens to be in the background. Christ was cosmopolitan! He loved men of every nation, tribe, tongue and people. To Him there was neither Jew nor Samaritanall such distinctions were banished from His mind. The woman might well say what she did, but her words would have sounded strangely out of place from the lips of Christ.

10, 11. Jesus answered and said unto her, If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that says to you, Give Me a drink; you would have asked of Him, and He would have given you living water. The woman said unto Him, Sir, You have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from where, then, have You that living water? Holy knowledge is very advantageous it often is the means of breeding prayer. If you knew...you would have asked, and He would have given. Therefore, Beloved, let us teach the Truth of God to all who come in our way, for it may be that we, too, shall meet with many of whom it can be said that if they know what the gift of God is, they will ask for itand if they ask for it, Christ will give it to them.

12 *.* Are You greater than our father Jacob who gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle? Ah, she did not know how infinitely superior Jesus was to Jacob! There could be no comparison between the two. Jesus is the true Father of all Israel and, in that respect, He is like Jacob, but He is immeasurably greater than father Jacob.

13, 14. Jesus answered and said unto her, Whoever drinks of this water shall thirst again: but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. Hence he will always be content. He who has Divine Grace in his heart is a happy manhe grows more and more satisfied with the Grace as it wells up increasingly in living power in his character and life. Oh, if you have never received that Living Water, may God give it to you now! You shall never regret receiving it, and you shall rejoice over it forever!

15 *.* The woman said unto Him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come here to draw. Up till now she has not imbibed a single idea from Christ. The Lord has spoken to her in parables, but she has not seen through the thin veil, so she has missed His meaning. Now He fires another shot and deals with her in another fashion.

16-18. Jesus said unto her, Go, call your husband, and come here. The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, You have well said, I have no husband, for you have had five husbands; and he whom you now have is not your husband: in that said you truly. It was necessary to awaken this woman to a sense of her sinfulness. It was no use putting on plasters where there was no knowledge of a sore, and no use attempting to fill the void where there was no feeling of emptiness. So first she must be brought low. She must be made to see herself in the glass of the Truth of God. And then she would begin to understand her need of salvation. Oftentimes, in seeking to bless people, the kindest way is not to build them up, but to pull them downnot to begin to encourage their hopesbut to let them see how hopeless their case is apart from Sovereign Grace.

19. The woman said unto Him, Sir, I perceive that You are a Prophet. She did not deny Christs charges. She could not, for they were so accurately descriptive of her whole life.

20-23. Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and you say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship. Jesus said unto her, Woman, believe Me, the hour comes when you shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. You worship you know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour comes, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth. It is not the place which makes the true worshipit is the heart. It is not even the dayit is the state of a mans mind. It is not that the place is said to be holy and, therefore, prayer is acceptedevery place is equally holy where holy men worship God. All distinctions of buildings are heathenish or, at the best, Jewishthey are done away with by Christ.

23-26. For the Father seeks such to worship Him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth. The woman said unto Him, I know that Messiah comes, which is called Christ: when He is come, He will tell us all things. Jesus said unto her, I that speak unto you am He. And she believed it, for what she had heard had prepared her mind for this declaration! Christs reading of her heart had convinced her that He was the Messiah. How many have been brought to Christs feet by having their characters laid bare in the preaching of the Word! The very thing they did in secret, yes, the very thought of their heart which they never communicated even to their best friend, has been told them. Their dream has been revealed to them and the interpretation of it, too and, by Gods Grace, they have been convinced that He who can thus read their hearts must be the Son of God!

27, 28. And upon this came His disciples and marveled that He talked with the woman, yet no man said, What do You seek? Or, Why do You talk with her? The woman then left her water pot, and went her way into the city. So that blessed interview was broken up by Christs own disciples! What a set of blunderers we are! We sometimes come in between Christ and poor sinners whom He is going to bless. There is many a lover of stern doctrine, with an unsympathetic heart and a harsh tone of speech, who has intruded just when he was not needed! If we cannot help poor souls, Brothers and Sisters, let us never hinder them! What Christian would not wish to help a poor sinner to her Savior? Yet these disciples, unconscious of what they were doing, had by their very looks driven this poor woman from their Master. She went her way into the city.

28, 29. And said to the men, Come, see a Man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ? May we be made useful, even as this woman was, in bringing others to Christ feet, for His dear names sake! Amen.

HYMNS FROM OUR OWN HYMN BOOK430, 431, 473.   
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PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #2423 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

THE MODEL SOUL-WINNER   
NO. 2423

**INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS DAY, JULY 28, 1895. DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, JULY 10, 1887.

**There came a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus said to her, Give Me a drink.   
John 4:7.**

THIS was the beginning of that interesting conversation which not only blessed this woman, but has been a means of Grace to many others ever since, for this chapter and the previous one must be looked upon as among the most soul-winning parts of Gods Word. I suppose that every portion of Scripture has had its use in the experience of men and women, but these two chapters have very, very largely been blessed in the commencement of the Divine Life. Many have been led through the door of regeneration and the gateway of faith by the Truth of God so plainly taught in them.

I shall not delay you with any preface, but shall take you at once to the subject mentioned in our text.  
I. You have before you, here, first, THE MODEL SOUL-WINNER. Jesus said to the woman of Samaria, Give Me a drink. I speak to many here who are wise to win souls. I hope that I also address many more who, although they have not yet learned this wisdom, are anxious, if possible, to be used of God to bless their fellow creatures. Here, then, is a perfect model for youstudy it and copy it.   
First, observe that our Savior, as the model Soul-Winner, was not reserved and distant. Jesus therefore, being wearied with His journey, sat thus on the well. If He had not been wonderfully anxious to win a soul, He would have kept Himself to Himselfand if this woman had spoken to Him, He would have answered her shortly and have let her see that He did not desire any conversation with her. There is a way of being civil, but, at the same time, of repressing anything like familiarity. There are some persons who have great gifts of freezingthey can freeze you, almost, with a look! You never dare to speak to them, again. In fact, you stand and wonder how you could ever have had the impertinence to address such exalted personages! They evidently live in a very distinct world from that in which your poor self residesthey could not sympathize with youthey are too good or too great, too clever. And if you do not complain of their conduct, yet you give them a wide berth and keep clear of them in the future, for they are not at all the sort of people that attract you. They repel you by their coldness. They are not magnets, or, if so, they exercise the very opposite influence from that of attraction.   
Now, if any of you are in such a frame of mind as that, pray the Lord to bring you out of it! But do not attempt to do any good while you are in such a condition, for you might as well try to heat an oven with snowballs as to win souls for Christ with a distant cold, dignified manner of speech! No, cast all that away, for nothing can render you so feeble, and so useless, as to cultivate anything like separateness from your fellows. Come close to the sinner, draw near to him or to hershow that you are not keeping yourself to yourself, but that you regard the person you are addressing as a brother or sisteras one who will find, in you, a sympathizer who is touched with the feeling of his infirmities, seeing that you have suffered in many points like he has suffered and are, therefore, on the same level, and desire to stand on the same platform with himand to do him good.   
There was nothing stiff and starched about the Savior. He was the very reverse of that and even children felt that they might go to Him freely. He was like a great harbor into which sailors run their ships in stress of weatherthey feel as if it was made on purpose for them. The very look of Christs face, the very glistening of His eyes, everything about Him made people feel that He did not live for Himself at all, but that He desired to bless others! There is the model Soul-Winner, therefore, for your imitation, in Jesus sitting on the well and condescending even to speak to a poor fallen woman!

In the next place, our Savior was aggressive and prompt. He did not wait for the woman to speak to Him, but He addressed her. Give Me a drink, He said. He did not wait until she had drawn the water from the well and was about to goand so give her an excuse for saying, I cannot be detained. I must get home with the water and the sun is hot, but no sooner has He seen her and her waterpot, than He begins a conversation with His request to her, Give Me a drink. The true soul-winner is like a man who goes out shootinghe is not half asleep so that when the game presents itself, he waits till it has taken wing and has gone. He is on the alertif a feather or a leaf moves, he has his gun all ready, and he is prepared for action at once! The cunning fowler spreads his nets early in the morning before the birds are awake, that when they first begin to move, they may be taken in his traps. And the Lord Jesus, with a loving wisdom, went about His work. He began with the woman at onceas soon as she came to the well where He was resting, He spoke to her and soon led the talk to the things which concerned the Christ and her own sinand the way by which the Christ might lift her out of her sin and make her useful for the conversion of others.   
I am afraid that there are some of you who cannot do thatyou are so reserved, you say. How often have I told you that the soldier who was so retiring was shot? There was a battle going on and the man was so modest and retiring that he went to the rear of the fightand they called him a coward and shot him dead! I am not going to call you a coward, nor to shoot you! Still, I wish you would not get into the rear so much. While souls are perishing, it does not do to be reserved and retiring! A man who can swim and would let his fellow man sink would hardly be excused if he said, I was so retiring that I could not push myself upon him. I never had the good mans card and I did not want to force myself upon him without an introduction, so I let him drown. I was very sorry, but still, I never was a pushing person.   
Are you going to let men be damned? Are you going to let the masses of people in this city perish in their sins? If so, God have mercy upon you! The question will not be, What will become of London in this case? But the question will be, What will become of you who let men die in their sins without trying to rescue them? Carry the war into the enemys country! Speak to people whom you do not know, whom you have never seen before, as Jesus did! Speak to that woman whom you meet casually and Providentially, as He did! Speak to her when the last thing she wants is that you should speak to her. Speak out at once and let yours be an aggressive Christianity that is prompt to seize every opportunity of doing good! What a model Soul-Winner, then, you have here!   
Next, the Savior was bold, but He was also wise. You cannot sufficiently admire the wisdom of our blessed Lord that He spoke to this woman while she was alone. He could not have said to her what He said and she would never have said to Him what she said, if anybody else had been there. It was necessary that this interview be held in private. But, oh, you who are so zealous that you are imprudent, you who would gladly win souls but attempt the task without that care which ought to come naturally to every sensible and prudent man, remember that although Christ spoke alone with this woman, it was in broad daylight, at twelve oclock, by the well. If some people had been as prudent as the Savior was, they could have afforded to be as zealous as they have been! In the case of such a woman as this, I would have you remember the Saviors wisdom as well as His wondrous condescension!   
With Nicodemus, the ruler of the Jews, He speaks by night, but with the harlot of Samaria He speaks by day. The soul-winner looks about him, he is wise in his plan of going to work. There are fish that will only bite in troubled waters. There are some that are not to be taken except at night and there are others that are only to be caught by daylight. Fit yourself to the case of the person you are seeking to bless! I do not say be so prudent that you will run no risk, but I will say, be so prudent, especially in certain difficult cases, that you run no unnecessary risk! The Savior could not have selected a better time for talking to such a personyou will see at once that if even the disciples marveled that He spoke with the womanit was infinitely wise on His part that it was done at the well side and done at noon.   
O Soul-Winners, win souls any way you can! Be willing to risk your own reputation, if necessary, to win them, but it is not necessary, or not usually necessary, and it never should be done except when it is necessary. Your Savior sets you that wise example. Follow Him in this speaking to people singly. I do so much of public preaching that, perhaps, I lose a measure of adaptation for private conversation, yet have I sometimes done the most successful work I have ever done in private rather than in public! Sitting at a table, I have marked a young man who was a stranger to me, and I have asked him to accompany me to the place where I was to preach. I did not know the way and I asked him to walk with me. A few words on the road won him for Christ and he has been, ever since, an earnest upholder of the Gospel and a very useful one! I do not know whether any were saved by the sermon, but I know that one was converted by the talk on the way there!   
I know an Evangelist who is useful in his public service, but he is also greatly useful to the families in the homes where he stays. Almost in every case the ministers sons and daughters are converted before he leaves the house, or the servant or a visitor is won by his private conversation. I like that kind of work! Oh, that we all studied this art of speaking to persons one by one! So I say to you, again, here is the model SoulWinnercopy His example.   
Observe how the Savior begins with this womanJesus said to her, Give Me a drink. When you are fishing, it is not always wise to throw your fly straight at the fishs mouth. Try him a little on one side, and then a little on the other side, and maybe, presently, you will get a bite. So the Savior does not begin by saying to her, You are a sinful woman. Oh, dear, none but an amateur in such a business would begin like that! Neither did He begin by saying, Now, good mistress, I am the Messiah. Well, that was the truth, was it not? Yes, but that was not to come first He began by saying, Give Me a drink. He must first attract her attention and influence her mindthen would come the closer work of probing her conscience and changing her heart!   
It was only a very ordinary, commonplace request that Jesus made. Give Me a drink. It might have occurred to any one of you to say it, but not to use it as He did. Yet it was a word that was wisely chosen, for it fitted in with the womans thoughts. She was thinking about drawing water and Jesus said to her, Give Me a drink. There could be no more suitable metaphor or mode of expression than that of water and drinking if you are talking to a person who has come to draw water for herself or others to drink.   
Besides that, it was an exceedingly pregnant expression, as full of meaning as an egg is full of meat. Give Me a drink. It contained much within itself. It gave the Savior as wide a field as He could wish for to talk to her about her spiritual thirst, and about that Living Water which He could put within her, which would abide in her, and be a wellnot one to which she should comebut a well that she would carry about with her and that would be always springing up within her unto everlasting life! So let us learn how to begin wisely with observations that are apparently commonplace, but such as will easily lead to higher things.   
I think that the Savior, as the model Soul-Winner, is also to be imitated in that at the very beginning He broke down a barrier. The Lord Jesus Christ was evidently dressed as a Jew and this woman came out of Samaria. Now, at once, there was a barrier between the two, for the Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans. Our Lord broke through that caste by saying to her, Give Me a drink. No other expression would do this so well, for to eat and to drink with persons was, after the Oriental fashion, to come into communion with them. Give Me a drink, therefore, shook off from Him all Judaism which would separate Him from this Samaritan. If you are going to try to win people for Christ, always seek to break down everything that would separate. Are you a man of wealth? Well, I do not believe in converting souls by making your diamond rings glitter and flash when you are talking to workingmen.   
Are you a scientific man? Now, that word of 17 syllables that you have been so fond ofdo not use it, but say something very plain and simple! Or do you happen to belong to any political party? Do not bring that question inyou will not win souls that wayyou will be more likely to excite prejudice and opposition. If I were talking to the French, I would devoutly wish I were a Frenchman. If I had to win a German, I should wish to know as much of the idiosyncrasies of that nation as I possibly could. I shall never be ashamed of being an Englishman, but if I could win more souls by being a Dutchman, or a Zulu, I would gladly have any kind of nationality, that I might get at the hearts of men! And our Lord Jesus acted just in that spirit when He said to the woman, Give Me a drink. He sank the noble dignity of being a Jewfor, mark you, a Jew is the aristocrat of GodJesus, even in His humanity, came of a race that is made up of the oldest and noblest of earthly nobility, but He dropped that dignity in order that He might talk to this Samaritan woman who was nothing better than a mongrel, for her race was made up of nobody knows what! They pretended to be Jewish when there was anything to get by so doingand to be Gentile whenever the Jews were in any kind of difficulties. But Jesus did not snub her, nor did He hint that she was in the least degree inferior to Himself. There is no winning souls in any other way than as the Savior won them. God teach us how to win them!

This must suffice for that first point, the model Soul-Winner.   
II. Now for just a few minutes I want to exhibit our Divine Lord and Master in another light. Not this time as the model Soul-Winner, but as THE MASTER OF CONDESCENSION. He seems to me to be so thoughtfulthis blessed Lord of ours, the Son of God, the Creator, the FirstBegotten of God.   
He takes His seat there on the well in weariness and thirst. Do you not see Him almost ready to faint? What condescension this was, that He was so straitened that He had not even a drink of water, or the means to get it. Maker of all springs! Bearer of the key of the rain! Lord of the ocean and yet He needs water to drink? What a stoop is this, for your Lord and mine to come to this! When He said, Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has not where to lay His head, He had come very low, but now, even the water, which is such a common thing around us that it ripples from the hills and streams through the valeseven that has fled from Himand He says, Give Me a drink. Bless your Lord, O you who love Him! Kiss His feet and wonder at His marvelous condescension!   
I wonder at His condescension, next, that He not only came into such straitness, but that He was so humble as to ask for a drink of water. He that hears prayer, Himself prays! He that listens to the cries of His redeemed and, with the fullness of His majestic bounty, opens His hands and supplies the needs of every living thing, sits there and says to the woman, Give Me a drink. O Master, how You have straitened Yourself! How You have humbled Yourself, that You should be a beggar of one of Your own creatures, asking for a sip of water!   
Admire that condescension still more when you think that HE asked it of her, of her who had had five husbands and he with whom she was living was not her husband! Yet Jesus says to her, Give Me a drink. Some of you good women would not have touched her with a pair of tongs, would you? And some of you good men would have passed by her on the other side. Jesus, however, was not only willing to give to her, but He was willing to receive from her! He would put Himself under obligation to a Samaritan sinner! So He says to her, who was not fit to come near Him to unloose the laces of His shoesJohn the Baptist said that He was not worthy to do thatbut what was she worthy to do? Yet Jesus says even to her, Give Me a drink.   
Then notice His condescension, again, when she answers Him tartly with a reply that was perhaps civil in tone, but that was virtually a refusal, He did not upbraid her. He did not say to her, Oh, you cruel woman! No, not a syllable or look of reproof did He give her. He needed not the water that was in the wellHe meant to have her heartand He did have it and, therefore, He went on to speak to her. Is not that a beautiful text, If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that gives to all men liberally, and upbraids not? So the Savior will not give this woman a word of upbraidingshe shall be led to upbraid herselfbut it shall be for her sin! She shall not be upbraided for her ungenerous reply that the Savior has passed over.   
This is the crown of Christs condescension, that He led her not to do what He asked her to do, but He led her to confess her sin. He said, Give Me a drink, but apparently she did not let down that waterpot, neither did He put it to His lips, parched as they were. But He led her to her confession of sin, her faith in Him, her running to call the menand all this gave Him meat to eat and water to drink that others knew not of! He had won a soul and this had refreshed Him after His weariness. We do not hear of His being weary any moreHe shook it all off at sight of that sinner saved! He was Himself, again, for He had received what He would die to win. He had received a heart returning to the great Father, He had found a soul that trusted in Him!   
I wish that I knew how to preach better so that I might lead you to my Master, for I do want you to glorify Him. I have often tried to set Him before you as He hung upon the Cross, and as He will come again in His glorious Second Advent. But just now I ask you to adore Him in His weariness as He sits upon the well! He is never lovelier than in His lowliness. There is a grandeur about Him when He rides to battle on His white horse and summons the kites and eagles to devour the slain, but we start back from that terrible vision of majesty to the attractiveness of His Love when He thus humbles Himself and makes Himself of no reputation and talks with a fallen woman! Seeing Him thus condescending, we love, reverence, admire and adore Him! Let us do so now.  
III. I shall have done when I have taken up my third point with considerable brevity, but with no little earnestness. It is this. You have seen the model Soul-Winner and the Master of condescension. Let us now notice THE MANNER OF THE WORKING OF GRACE with the view that we may see it here this evening.   
So you have come here, my Friend. You have not come to be saved. Oh, no! That is very far from your mind. You came to see the place, you came to look at a building to which a crowd will come and listen to a minister of the Gospel. Yes, yes, but even that is no reason why you should not get a blessing, for this woman only came to draw water. There came a woman of Samaria to draw water. She had no desire to see Jesus, or to learn of Him. She was only looking for water! Saul went to seek his fathers asses and found a kingdom! So you may find what you never sought and you may be found of Him whom you never sought!   
Listen! Open your ears! Perhaps your Day of Grace has come and the great silver bell is striking the hour of your salvationI hope that it is so. It may be so, though you have no thought of it. You are not converted, you are not a Christian, but you would like to do good in the world, would you not? You desire to do some kindly action, something generous. I have known that thought arise in a great many who yet did not know the Lord. Some people will not ask an unconverted person to give money. I would, for my Master said to a woman who was a great sinner, Give Me a drink. It may be to the everlasting good of some of you to do something for the Church of God, to do something for the Christ of God! Before you know where you are, it may be that you will commit yourselves by some kindly act. I wish you would do so.   
The way to win a person to yourself is not always to do him good, but to let him do you good. Jesus knew that, so He began by saying, Give Me a drink. So sometimes it may be wiseand I would try it nowto say to some of you, You would like to do someone good, would you not? You would like to do some kindly action. Well, notice, the Master is here, tonight, and He has come with much the same cry as He came to the Samaritan woman. Jesus says to you, Give Me a drink. Oh, you say, What could I give Christ to drink? If He were here, I would gladly give Him a drink. I am sure that if I were at my cottage door and He passed by on a dusty day, I would gladly turn the handle of the well and bring up a bucket of water. Though I am not converted, I would do that. Well, dear Heart, you may do that! I want you to do it! It is your privilege to refresh the very heart of Christ! If you were not a sinner, you could not do it, but being a guilty sinner, you can do it! Your very guilt and sin give you the possibility of refreshing Him. How? you ask. Why, repent of your sin! Have done with it, quit it, turn from it. There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repents. It does not say that the angels rejoice, though I have no doubt that they do, but it is said, There is joy in the presence of the angels. That is, the angels see the joy of Christ when a sinner repents! They spy it out and notice it. If you let fall a tear of repentance. If in your heart there is a sense of shame because of your sin. If in your soul there is the resolve to escape from it, you have refreshed Him!   
Next, guilty as you are, you can refresh Him by seeking salvation from Him. Did He not say to the woman, If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that says to you, Give Me a drink, you would have asked of Him, and He would have given you living water? And when she said to Jesus, Sir, give me this water, that refreshed Him! Ask this of Him, now, quietly in your soul. Oh, may God the Holy Spirit persuade you to do so! Cry to Him to save you! Say, Lord Jesus, save me! I am but a girl and careless, but save me. I am a young man and thoughtless, but save me tonight. By so doing, you have given Him a drink, and He is already refreshed! The sweetest drink of all is when you perceive that He is the Christ, and that God has sent Him to save youand you give yourself up to be saved by Him!   
Trust Him nowmay the good Spirit lead you to trust Him now! So will you refresh Himthis is the recompense for all His wounds and even for His deathwhen sinful souls come and trust Him. I remember hearing of one who, while walking the fields, found a little bird fly into his bosom. He could not understand why the creature should come there, but when he looked up, there was a hawk which had pursued the bird, and the little thing had flown into the bosom of the man for shelter. What do you think? Did the man tear it in pieces? No. He kept it safely till he had taken it away from the place where the hawk wasand then he gave it its liberty again. The Lord Jesus Christ will do just that with you if you trust Him! Sin pursues youfly to His bosom, for only there are you safe!   
I have heard of a great king who had pitched his royal pavilion and when he was about to move it, he found that a bird had come and built its nest there. He was such a king that, although the pavilion was of silk, he ordered his soldiers not to take it down until that birds young ones were hatched and could fly. I love the generosity of a prince who will act like that, but my Lord is a nobler and kinder Prince than all others! Oh, what a Prince He is for generosity! Poor bird, if you will dare to trust Him and make your nest in the pavilion where He dwells, you shall never be destroyed, nor your hope, either, but you shall be safe forever!

Oh, that I knew how to bring you to Christ, dear Hearers! This is a hot summers night and you are weary, perhaps, of my talking, but I would not mind that if I could bring you to Jesus! Oh, that I might have fruit from this sermon! This week I believe I might say that I have met and heard of hundreds who, in past years, have been brought to the Savior by the printed sermons. They came to me, grasped my hand, and thanked meand I praised Godbut then I thought, Yes, God did bless me, and He has blessed the printed sermons, but I want present fruit, and to see sinners, now, close in with Christ and be eternally saved. Is all that I preach to you only a dream or a fiction? Then, fling it away from you and despise both it and me! But if it is true and if I only tell you of a true salvation, and a true Savior, come and have it, come and trust Him now, for He casts out none who come to Him! May this be the deciding time with many of you, for our Lord Jesus Christs sake! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **JOHN 4:1-32.**

Verses 1-4. When, therefore, the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, (though Jesus Himself baptized not, but His disciples), He left Judea and departed again into Galilee. And He needed to go through Samaria. When He was needed in so many places, He did not care to stay among the Pharisees where He was not wanted. They would not receive His message, so He left the lordly professors and went to look after a fallen woman! Christs estimates of usefulness are not always the same as ours. We think it a grand thing to be the means of converting a great manChrist thinks it a worthy work to convert a great sinner!

5. Then He came to a city of Samaria which is called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son, Joseph. You remember how the Patriarch said to his favorite son, Moreover I have given to you one portion above your brothers, which I took out of the hand of the Amorite with my sword and with my bow. This was the parcel of ground which was near to Sychar.

6. Now Jacobs well was there. Jesus, therefore, being wearied with His journey, sat thus on the well. What could the wearied Savior do? Why, He could save a great sinner! And now that He is no more wearied, what can He not do? Brethren, when you go to preach or to teach, you like to feel fresh and vigorous, but do not think that this state is at all necessary! Your wearied Master won the woman at Samaria. So may you win souls, even in your weariness! Let us not make excuses for ourselves because we do not feel fit for our work. God may bless us more when we feel weary than He does at any other time.

6. And it was about the sixth hour. Twelve oclock in the day, I suppose. Was that the time when the women usually came to draw water? No, but it was the time when a woman who was shunned by other women would be most likely to comeand the Savior knew that. She had to take odd times to get to the well, for her neighbors did not care to be seen in the company of such a reprobate as she wasand she was probably just as anxious to avoid them.

7, 8. Then came a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus said to her, Give Me a drink. (For His disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat). Or, food.

9. Then said the woman of Samaria unto Him, How is it that You, being a Jew, ask me for a drink, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans. The woman seemed to say to the Savior, You Jews will not acknowledge us until You want something from us! Now that You happen to be thirsty, You do not mind asking for a drink from me, but, at other times, You will have no dealings with us. This was a tart reply to our Lords request, but He did not answer the woman in the tone she had adopted. When you are dealing with a soul, you must not lose your temper because of a sharp word, a hard saying, or even a blasphemous reply. Soul-winners must be very tender and gentle. God make us so!

10. Jesus answered and said unto her, If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that says to you, Give Me a drink; you would have asked of Him, and He would have given you living water. Oh, that ignorance, that baneful ignorance! If you knew, you would have asked of Him, and He would have given you. Sometimes, my Brothers and Sisters, the key of a mans salvation may lie in your instructing him in the simplest matters of the Gospel, for, if he does but know, he will askand Christ will give! Great issues may depend upon this, which seems but the turning of a straw. Therefore, go and tell men the way of salvation, for, in the most of cases, ignorance, alas, bars the door! I mean not among those who have long heard the Gospel, but I mean the outsiders who do not know anything about it. Tell it to them and you may, thereby, open to them the Kingdom of Heaven.

11-14. The woman said to Him, Sir, You have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from where, then, have You that living water? Are You greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle? Jesus answered and said to her, Whoever drinks of this water shall thirst again: but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. So you see, my dear Hearer, if you get Grace from Christ, you really possess it and it is of that nature that it remains in you and becomes, itself, a spring within you, springing up into everlasting life. It is not that temporary, trumpery salvation which some preach, which saves you for a quarter of a year and then lets you perish! It is everlasting salvation! Once received, it does not pass away like that little dribbling shower that watered the pavement just now, and is gone, but it shall be in you a well of water, springing up, a living and enduring principle, or, to use another Scriptural expression, incorruptible seed, which lives and abides forever. This salvation is worth your having! Then, get it! It is worth your pining after, praying for and believing. Oh, that you might have it, even you! As soon as you trust the Lord Jesus Christ, it is yours, and yours forever!

15. The woman said to Him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come here to draw. The woman had not even the faintest idea of the spiritual truth of which Christ had spoken to her. The fact is, conviction must come before conversion. No sinner is made alive till he is first killed. You cannot clothe him till he is naked. So now the Savior began that conviction work in this womanand He did it very wisely. He did not, at first, charge her with criminality, but He led her to accuse herself.

16, 17. Jesus said to her, Go, call your husband, and come here. The woman answered and said, I have no husband. And, as she said it, no doubt she tried to look as innocent as possible. But a guilty flush stole over her face despite her attempt to keep it back.

17. Jesus said to her, you have well said, I have no husband. Always give people credit for what is well said. If you want to win them, you must mind that you are not rough with them, but admit what you can of the truth in their utteranceyou have well said, I have no husband.

18, 19. For you have had five husbands; and he whom you now have is not your husband: in that said you truly. The woman said unto Him, Sir, I Perceive that You are a Prophet. It would have been better if she had perceived that she was a sinner! Perhaps she did perceive it, but scarcely cared, yet, to confess it openly, so she said, I perceive that You are a Prophet. Now she has a religious difficulty and what man or woman is there in the world, however far gone from morality, who has not some religious difficulties? And the more immoral they become, the more difficulties they are pretty sure to have. I hate that style of preaching which is everlastingly pandering to difficulties which never would exist except in a dissolute generation like the present! We preach a plain Gospel and when mens hearts are right, it is all plain to them. To him who desires to understand, difficulties soon cease to be a trouble! We had better deal with mens hearts and lives than try to answer their quibbling questions. This was the womans dilemma

20. Our fathers worshipped in this mountain. That is, Mount Gerizim   
20-23. And You say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship. Jesus said to her, Woman, believe Me, the hour comes when you shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. You worship you know not whatwe know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour comes, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeks such to worship Him. You see, Brothers and Sisters, all the difficulties that arise are but temporary! Put them away and get to the great spiritual business that concerns us allthe truly seeking after God in spirit and in truth! If you really want to find God, you shall find Him. He is already seeking you and your very desire after Him is the proof that He has already had dealings with you by His Spirit! Therefore, come unto Him and come at once, for the Father seeks such to worship Him.   
24-27. God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth. The woman said to Him, I know that Messiah comes, which is called Christ: when He is come, He will tell us all things. Jesus said to her, I that speak unto you am He. And upon this came His disciples. This gracious work of the Master had been done in private. Christ knew that such a person as this woman was not to be spoken to in the presence of His disciples, who were scarcely sympathetic enough for such service. But her heart is now won by the Messiah! So now you may come in, you disciples! Providence shut the door and kept them waiting a while until this delicate piece of work was done!

27. And marveled that He talked with the woman. These men who had, themselves, been picked off the dunghill, marveled that Christ spoke to this woman! So have I known some who were, themselves, once grievous sinners, yet they have become horribly conceited some years after conversion. And they have thought that other great sinners might not be saved as they were! God deliver from such abominable pride any soul that professes to be saved! Every Believer should feel, If the Lord has saved me, He can save anybody. And that state of mind ought always to be ours.   
27. Yet no man said, What seek You? or, Why talk You with her? They had some sense left, sense enough to keep silent.   
28. The woman then left her waterpotPossessed only with one thought, going to tell others the glad news she. herself. had believed! She left her waterpot.   
28, 29. And went her way into the city, and said to the men, Come, see a Man which told me all things that ever I did. Is not this the Christ? They must have been surprised to hear her talking about good things. There was no more likely messenger to win men, or to strike them with curiosity, than such a woman as this.   
30-32. Then they went out of the city and came to Him. In the meantime His disciples urged Him, saying, Master, eat. But He said unto them, I have meat to eat that you know not of. So has every man who lives to win souls for Christ! There is a table which he enters where the very delicacies of God are brought before him and his soul is sustained and his strength is renewed by the dainties that the Lord has provided for those who do His will! Brothers and Sisters, may we often feed upon this heavenly meat! Amen.

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PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #2277 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

SYCHARS SINNER SAVED   
NO. 2277

**INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS-DAY, OCTOBER 9 1892. DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, APRIL 13, 1890.

**Jesus answered and said unto her, If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that says to you, Give Me to drink; you would have asked of Him, and He**

**would have given you living water.   
John 4:10.**

I COULD not help saying, in the reading, that the womans answer to our Lord was, at least, somewhat abrupt, if not really rude, but, with great meekness, Jesus took no notice of it so as to blame her for her tone, or for her unkind manner. He was too intent upon saving her soul to care about a little rudeness on her part. Learn a lesson from your Lords conduct! When you are dealing with souls, do not always expect them to yield to you at once. Do not expect them, even, to receive your expostulations with thankfulness. Be prepared to be repelled and even to be ridiculed. And when it so happens, do not be put out of temper, or out of heart, but go straight on with your work whichever way they may go.

Our Savior, instead of being vexed at the rudeness of the woman, said to her, If you knew. Ah, poor Soul, you do not know to whom you are speaking thus rudely! If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that says to you, Give Me to drink; you would have asked of Him, and He would have given you living water. Oh, that we might have a passion for the souls of men! May we be vehement in our desire, with a love that burns like coals of juniper! May we not be put off by any discouragements, but let us resolve that before we have done with any poor sinner, we will do all in our power to bring him to Christ, so that, if men are lost, it shall not be our faultand if they are saved, we will, at least, have this part in itthat we have set Christ plainly before them as their souls only hope!

Now, our Savior, having thus set us an example of great meekness, went on to read this womans heart in a amazing manner and, reading her heart, He foretold what her action would be when her ignorance was removed. It is a difficult thing to tell what people will do under such and such circumstances, for men and women are very unaccountable creatures. But the Savior made a prediction as to what this woman would do. That will be my first pointJesus foretold what her action would be when her ignorance was removed. And then, secondly, I will show you that the fact justified the prediction. As soon as the woman knew who it was that spoke to her, she asked Him for the Living WaterJesus gave it to her and she went on her way rejoicing!

I. First, then, JESUS FORETOLD WHAT HER ACTION WOULD BE WHEN HER IGNORANCE WAS REMOVED. He saw in her a kindly disposition towards right things, but she was hindered by her ignorance. If that hindrance could be taken away, she would at once travel in the right road.

Let me mention the points of saving knowledge which it was desirable for her to know.   
These were, first, the nature of salvation. If you knew the gift of God. Thousands of people in the world do not know what salvation means. They conceive, if they have any notion of it at all, that it means escaping from Hell and going to Heaven when they die, which is a very imperfect and incorrect idea of salvation. The gift of God is eternal lifeand that is salvation! God gives to all who believe in Christ a new life, a vital principle, something to be within them alwaysthe reigning and ruling principle of their lives. Salvation means salvation from sin. To the drunk, it is salvation from the drink. To the swearer, it is salvation from a profane heart. To the unchaste, it is salvation from impurity. It means deliverance from the power of evil in the life and submission to the power of that which is good and gracious, by which sin shall be cast out.   
Do you remember the meaning of the name, Jesus? You shall call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins. The salvation that we have to preach produces a change of heart, a renewal of nature, a deliverance from the power of the devil and brings the renewed man under the supreme power of the Holy Spirit of God! If some men knew this, they would begin to seek for it. Are there not many here who feel that they ought to turn over a new leaf and they do not know how to do it? They have not the power, even though they have, in a measure, the will. Now, salvation brings you both will and powerit saves you not only from the wrath to come, but from the sin that is now within you. That is the nature of salvation.   
This woman did not know the freeness of salvation. If you knew the gift of Godthe gift of God. She thought, perhaps, that it had to be bought with money, or procured by sacrifices, or attained by good works after a long period of preparation. The Savior assured her that salvation was the gift of Godfreely given, not because it is deserved, but because God delights to bless even the unthankful and the evil! Given, not because of penances, or austerities, or myriads of prayers, or floods of tearsbut freely given to every soul that is willing to accept it by faith in Jesus Christ! Oh, if many knew this, they would seek to have it! But they do not know what salvation is. And they do not know that it is to be had for nothing and to be had on the spot. If you knew the gift of God.   
Further, it was necessary for this woman to know the Person of Christ. If you knew who it is that says to you, Give Me to drink. Some do not know who the Christ is. Though He has been here and lived, and died, and is gone to Heaven and is preached by tens of thousands of preachers, and His blessed Book is with you to this day, yet you do not know that the Savior is God over all, blessed forever, the second Person of the sacred Trinity, the Son of God and yet Man! He took upon Himself the nature of man, was born into this world, lived a suffering and obedient life, died an ignominious and painful death! And now He has risen from the dead and He is sitting at the right hand of God, even the Father, and will shortly come to judge the quick and the dead according to our Gospel. Now this is He, this God, this Man, this Mediator between God and men who is to be trusted! He was commissioned of God and, therefore, He was called the Christ, the Anointed. He has come into the world on purpose to do the will of Him that sent Him and to finish His work. Oh, you sons and daughters of men, if you would be saved, you must come and trust yourselves with the Incarnate God who is bone of your bone, and flesh of your flesh!   
This woman also did not know the freeness of Christ, for when our Savior said, If you knew the gift of God, He really meant Himself. Paul said, Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift. This is He, the Gift of the Father! Christ has not come into the world simply to save the rich, or the learned, or those who struggle through many examinations to obtain a high degree of human wisdom. He died, also, for the poor, for you who know your own ignorance and bewail for you w ho know your sinnership and repent of it. He came not call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. God has given His Son Jesus Christ, freely given Him! You may have Him for the asking! You may have Him for the taking! Whoever believes in Him has everlasting life. And if you will but trust Him, there is eternal life for you! It was important that this woman should know this. If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that says to you, Give Me to drink.   
If you look at the text, you will now see the conduct which follows this saving knowledge. Christ foretold what this woman would do when her ignorance was removed. What would she do? Well, first, she would forget about the idea of giving Christ anything! He began by saying to this sinful woman, Give Me to drink, but He afterwards said, If you knew the gift of God, you would have asked of Him.   
I am continually hearing, from converts and others, the expression, I gave my heart to Christ, as a description of conversion. Now I do not find fault with that expression, for we must give our hearts to Christbut very seriously let me say that I am afraid that that phrase will do much mischief unless it is well guarded and looked after. The Gospel is not, Give your hearts to

Christ, and you shall be saved. The Gospel is, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christthat is, TRUST Himand you shall be saved. When you do that, you will be sure to give Him your heart, by-and-by, if not at once. Salvation is not by your giving anything to Christ, but by Christ giving something to you! I am glad that you have given your heart to Christbut have you learned, first, this lessonthat He gave His heart for you? We do not find salvation by giving Christ anything! That is the fruit of it, but salvation comes by Christ giving us somethingdid I say somethingby Christ giving us EVERYTHING! By His giving us Himself!   
I used to notice that a good deal of Sunday school teaching to the children was, Dear child, love Jesus. That is not the way of salvation! The way of salvation is to trust Jesus. The fruit of salvation is that the dear child does love Jesus, but that is not the way of salvation. The way of salvation is to take Christ, to trust Christ. When you are saved, the proof of it will be that you will give your heart to Christ, but do not let us turn things upside down lest, beginning with a little blunder, we should go on to some great error and set up, again, the ruinous doctrine which once sank the world in darknessthe doctrine of an imaginary salvation by our own works!   
Next, the text suggests the idea of asking of Christ as the first thing for us to do. How many there are who know that salvation is a gift, but they never seek it! They know that it is all of Grace, but they never ask for it. An occasional prayer, when you are half-asleep at nightnow and then an expression of a wish that you were betterthat is all the effort you put forth. The Lord says, You shall seek Me, and find Me when you shall search for Me with all your heart. Men seek after gold as if they had a thousand heartsbut they seek after Grace as if their heart were cut into a thousand pieces and only one solitary thousandth part of it went after the blessing! This woman did really ask of Christ, and asked with earnestness. And so must you. If you did but know Christ. If you did but know the value of His salvation. If you did but know the freeness of it, my Hearers, you would get to your knees and you would never rise from them again till you had found Him who alone can save your souls!   
Let me ask you unsaved ones, do you cry to God for mercy? Are you in earnest about it? Does your very soul go up to God in prayer? If not, do not wonder that you still remain in the gall of bitterness! How can you expect God to give to you that which you do not value enough to heartily ask for?   
This woman, when her ignorance was removed, would be led to put asking, first, and then really to ask. And, next, receiving would graciously follow the asking! I call your attention to the words, You would have asked of Him, and He would have given you. Dear Hearer, if you had asked, you would have had! You have not because you ask not. Sitting in that pew, tonight, without God, without Christit is because you have not sought Him, you have not cried for Him! Had you sought Him, you would have found Him, for everyone who asks, receives; and he who seeks, finds; and to him that knocks, it shall be opened. I do not like merely to utter this Truth of GodI wish I could press it home upon your heart and that you would feel that if you have not asked, it is right that you should not have receivedand that if you had asked, you would not have asked in vain! You would have asked and He would have given.   
Then she would have received and the preciousness of the gift would have been apparent. The result would have been that she would have been a happy woman, greatly prizing the gift of God, greatly valuing the dear Savior, singing in her delight because she had found Him who could take all her sin away and send her back to Sychar a renewed woman. Instead of being a destroyer of the souls of men, she would become a herald of the Cross to them and the means of their salvation.   
So our Savior pictured what she would have done. I wonder whether it is true about any of you, here, that you have only kept from prayer because you have not known better? Have you not found Christ because you really did not know anything about Him? You have been making mistakes and blunders and that is why you are not saved. Now we have explained the matter to you and you can see itI trust that not another day will begin and end without your seeking and finding Christand so entering into eternal life.   
Now consider the line of action which this teaching suggests to us.   
If it is, in many cases, the fact that nothing but ignorance is keeping men out of eternal life. If it is true of many that if they did but know, they would ask and they would receive, then if you have not found Christ, be wise enough to try and learn all about Him! Do not remain in ignorance where that ignorance is not bliss, but endless woe. Wake yourself up and say, If I can find out what salvation is, I will find it out, even if I have to burn the midnight oil, and wear my eyes out in searching through the sacred Book. I will hear as well as read. I will know all that I can about salvation and about this Jesus, the Son of God, the unspeakable Gift of God. Well, take care that you go where Christ is most preached! A little girl heard her mother say, We went to the House of God to hear about Jesus. Mother, she said, at the place where Aunty goes, they do not hear anything about Jesus, I am sure, for I went with her many times, and I never heard anything about Him.   
Do not go to places where Christ is not preached! Let those go who have no souls to be saved, if there are such people, but you, dear Hearers, are in an anxious state. You need to find salvation and, lest ignorance should hinder you, take heed what you hear and take heed how you hear. I was but a child when I first began to seek the Savior, but I have a distinct recollection that as soon as the sun shone into my little bedchamber, I was awakeand what was I reading? Doddridges, Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul, Alleines, Alarm to the Unconverted, and books of that order! I read when I was but a child, in the hope that I might somehow find Christ and be saved. When I went to a place of worship, I took no notice of the music of the organ, or the eloquence of the preacher. I kept listening with this one thought in my mindOh that I might but find salvation! Oh, that I might but find Christ! Whenever that is the case with anyone, depend upon it, sooner or later the ignorance that bars the way will melt and disappear! And you will ask, and God will give, and there will be joy in Heaven and joy in your own heart because you are saved!   
One thing more. If you discover the Truth of God, then go on learning more about it so that you may tell it to others. It is of the nature of the Grace of God, when it gets into one heart, that it needs to flow into another. The woman of Sychar believes in Jesus. Now she must go and tell the men of the city about the Christ. I wonder whether she went to the men with whom she had sinned? Women did not often speak openly to men in those Oriental regions, but this woman did. She had broken through the laws of decorum and of the Word of God, so away she goes and says to the men, Come, see a Man who told me all things that I ever did: is not this the Christ? Go on learning about Christ, I say, that you may teach it to othersand never think a day is well spent unless you have spoken to someone about your Master, unless you have at least dropped one tiny seed somewhere to bring forth fruit to His praise! Our Savior predicted that the woman would ask and that she would receive if she could but get rid of the ignorance that weighed her down.   
II. My second point is that all this came true. THE FACT JUSTIFIED THE PREDICTION. When this womans ignorance was taken away, she did what Christ said she would do!   
First, let me remind you that what she did know stood her in good stead. She was not converted when she came to Christvery far from it but she did know something about Him, for she said to Him, I know that Messiah comes, which is called Christ. It is a good beginning when you know anything. I heard, yesterday, a piece of bigotry concerning Dissenters which astonished me for the moment, and then I said, I am rather glad to hear it, for I like to meet with men, nowadays, who believe anythingfor the majority of people do not believe anything at all! And there is hope for a man, or a woman, who really knows and believes something. If you have one solid bit somewhere, we can get a fulcrum for our lever and so can move you. This woman said, I know that Messiah comes. Teachers of the children in the Sunday schools, it may be years hence, but if you have taught a child to really know something, that knowledge may be the beginning of his salvation. It was partly by common tradition, partly by conversation and partly by the belief of her associates that this woman came to say, I know that Messiah comes.   
Then she had got into her head another thing, that when He did come, He would tell them all things. When He is come, He will tell us all things. In effect, the womans belief led her to say, When the Messiah comes, we shall all be set right. Now, we Jews and Samaritans have had a quarrel about where we ought to worship. The Samaritans say that Mount Gerizim is the place where the blessing was pronounced, and that we ought to worship here. They only believe, as you know, in the Pentateuch. Those five books of Moses do not say much about Jerusalem, or about a Temple. Clinging to that grand old Pentateuch, I believe in worshipping here at Gerizim. But the Jews say that we ought to worship at Jerusalem. Well, when Messiah comes, He will tell us all things.   
She had that idea firmly fixed in her mind. Where did she get it? I will read you the passage in order that you may see how a single text may give a hook on which a soul may hang. One single text may be a little bit of solid rock on which you may plant your lever and begin to lift the heavy weight of an immortal soul! In the 18

th Chapter of Deuteronomy, beginning at the 15th verse, we read as followsThe LORD your God will raise up unto you a Prophet from the midst of you, of your brethren, like unto me; unto him you shall hearken; according to all that you desired of the Lord your God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the Voice of the LORD my God, neither let me see this great fire anymore, that I die not. And the LORD said unto me, They have well spoken that which they have spoken. They need a Mediatorthey shall have a Mediator to speak to them from Me.   
NOW, here is the special verse, I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto you, and will put My words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. This woman pulled the text about a little, but she gathered this from it, There is a great Prophet to come, Gods anointed Prophet, the Messiah, or Christ; and when He comes, we shall know Him by this, that He will tell us all things. He will more fully expound the Truth of God about which we may now be in doubt. That is what she knew and that helped her a great deal.   
But, next, what our Lord told her was a still greater help to her, for He directed her to Himself. He began, first, by preaching the Gospel to her. He would give her Living Water and if she drank it, it would remain in her forever a well of water, springing up unto everlasting life. And He was ready to give her this Living Water then and there.   
Next, He unveiled her life before her. He told her that she had had five husbands and that the man with whom she then lived was not her husband. With two or three strokes He drew her portrait. She marveled at this. It is a great thing for a man to see himselfit is a greater thing for him to see his Savior. After you are once converted, do not study yourself. Study your Lord1 God has given one objective for the souls eye to rest upon, and that is Christ! Keep your eyes always resting upon Him. But, in order to her conversion, she was made to see herself, a wretched woman, living in abominable sinand she was astonished at the sight! But even that helped her.   
Then the Savior took her off from all outward religion. He said to her, Woman, believe Me, the hour comes when you shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. Jesus told her that the hour had come when the true worshippers would worship the Father in spirit and in truth. Notice, too, that Christ took her off from the Samaritan worship. He said, Salvation is of the Jews. But then He took her off the Jewish worship, too, and said, Neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem. It is all very well for you to try to convert a Roman Catholic into an English Churchmanthat is, converting him from a Samaritan to a Jew. It is all very well for you to turn him from a Wesleyan into an Independent, or from an Independent into a Baptist, or from an Arminian into a Calvinist. The fact is, though, you have to get him off everything but Christ! And you have not done your work until you have brought him to know that no profession of religion, no outward ceremonies, whatever, can save the soul. They that worship God must worship Him in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeks such to worship Him.   
The Savior had done this woman great service. He had preached to her the Gospel, unveiled her sin, taken her off herself and off all external religiousness. Then came the main point of allHe revealed Himself to her, unveiling the sacred majesty of His Divine Glory. He said to her, I that speak unto you am He. When she said, I know that Messiah comes, He at once spoke that grand word, I am He. Now, dear Friend, if the Lord has given you only to know one Truth, hold on to it! And may He teach you more of yourself, more of Himself and bring you to know that Jesus Christ is the one and only Savior even as He brought this woman to know it!   
Well, once more, her own experience of Christ settled her faith. I do not know whether you see my drift. The woman had the idea in her mind that when the Messiah came, He would tell all things. She listened to Christ and when He drew a picture of her entire life, something began to whisper in her heartHe is telling you all things that you ever did. Is not this the Christ? And when Christ said to her, I that speak unto you am He, the work was completed and off she went and said to the men the first thing that she could think of. She said, You know that the Messiah, when He comes, is to tell us all things. Moses said that in Deuteronomy. You remember the passage in the Pentateuch! Now, she said, I have met with a Man who has told me all things that ever I did. At least, He has told everything in one particular line. Do you not think that this could be the Messiah?   
In her poor, womanly way, she had argued herself into that beliefand I think that it was a good, reasonable argument, too. I have known many a soul get to Heaven with no better guidance than some one text of Scripture. One Truth of God will guide a man to Heaven, though 50 may feed him better than one. When a bridge is to be made across some deep chasm, what is to be done? The first thing is to shoot an arrow across, or a gunshot that will carry a thread. When you have a thread across, you can pull a string over the gulf. When you have the string across, you can pull a thicker and stronger cord across. That can pull a rope and that rope can carry a bigger rope that can bear a cable! And, by-and-by, when you have got your cables across, you can begin to make your iron bridge.   
Now, in this womans heart, that one belief, I know that Messiah comes, which is called Christ, was like the thread shot across the chasm! When He is come, He will tell us all things, was like the piece of string. And when she found that she had met with One who did tell her all things, she had a cable across the chasm! This is the way in which God removes ignorance! This is the way in which God builds up faithlittle by littleand I, therefore, pray any of you who believe even a little, to hold on to it, and not to give up! Search the Scriptures. Hear the Gospel until you believe a great deal more and, believing that Jesus is the Christ, sent of God to save sinners! Trust Him wholly. Trust only Him! And so you shall enter into eternal life.   
I think that I hear one ask, Do you mean to say that that woman was saved? Yes, I expect to meet her in Heaven. Among the fair daughters of the New Jerusalem, the woman that was waiting at the well will surely be found! But she was such a shocking character, says one. She was a shocking characterI hope that there is not any woman here half as bad as she was, though there may be, and there may even be some worse than she wasbut she was saved and so will you be, if you go the same way that she went. There may be men here who are steeped in vice much worse than this poor woman ever was. You generally blame the woman and the man is allowed to go scot-free. But tonight, man or woman, I do not care which you areeven if you have committed the same sinthe very same and are guilty in the sight of God, and before your own conscience, yet listen to two things that Jesus said to that woman.   
The first was, Woman, believe Me. Woman, believe Christ. Man, believe Christ. Never mind me. Never mind ministers or priests. Believe Christ, the Sent One of God, for He cannot lie! He speaks the truth! Believe Him and believe in Him, that is, trust Him, rest upon Him for salvation!   
And then Jesus left her with this word ringing in her ears, the last word that He spoke, I that speak unto you am He. Believe that Christ is He whom God has sent to save sinners! Believe that Christ is He who took our sin, the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world! Believe Him as He says, I am He, and say to Him, I, Lord, am like this woman, one of the chief of sinners, but I believe that You are the Savior of sinners, and I trust myself with You. Save me, Lord, for Your own names sake!   
Now, you see, I have brought the horses to the water. But I cannot make them drink! I have set Christ before you, but I cannot make you have Him! May the Holy Spirit help you to take Him, tonight, once and for all! Do not go away till He has done so. Give not sleep to your eyes, nor slumber to your eyelids till you have closed in with Christ and accepted Him as your Savior! For when you fall asleep, tonight, you may never wake up again on this earth. It will be a dreadful thing to wake up in the land where hope can never comewhere you shall see afar off Gods chosen ones, but, as for yourself, you shall be told that there is a great gulf fixed between you and them so that they cannot come to you, and you cannot go to them Repent and believe the Gospel! May the Holy Spirit cause you to do so even now, for Jesus sake! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON **JOHN 4:1-42.**

Verses. 1-3. When, therefore, the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, (though Jesus Himself baptized not, but His disciples), He left Judea, and departed again into Galilee. Our Lord knew that the Pharisees would assail Him now that He was prospering, and gathering disciples. He, therefore, went away from them as He did on other occasions. Whenever the cause of God grows, Satan is sure to be violent against it. Notice that our Savior did not, Himself, baptize His followers. Now, if Baptism depended upon the character or the office of the baptizer, Jesus would certainly have done it! But to show us that the person baptizing does not impart any Grace to the person baptized, our Lord baptized not, but left that work to His disciples.

4. And He must needs go through Samaria. Men say that, Must is for the king. But our King puts Himself under an imperative, must, under a Divine necessity. Though obliged to do nothing, yet He obliges Himself to do deeds of mercy and Grace.

5, 6. Then He came to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Now Jacobs well was there. Holy men often impart an interest to the very place which they inhabit. We should not have cared anything about Sychar, or its well, if Jacob had not been there. Where godly men have been, the ground is sacred. How much more so where the God of men comes to visit us!

6. Jesus, therefore, being wearied with His journey, sat thus on the well and it was about the sixth hour. Only half a day spent on His journey, yet He is weary. See, Brothers and Sisters, how He was compassed with infirmity! Our Great High Priest so truly took our flesh that He was wearied with His journey. He that rolls the stars along was weary in the middle of the day! So weary was He that He sat in the very attitude of weariness, as best He could, on the curb of the wellJesus, therefore, being wearied with His journey, sat thus on the well.

7. There came a woman of Samaria to draw water. Jesus said to her, Give Me to drink. Wonderful words of condescension! The Creator is asking drink of His creature! Perfect holiness is asking of a sinner! He without whom there were no clouds, or rain, or springs, or wells, says to a sinful woman, Give Me to drink.

8, 9. (For His disciples were gone away unto the city to buy food). The woman of Samaria said unto Him, How is it that you, being a Jew, ask drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? For the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans. In effect, the woman said, Now that You are thirsty, You can ask drink of me. But at another time, proud Jew that You are, You would not speak to a Samaritan. Surely, this was rather a gruff answer, if not really rude. If she had known who it was to whom she was speaking, she would not have answered Him thus.

10. Jesus answered and said unto her, If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that says to you, Give Me to drink; you would have asked of Him, and He would have given you living water. Something better than the water from Jacobs well! Though you have denied Him a simple draft of water, He would not have denied you something infinitely better, namely, Living Water. She little knew what that Living Water was.

11, 12. The woman said unto Him, Sir, You have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from where, then, have You that living water? Are You greater than our father, Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle? That last word, cattle, lets us see wherein the water of Jacobs well could never be compared to the Living Water that Jesus gives! If beasts can partake of it, it is not that high and spiritual thing which immortal souls need, which Jesus came to give. Unwittingly, the woman had answered her own question, Are You greater than our father Jacob?

13, 14. Jesus answered and said unto her, Whoever drinks of this water shall thirst again: but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. If Christ gives you Grace, it is eternal life that He gives you! It is not a life that can die. It is not a Grace that you can lose. It is everlasting lifea supply of living water which turns to a spring or welland always remains within the heart that receives it.

15. The woman said unto Him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come here to draw. She had caught the Lords meaning so far as the perpetuity of the water was concerned, but she still did not know what the Living Water was. It was all a riddle to her, as I am afraid it is to some of you. There is many a Doctor of Divinity who cannot explain what the Living Water is.

16. Jesus said unto her. As she had apparently learned nothing by His instruction, He now tried another plan with her and began to deal with her conscience.

16, 17. Go, call your husband, and come here. The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, You have well said, I have no husband. Praise people whenever you can. There was nothing good about this woman, but she had spoken the truthYou have well said, I have no husband. Our Lord purposely laid the emphasis on the last word.

18. For you have had five husbands; and he whom you now have is not your husband: in that said you truly. What an exposure of the life she was living! Jesus laid bare what she and her companion in sin may have thought that no man knewHe whom you now have is not your husband: in that said you truly.

19. The woman said unto Him, Sir. She is getting more respectful now. When conscience begins to work, men treat the ministry with greater deference.

19, 20. I perceive that you are a Prophet. Our fathers worshipped in this mountain. How pleased she was to get away from that unpleasant subject of her five husbands and the man who was not her husband! How anxious people are to salve their consciences by discussing religious matters of a general character! When you come a little too close to them, they edge off if they can. So this woman said, Our fathers worshipped in this mountain.

20, 21. And You say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship. Jesus said unto her, Woman believe Me. Our Savior gave the woman good Gospel advice, Woman, believe Me

21, 22. The hour comes when you shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem worship the Father. You worship you know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. They have the oracles of God. The Savior comes of the Jews. They are right as far as they follow the instruction they have received, and you Samaritans are wrong in keeping to the Law of Moses, alone, and rejecting the rest of the Scriptures.

23, 24. But the hour comes, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeks such to worship Him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth All the true worship in the world is of Gods seeking. None would ever worship Him aright if He did not lead them to it. He seeks themand then they seek Him.

25, 26. The woman said unto Him, I know that Messiah comes, which is called Christ: when He is come, He will tell us all things. Jesus said unto her, I that speak unto you am He. Now her eyes were opened. That last word had made her see!

27. And upon this came His disciples, and marveled that He talked with the woman. How big they were, how wise in their own conceit to be astonished that Christ was talking with a woman! The followers of Christ often get much too big for their placesand too big to please their Master, too. Though they marveled that He was speaking with a woman, as the Revised Version translates it.

27. Yet no man said, What do You seek? or, Why do You talk with her? They dared not do that. They had too much awe of Him. But, do you know I have often wished that they had done so? I should like to have read what Christ would have said to them. How He would have reproved them for thinking that He had degraded Himself by talking with a woman, or with anybody. Our Savior would have vindicated womans place in the world in a way that one might have liked to have heard.

28. The woman then left her water pot and went her way into the cit. Why should she stay any longer? The faces of the disciples did not look pleasant, but their Master had comforted her. She would not stop to lose that comfort by hard words from the disciplesshe went her way into the city.

28-32. And said to the men, Come, see a Man which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ? Then they went out of the city, and came to Him. In the meanwhile His disciples prayed Him saying, Master, eat. But He said unto them, I have meat to eat that you know not of.

39, 40. And many of the Samaritans of that city believed on Him for the saying of the woman, which testified, He told me all that ever I did. So when the Samaritans were come unto Him they besought Him that He would tarry with them: and He abode there two days. Two days of Christs personal ministrywhat might not come of that?

41, 42. And many more believed because of His own word; and said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of your saying: for we have heard Him ourselves, and know that this is, indeed, the Christ, the Savior of the world. Would God that many might be brought to know that Christ, the Savior, tonight! Amen.

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SAVING KNOWLEDGE

NO. 782

**DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, NOVEMBER 24, 1867, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**Jesus answered and said unto her, If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that says to you,   
Give Me to drink; you would have asked of Him,   
and He would have given you living water.   
John 4:10.**

THE matter will turn, this morning, upon those few words, If you knew the gift of God. The woman of Samaria, who was met by our Lord at the well, was an object of electing love but she was not yet regenerated. One difficulty alone lay in the wayshe was willing to receive the Truth of God, perfectly willing to be obedient to itbut ignorance lay like a stone before the door of her sepulcher. If you knew the gift of God, says Christ, then you would have asked, and I would have given. There was the one barrier! If that could be removed she would be a saved soul.

The impediment which lay so much in her way was ignorance concerning the Lord Jesus Himself. She was not an uninstructed woman. She was evidently acquainted, at least, with portions of Biblical history. she could speak of Father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank there himself, and his children, and his cattle. She was versed certainly in the peculiarities of her sectHow is it that You, being a Jew, ask drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? For the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.

She was equally well acquainted with the hopes, which were common to her people and to the Jewish nationI know that Messiah comes, which is called Christ. When He is come, He will tell us all things. She was not, therefore, kept out of the kingdom on account of ignorance. In these matters she was better instructed than, I am afraid, are some of youfor, alas, in this age there are hundreds of people who are educated in everything

except their Bibleswho could answer questions upon most sciences, but concerning Christ Crucified they know not even so much as the very elements! But the point which kept this woman, I say, out of the kingdom was thisthat she did not know Christshe knew not the gift of God, and who it was that said unto her, Give Me to drink.

And this, indeed, is enough to keep any of us out of peace, and life, and joy, for, until we know God in human flesh, we cannot find peace and comfort. The great riddle of, What must I do to be saved? remains unsolved till we know Christ and are found in Him. We may go about and we may study this, and that, and the other, but we shall remain fools in the matters of eternal salvation until we come and sit at the feet of the great Teacher, and know Him, and are known of Him.

I shall attempt, this morning, as God may help me, to speak with you upon spiritual ignorance. And then upon what would follow if that ignorance were removed, hoping that I may be allowed to say a few stirring things to some of you to induce you to get rid of any ignorance which now bars you out of peace, and that others of you who know the Truths of Jesus Christ may be more earnest to tell to the unenlightened what you know yourselves, lest they should perish and their blood should be required at your hands. I shall commence, then, this morning, by some few remarks upon the gift of God and the knowledge of it. And then, secondly, I shall turn to the if of the text, and what then? And thirdly, I shall take up the if of the text once more, and show what it has to do with the Believer.

I. First, our text speaks of A GIFT AND OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF IT. The latter half of the verse informs us that the gift of God is no other than the Man who spoke to the woman and said, Give me to drink. In fact, Jesus Christ is Gods unspeakable gift for whom we should daily and hourly lift up our hearts in gratitude to God. Christ was Gods gift to the fallen seed of man. Long before this world was made, He ordained in the eternal purpose that Christ should be the Covenant Head of His elect, their Surety, and their Redeemer. He gave Christ to us before He spread the starry sky. He was the Fathers goodly gift when the fullness of time was come.

Many promises had heralded the Masters coming, and at last He appeared a Babe of a span long in His mothers arms. His holy life and His suffering death were the gifts of God to us, for He spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all. To the whole company of Gods elect, Christ Jesus is the priceless gift which the Fathers love has bestowed upon them. And when you and I receive Jesus Christ into our heart He evermore comes as a gift. The faith by which we receive Him is a giftthe gift of God is faith, but Jesus Christ Himself never comes to a soul that has faith, as a reward. No man ever received Christ by the works of the Law or the deeds of the flesh.

It is not possible, my Brothers and Sisters, that the highest and most perfect obedience should ever deserve such a reward as the gift of the Son of God! Conceive of any virtue and you will not dare to blaspheme so much as to think that it could deserve the death of Christ. No, the price is too great to be a recompense for any of our exertions. It is the spontaneous gift of Heaven given to us, not on the footing of the Law, but on the grounds of the Sovereign Grace of God who gives as He wills to the unworthy sons of men.

If you come to God with a price in your hands, you shall not have Christ. If you come to God thinking to force your way to Heaven, or supposing that you could even contribute towards your entrance there, you shall find the gates of the Law shutting you out forever. But if you come humbly penitent, confessing your soul-poverty, and plead with the Father that He would give to you His Son, you shall receive the gift of God into your soul most freely. The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life. We are justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Man is dead in sin, but Christ is a gift bringing life to the dead.

The text uses the definite article, If you knew the gift of God, setting Christ as Gods gift beyond all other gifts. True, the light of the sun is the gift of God to us. There is not a piece of bread we eat, nor a drop of water we drink but what it may be called the gift of God. But the gift which comprehends, excels, and sanctifies all other gifts is the gift of Jesus Christ to the sons of men! I wish I had the power to speak as I should of this gift, but I am reminded by Gods Word that it is unspeakable. Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift. I can comprehend Gods giving the earth to the children of mengiving to Adam and his seed dominion over all the works of His hands.

I think I can understand Gods giving Heaven to His people, and permitting them to dwell at His right hand forever and ever. But that God should give the Only Begotten, very God of very God, to take upon Himself our nature, and in that nature actually to be obedient unto death, even the death of the Crossthis we cannot understand, and even the angels with their mightier intellects cannot grasp it fully! They look into it, but as they gaze they desire to see more, for even they feel they cannot search this out to perfection.

A depth unfathomable of Divine love is there in the condescending loving kindness which gave Jesus Christ to die for us when we were yet sinners. Beloved, it is an unrivalled gift! God has given to us such a treasure that if Heaven and earth were melted down, the price could not buy another like Jesus! All eternity cannot yield such a Person as the Lord Jesus! Eternal God, You have no equal! And becoming Son of Man, Your condescension has nothing that can rival it! Oh, what a gift! You cannot conceive of anything that you can put side by side with it! It is a gift, Beloved, which comprehends all things within itself. He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?

Get Christ and you have the pardon of sin, the justification of your personin the heart of that redemption you shall find sanctification, adoption, regeneration. Every Covenant gift is wrapped up in Christ Jesus. A bundle of myrrh is my well-beloved unto me. Not one sprig of it, but a whole bundle! All things that can possibly be needed for the Christian for time and for eternity are given to him in the Person of the Lord Jesus. And as this gift comprehends all, so it sweetens all. Temporal mercies without Christ are like ciphers without a figure. But when you have these temporal mercies and Christ stands in front of them, oh, what an amount they make!

Temporal mercies without Christ are unripe fruitbut when Christ shines upon them, they grow mellow and sweet. Temporal mercies without Christ are the dry riversChrist fills them to the brim. They are like trees with leaves only, but Christ comes to give them fruit upon which we may live. Brethren, what are all the mercies of this life to us without Christ? Would they not make our souls hunger? Whom have I in Heaven but You? And there is none upon earth that I desire beside You. The full wine vat, or the barn that needs to be enlargedwhat would these be without a Savior? O God, take them all away if You will, but give us more of Christ! Fill our hearts with the love of Christ, and You may empty the cupboard and purse if You will.

Mercies are blessed when we have Christ with them, but if Christ is gone, they are but empty vanities. Our Lord Jesus Christ is a gift most precious, my Brothers and Sisters, because he who gets it is sure that he has the favor of God. Other mercies do not necessarily bring with them Gods favor. God gives the most of this world full often to wicked men. He pours the husks out to the swine. As for His children, He often wrings out to them a full cup of bitterness. This world is not our portion, as we know right well. The wicked have their portion here, and they are full of fatness. Their houses are full of provisions and they leave the rest of their substance unto their babes.

But get Christ and you have Gods favoryou are sure of it! This is The blessing of the Lord that makes rich, and He adds no sorrow with it. It is a right-hand and a left-hand blessing. Get Christ and it is all blessing and no curse whatever. If you have Christ, as sure as you live, God loves you for there never was a soul that had Christs name written upon its forehead but what eternal love had inscribed it thereand in that writing had given a sure evidence and pledge of love that could not end.

If you have Christ, again, you must prize the gift, because this is a token of your everlasting salvation. Hell never did enclose within its gates a single soul that rested on the Cross of Christand it never shallif you have Christ you have the melodies of Heaven. You have the goodly land that flows with milk and honey. You shall never bear the wrath of God, Christ has borne it for you. You shall never hear it said, Depart, you cursed, for Christ has said, You are blessed forever and ever. Yes, and you shall be blessed!

We shall now turn to the further thought which stands linked to the one I have thus tried to lay before you. In the text knowledge is put with the gift: If you knew the gift of God. Yonder woman in the wilderness is sorely vexed, her heart is ready to break. She has left the abode of her master and journeyed far. She is faint herself, but a far greater trouble depresses herher child, her only boylies under yonder shrubs to die for need of a drop of water. Do you see the anguish depicted on her face? Do you hear her bitter cries?

Ah, Woman, you may well wipe your eyes, your distress is causeless. You have room for thanksgiving, and not for sorrow! Yonder is a spring of water, dip your pitcher and refresh your child. But, Beloved, what was the use of the spring of water to her if she could not see it? Till her eyes were opened, Hagar could not see that God had provided for hershe must suffer and her child must die till she could

perceive the supply. It is so with the gift of God. Beloved, until we know Christ, we famish for Him but we find no relief. A sense of need is a very blessed work of Divine Grace, but it will not save you! You must get beyond knowing your need, you must perceive, accept, and enjoy the supply, or else assuredly you will perish, none the less because of your knowledge of your need.

Now, a knowledge of Christ is the gift of God. No man ever knew Christ experimentally and truly except by the operation of the Holy Spirit upon his heart. It is in vain for those who are the advocates of free agency and human power to talk for wherever you meet with a gracious spirit you will be sure to find the confession that it was as much the work and gift of God to give us faith as to give us the Object of faith

*Twas the same love that spread the feast, That sweetly forced us in;   
Else we had still refused to taste,   
And perished in our sin.*

If God did nothing more for men than provide a Savior, and leave it for them to acceptif He never operated upon their souls and affections by His Holy Spiritnot one of Adams race would ever enter into eternal life! If you would have a knowledge of Christ you must have it through the Holy Spirit, for this comes not by the works of the Law, nor by the efforts of the flesh.

That which is born of the flesh is still flesh. Only that which is born of the Spirit is spirit and can make you acquainted with spiritual Truth. A saving knowledge of Christ is always personal. The man does not take it at second hand. He does not catch it up from what his mother told him. She may be the instrumentthe happy instrumentbut the man learns for himself, or else he does not know savingly. Beware, Beloved, of copying your religion out of other mens books. It must be written with the pen of the Holy Spirit upon the fleshy tablet of your own heart, or else you know nothing aright.

Observe also, that as this knowledge is spiritual, so, as it is spoken of in the text, it immediately concerns Christ. All other knowledge, whatever it may be, will fail to save unless we know the gift of Godunless we are clearly acquainted with the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ. I say, with the Person, for let me insist upon itit is necessary for you and me to rest wholly upon the Person, work, and righteousness of Jesus. You may know a great deal about His offices. You may have read much about what He did, but you must pass through all these and get to HimCome unto ME, He says, all you that labor and are heavy laden. At His feet your soul must cast itself down, kissing the Son lest He be angry. Before Him, the Great High Priest, you must present yourselves, desiring to be sprinkled with His precious blood, and to be saved in Him.

Remember He is a Man like yourselves. Though God over all, blessed forever, yet is He Man of the substance of His mother. Let your soul advance to Him in thought this morning. Lay hold upon Him! If you cannot put your finger into the print of the nails, and your hand into His side, literally, with Thomas, yet do it spiritually. Remember, it is to know Christ and His Cross which is the saving knowledgeeverything short of this will leave you short of eternal life. Brothers and Sisters, it must be spiritual knowledge. Any acquaintance with Christ that can be derived from pictures or that may come to us through the use of outward symbols will be all valueless.

We must know Christ, not after the flesh, by the eyes and earswe must comprehend Him by our inmost souls being acquainted with Him. Our heart must trust Him. Put away the crucifix! Let your soul wear the cross, not your body! Hang not up the picture of Christ on the wall, hang it upon the walls of your heartthere let His image be stored. Bear about you the marks of the Lord Jesus Christ in your life and character and let your contemplations and thoughts be continually exercised about Him. This is the kind of knowledge of Christheart-knowledge, spiritual fellowshipthe knowledge of the most vital part of the man, his soul, his newborn spirit.

Now, such knowledge as this, when God has once given it to us, becomes very operative upon the entire manhe has found the great secret and he feels inched to tell it! He has learned a great mystery and it at once affects all the parts and passions of his nature, making a new man of him. This knowledge he never loseshe may forget much, but he never can forget Christ if he has once known Him. Like the dying saint who had forgotten his wife, forgotten his children, forgotten his own name and yet smiled sweetly when they asked him if he remembered Christ Jesus! This is printed on the Believers heartthe warp and woof of his being bears this, like a golden thread, right through its center.

Jesus, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, and let my right hand forget its cunning, but never shall my heart forget You who has given Yourself for me! This is the knowledge which we should desire, the knowledge spoken of in the text. Desire it, I beseech you, above gold! Yes, seek it above much fine gold! O you that have it not, open your mouths and pant after it! Hunger and thirst to know Christ and take no rest, and get no satisfaction till you do know Him! If you ask me how this can be, I remind you that God alone can reveal Him to you, but yet you are to use the means.

Search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life, and these are they which testify of Christ. Attend a Christ-honoring ministry! If you have been sitting under any minister who does not extol Christ and lift Him up before youhowever eloquent and intelligent he may be, leave his ministryit is not fit for poor dying souls to listen to! You that need salvation can only find it in Christ! Seek, therefore, a ministry that is full of Christ! Christ the first, and Christ the middle, and Christ the last and without end.

Depend upon it, as men would think it folly to deal at a shop where the bread (so called) was not breadwhere the food that was given was so adulterated as to yield no nutrimentso is it a sin on our part if we do not seek out the pure unadulterated milk of the Word of God and endeavor to grow thereby. Oh, how many souls are poisoned by listening to a ministry that is not full of Christ! But oh, if you do get a ministry that savors of the Lord Jesus, hear with both your ears! Drink it in! Be like the thirsty furrows that do not refuse a single drop of Heavens rain. Receive with meekness the living Word.

Add to this an earnest prayer for illumination. Wait upon God each day and say, Show me Your Son. Lo, I would know Christ: I would know Him so as to be saved by Him. And remember, He that seeks finds; and to him that knocks it shall be opened, Ask and it shall be given you. They that seek the Lord shall in due time be found of Him. He that calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

II. The first word of the text is If. If you knew the gift of God. IF. AND WHAT THEN? The if seems to me to wear a black side. It supposes that there are many who do not know the gift of God. Alas, no supposition, but a fearful fact. Dear Hearer, may I ask you to look to your own soul now? You are a Church member. You have been considered to be a Christian from your youth till the present time. At least you have reckoned yourself to be so. But ask yourself if you now know the gift of God. Is Jesus Christ All in All to you?

Do you rest on Him as the unbuttressed pillar of your confidence? Do you love Him? Is He your Master? Are you conformed unto His image? Have you ever spoken to Him? Has He ever had communion with you supping with you, and you with Him? As the Lord my God lives, before whom I stand, if you know not Christ your high profession is but a painted pageant to go to Hell in! Your fancied experience is a will-o-thewisp leading you to destruction, and all your fond hopes shall come tumbling about your ears like a house that is founded on sand which totters in the day of storm! I pray you, then, dear Hearers, as you would be right at the last, make heart-searching enquiries now, and let this be the question: Whether you know the gift of God in your soul or not?

But we will deal better with the bright side. Knowing that there are many here who do not know the gift of God at all, it is a mercy to think that they may know it, for the, If you knew, implies that some who do not know it yet may know it before they die! And, thank God, some of you shall know it and glorious results will follow at once. If you knew the gift of God. My dear Hearer, you who are not yet converted, what a change would come over you! Let me single you out. You are here, this morning, quite uninterested in religion. You have come here this morning out of curiosity to look at the large assembly and hear the strange preacher, but religion has no interest in it for you. Life and death, and all the problems that connect themselves with time and eternity are nothing to you. You are a butterfly, flying from flower to flower. You have no deeper sense of things than a man of the world who thinks to live and die, and so to come to his end.

Ah, but if you knew Christ, it would soon be different with you! That vain mind of yours would soon be full of thoughts. These worldly toys which are now so engrossing would then be put into their proper places. You would become thoughtful, and, let me tell you, you would become infinitely happier than you are now, for your present ease is a hollow thing. You are afraid to try it. You dare not sit down and think for an hour of your own state and futureyou know you dare not. But, oh, if you knew the gift of God, you could endure sober thought, yes, it would be your delight! And as for the future, you would dare to look into it, too. Yes, it would be your greatest comfort to anticipate the glories which God has prepared for them that love Him!

As I think on some of you indifferent ones, I could gladly weep over you, not merely because of the Hell which will be your portion, but because of the Heaven which you are losing even now. A Heaven below is to know Christ, and you are missing this. Man of pleasure? Christ is pleasure! Men who would have ease and peace? Christ is the true ease, and if you knew Him you would find true peace! Possibly there may be some few in this assembly to whom religion is not even a matter of indifference, but worsethey have persecuted it. They are accustomed to vent their sharpest wit upon anything religious. To them godliness is always known by the name of cant, and if a man is known to be a professor of religion, he is at once the butt of every joke.

Ah, but if you knew Christ, you would not do this. Saul of Tarsus sought much the destruction of the people of God, but when once Christ had said to Him, Why do you persecute Me? and he understood that Christ was no other than God over all, the Redeemer of men, and he said, Lord, what will You have me to do? Ah, Persecutor! You would be just as warm for the cause as you are hot against it if you did but know Christ! Man, you would not have the heart to spit into the face of the Crucified you would never crucify Him afresh who died for His enemies. You would never be so cruel and barbarous as to trample on the members of Christ when you know that Christ, out of pure love, suffered for the sons of men. If you knew the gift of God, Persecutor, it would be otherwise with you than it is now.

Yes, and there are some here who would never persecute, but nevertheless they trifle with religion. Many more belong to this class than to the two I have just mentioned. I know many of you are impressed when we are delivering the Truth of God earnestly, and you vow what you do not pay. And you promise reformations which are never made. Ah, you triflers, you who halt between two opinions, who, like Felix, would wait for a more convenient season, if you knew the gift of God, this morning would be the convenient season! Oh, if God did but give you an understanding of the preciousness and sweetness of Christ, you would not delay!

Who delays to be crowned when the time has come for him to receive a kingdom? What heir would ever postpone the day in which he should enter into the heritage? Does the bridegroom put off the hour of his marriage? Do men wish their happiness to be removed far away? Oh, no! And if you knew what Christ would be to your soul, and what joy and blessedness you would have in receiving Him, you would say, Now is my time as it is Gods time. O God, I give myself to You! Trifler, may you yet know the gift of God!

Alas, there are some here who are not exactly triflers. They have serious thoughts, but they have some sin which they cannot give up. I cannot particularize cases, but there are such here. There are men here who would be Christs, but the habit of taking intoxicating drink to excess clings hard to them. Have I not talked to some of you who have, with tears confessed the sin, and longed to be delivered from the snare, but you could not? Your besetting sins are too dear to you for you to give them up. With some it may be filthier vices, still. With others it is the thought, Religion is too severe. To follow Christ is to give up so much. I must have a little more indulgence. I must for a little time, at any rate, drink of the wine of Satans banquet.

Ah, if you knew the gift of God, you would give up the sweetest thing earth ever knew to know the greater sweetness of Christ. What? Will you put my Lord and Master in comparison with the painted harlot of this wicked world? Will you put the solid gold of Heavens kingdom in contrast with the filthy draft and dross of this worlds merchandise? O my Master, You are no more to be compared to the riches and enjoyments of life than the sun is to be likened to a glowworm! Let Christ arise in your soul and all your starry joys will be gone. You will find this one great joy fills your spirit to the brim and overflows so that there is an exceeding and eternal weight of glory too great for your spirit to be able to handle! If you knew the gift of God, Sensualist, you would turn from your tables to feed on Him! You would leave your gilded couches of pomp and vanity, and everything else the world calls good or greatyou would leave it all, turning from ashes to feed upon angels foodeven upon Christ the Lord, and the Redeemer of men!

There is another class here present, represented by some few who would gladly be saved, but they fear they are too bad. They think that they could never be saved after delaying so long and sinning so foully. If you knew the gift of God, you would never think that, for my Lord Jesus loves great sinners! This Man, it is said, receives sinners, and eats with them. When the woman that had been a sinner washed His feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head, He did not utter an upbraiding word. The Lord is gentle and full of compassion and tenderness and truth. He came not with a sword to slay, but He came to be slain Himself, that we might not die.

You have only to come to Him, and let this encourage you. He has said it, Him that comes unto Me, I will in no wise cast out. He cannot cast you out! He must receive you! His word binds Him to itHe cannot deny Himself and therefore He cannot refuse you. If it were proper for us to prolong this addressing of separate characters, I think there would be in this suggestion, If you knew the gift of God, something for everyone. I am sure if any of us who are now at enmity to God did but know what Christ isif they could but know as with the knowledge I have before described, the Person of the Lord Jesusfaith would immediately follow! We should trust our souls to God and feel safe in the hands of Gods appointed Propitiation.

Faith would be sure to be followed by prayerwe should cry to Him whom we now knowand prayer would be followed by His blessing. At the heels of that would come holy love to Him. And holy love would prompt us to serve! Service would be followed by increasing strength and increasing strength would augment daily joy till we should go up Jacobs ladder, gaining virtue after virtue by the power of the Son of God till we were meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light! Each point in Christs Character, if known, would work good to us. For instance, if you knew the gift of God, that He came to save the vilest of the vile, how could you doubt or despair because of your sins? If you knew that the salvation of Christ is finished by Him, and not by us, how could you dream of adding to it, or think it necessary to bring your own feelings, and frames, and doings to make the salvation complete which Christ has finished altogether apart from you?

If you knew that Christ never forsook His people, would you be trembling and fearing lest in the hour of temptation He should fail you? If you knew how suitable Christ is to you, how ready He is to receive you, how full of love He is to all His people, how He feels in His heart all your pains and all your groans, how His honor is bound up in your salvation, how He has pledged Himself to bring every one of the saints to the Fathers right handif you knew all this, Christian, you would live above your doubts, and fears, and frames, and feelingsyou would live a heavenly life, like one who has seen Christ and then has been made like unto Him.

Beloved, if we were to take a walk, this morning, through the streets of London, how many cases we should see where we might say sorrowfully of the persons we looked upon, Alas for you! If you knew the gift of God, what a difference would come over you! Perhaps at this very hour you will find the great mass of the working men in London in their shirt sleeves. It has not struck them at all that going to a place of worship is desirable. They will be lounging about. The penny paper has been taken, and they have begun to read thatbut as yet the public house is not openthey feel as if there is nothing in the world to do but just lounge about and let the time run on.

Ah, stepping into such a house you might say, If you knew the gift of God, your Sabbaths would assume quite a different appearance. You would not talk about Pharisaic Sabbatarians, and the strictness of shutting up the house of drink and only opening the house of worship. You would feel the Sunday a delight, and the holy of the Lord honorable. Instead of wasting your time, it would seem to you as though Sabbaths were too short and opportunities and means of Divine Grace too few. If you knew the gift of God, it would be otherwise with you, working man.

Step into the next Church or Chapel, I do not care which, and observe the multitudes of the people going through the worship with mere formality, confessing what they never felt, and professing to believe what they know nothing of. Ah, we might look into the face of each worshipper and say, If you knew the gift of God, you would give up this formalism, and worship God in spirit and in truth. We need not go far. There are many of you here in that state. May you know the gift of God, and forget formalities, and worship God in truth!

At some places you may step into the Church or Meeting House and listen to the ministeran eloquent address, but altogether Christlessno care about the souls of men, no dealing with human consciences. Pompous sentences, sounding periods, high flights, climaxes, and I know not what oratorical flowerbut nothing concerning the weighty matter of eternity, about the undying soul, and the precious cleansing blood, Ah, Preacher, if you knew the gift of God. If you had in your soul any sense of the preciousness of the salvation of Christ, you would preach in another fashion.

Step in where the Ritualist has dressed himself in all his gaudy apparel, flaunting like a peacock before God Himself, and you may well say to him, If you knew the gift of God you would lay aside these fooleries and come before God sooner in sackcloth than in your tag-rags, humbling yourself before the Most High as a poor, guilty sinner, most accursed of all the human race for having dared to call yourself a priest! For priest you are not for your fellow men, for One is Priest, even Christ Jesus, and no other is priest, save only that all saints have a common priesthood which some cannot usurp to themselves alone unless they dare to bring upon themselves the vengeance of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, who called themselves priests and were not. If you knew the gift of God, poor simpleton that you are, you would doff that priestly array and bow before the great High Priest of our profession and worship Him alone!

While going down the street, yonder, I might knock at a door after leaving that ritualistic mass house, and might find the merchant in his counting house. He looks a little disconcerted that I should call upon him on Sunday morning and find him with his pen behind his ear. But he says he has no time to cast up his accounts at any other period. Ah, but if you knew the gift of God, you would find other time and find another occupation for this time, rather than spending upon yourself what God claims to be His own. I pass on into the chamber of sickness, and I see on the bed of death a sinner full of fears and dread about the world which lies before him.

Listen to his groans. He has no hope! He has lived without Christ. The world has been his portion, and now he has to leave it, and he is unprepared to meet his Judge. All is dark as the pit where he is going. How miserable his state as he feels he is parting with all he has loved, and for which he has lived, and that there is nothing before him but a dread unknown existence in another world! Ah, if he only knew the gift of God, what a change there would be at once! What light, joy, and peace would come into that chamber! All its gloom would pass away and in the place of it would come such rapture as would lead men to say, Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his.

I shall not detain you longer. We might go down one street and up another for many a day and we should find thousands to whom we should say, If you knew the gift of God, you would be another and different man from what you are.

III. It seems to me to concern Believers this way. Evidently there are tens of thousands who do not know the gift of God. Enquiry, then, of the most solemn kind should at once be made, Has this ignorance of theirs been my fault? These men know not the gift of Godhow can they know it unless there is someone to teach them? How shall they hear without a preacher? Is this ignorance to be laid at my door? Beloved, in the name of Jesus Christ, I ask you seat-holders and members of this place who know Christ yourselvesis there a person sitting next to you in the pew who does not know Christ, and have you done your best to tell him about Christ?

I pause, that conscience may give its reply. And you who do often speak about Christ in the school or in the street, preaching or not preaching, let me ask youdo you so talk about Christ that people can understand you? Believe me, I try to use very simple words, but I often hear of words I have uttered which have not been understood by people present. I am always grieved when such is the case. God knows I would speak the most vulgar words I could find if people could understand them better. To me the finery of language is less than nothing! I would sooner preach Christs Cross in the tongue of Billingsgate, if all would understand, than speak in the most polished tongue so that the poor could not comprehend me.

My dear Brothers and Sisters, that a soul should go to Helllost through our fine sentenceswho shall be accountable for this? The watchman is not to speak in Greek to those who only know English, or even in good English to those who do not understand the language if it is well spoken! Augustine, I believe, frequently preached in exceedingly bad Latin because it was the common talk of the people. If he had spoken classic Latin he would not have been understood. And so must we do. If any man does not know Christ, have you told it to him in all the ways which you can find out of making it plain and clear? If you have not, then some responsibility lies with you.

Then next, suppose you have not. Will you, my Brethren, for the future resolve in Gods strength that if any man perishes for lack of knowledge, it shall not in the future be your fault? Make no rash vows, but do solemnly put it to your heart. And if you cannot speak as you would, yet you will distribute such publications and give away such tracts as may tell the Gospel simply. If you cannot do what you would, O resolve, dear Brethren, to do what you can, that none here may be without the knowledge of Christ!

And though a professor, I shall venture to say to you that the text seems to say to you, Do you know the gift of God yourself? When I asked you whether you told others about it, I think a question might have been raisedif you have not told others, it is very questionable whether you know it yourself. If you never weep for other mens sins, and never desire their salvation, you are not a saved soul! One of the first instincts of the saved soul is to say, What can I do that others may be saved, also? Now, if you have done nothing, let a suspicion arise! And to us all, I think, there may be this query putjudging by my efforts, judging by my actions, judging by my inward feelingsmay I not often ask myself, Do I know this gift of God? And may I not come, this morning, just as I did at the first, as a sinner, and look up to the wounds of Jesus and cast myself again upon Him?

If I never did believe before, Lord Jesus, I trust You now. Up till now if I have been a deceived one, here I am *My faith looks up to You,   
You Lamb of Calvary,   
Savior Divine!*

*Now hear me while I pray;   
Take all my guilt away.   
Oh let me from this day be wholly Yours.*

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THE SOURCE   
NO. 2897

A SERMON   
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, AUGUST 18, 1904.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON THURSDAY EVENING, JULY 6, 1876.

**The woman said unto him, Sir, You have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep. Where then do You get that living water? John 4:11.**

THIS was a sensible and very important question. May the Holy Spirit graciously enable us to answer it aright! Our Lords great objective in His talk with this woman at the well was not to convince her of His oratorical power, for He spoke to her as simply as one would speak to a child. Many sermons are far too elaborate in their constructionthey are evidently intended to display the preachers own powers. But if we would imitate the Lord Jesus Christ, the true Prince of Preachers, we would not strain after effectand we would get a better effect without any strainingby taking the living Truth of God and telling out, as simply as possible, the story of salvation.

Jesus Christs sole objective in talking with this woman was to bring her to salvation. That is also my objective with regard to my hearers and readers and, my dear unconverted Friends, if you shall agree with me in that objective and shall breathe the prayer, Lord, help the preacher to speak to my soul that I may find Christ, there will be joy among the angels of Heaven over sinners repenting and returning to the Lord!

Our Savior, in seeking to win this woman to Himself, was completely successful. He hit the mark He aimed at. His shot struck the very center of the target. Only one sermon was preached to herno, it was hardly a sermonjust a brief talk with her and the woman received the Living Word! Alas, there are some of you who have had a great many affectionate talks from godly mothers and fathers, or from earnest ministers, teachers, or other Christian friendsbut, so far, they have not been as successful as Jesus of Nazareth was on this occasion! You have heard many sermonsyou cannot tell how many you have heardand some of them have produced some effect upon you, but, up to the present, you have not been slain by the sword of the Spirit, nor quickened by Jesus Christ the Life-Giver. I hope the Lord is about to do what has not been done before! And, with the accumulated responsibility upon you of having heard the Gospel so often in vain, I think you should the more earnestly breathe the prayer to God, O Lord, let this be the effectual time of speaking to me! Call me as You did the Samaritan woman. While the preacher is speaking and I am listening to Your Word as it shall be proclaimed, graciously grant that Jesus may be revealed to my soul and that He may say to me, I that speak unto you am He. If you are brought to pray that prayer from your heart, I believe that it will be answered and so, as I have already said, there will be joy in the Presence of the angels of God over you! Our Lord aimed at this womans conversion by simply instructing her and bringing the truth home to her conscience. Let us see whether if we do the same thing, trusting in the same Spirit that anointed our Master, similar results will follow here as followed at the well of Sychar.

First, then, I am going to expound the teaching which preceded the womans question and suggested it. Then, secondly, I will answer the question. And thirdly, I will draw some inferences from it.

I. First, then, WHAT WAS IT THAT LED THIS WOMAN TO ASK OUR SAVIOR THE QUESTION, Where then do You get that living water?   
Jesus Christ had told her that had she known Him, she would have asked of Him and He would have given her Living Water. There was Jacobs well. They were, both of them, close to it and they could look down into it. There was some water in it, but the well of Sychar was not a well of living water. You probably know that the expression which is translated, living water, refers to water that springs up from a fountain. But the well of Sychar is not a well of that kind. The water in it is surface waterthe gathering of the neighboring hillsland water, not spring water. Jesus Christ seemed to draw His illustration from that factThe water in that well runs into it and is drawn out from it. But if you had asked Me, I would have given you water that bubbles upwater that is full of life, very different from this well waterwater from the great deep that couches beneath. You know the difference between those two sorts of water. I have illustrated it before by the two wells which are in the courtyard of the Doges palace at Venice. One of them has its copper or bronze margin worn with holes cut by the string by which little cans are let down to fetch up the water that wells up from the spring. It is so precious because it springs up from a living fountain. The other well, which looks very much like the one I have mentioned, is not worn at all. Very few people care to draw from itand the reason is because it is simply filled with water brought into the city. It is flat, dead water, not living water at all. So Jesus Christ had used this illustration in speaking with the womanYou have come here to draw this water out of the wellthe mere rain water that runs into Jacobs well. But if you had asked of Me, I would have given you water of a far better sortwater with life in it water which would be life to youwater which would be in you a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

The woman caught the figure, though she did not at first understand its spiritual meaning. Its spiritual meaning is thisthat Jesus Christ has Grace in HimselfGrace to give to sinnersGrace to give to those who ask Him for it, for He said to the woman, You would have asked of Him and He would have given you Living Water. In the Lord Jesus Christ, then, there is a deep fountain of Grace always springing up within Himself. It pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell. And it does dwell in Him! To Him, the Spirit has been given without measure! There is no meager supply of Grace in Christ. He has an abundance and I might almost say a redundance forever springing up within Himself. And this He has on purpose to give away! He has it not for Himself, for He needs it not. Almighty and ever-blessed as He is by Nature, co-equal and co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit, He needs no Grace for Himselfwhat He has is all to give away! He came into this world to open up channels by which He might distribute all His Grace to thirsty souls!   
And He gives it all away far the askingAlmighty Grace to be had for the asking! No human merit can demand it and no performance of any earthly ceremony is required in order to obtain it. Here it is in a nutshellYou would have asked and He would have given. If any man lacks wisdom, let him ask of God. And if any man lacks pardon, let him do the same. If any man lacks anything that is essential to his purity, to his happiness, to his present life, or to his future life, it is stored up in Christ and it can be had from Him for the asking! He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?   
The teaching of the text to you unconverted people is thisif ever you are saved, it must be by the Grace of God. That Grace is in Jesus Christ. It has been put into Jesus Christ not because He needs it Himself, but that He may distribute itand He does distribute itwhoever asks it of Him receives it from Him. For everyone that asks receives and he that seeks finds; and to him that knocks it shall be opened. And when you receive this Grace, it will remain in you. It will not be like ordinary water which you drink and which then is done with, but it will live in you. It shall turn into a well of Living Water! Inside your soul there shall be an ever-springing Well of Life which never shall cease to flow, either in summer or in winter and which, in Glory, shall enable you to understand what that eternal life was which Jesus gave to you and of which He said to His Father, This is life eternal, that they might know You the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom You have sent.   
II. Now, secondly, I am going TO ANSWER THE QUESTION THAT THIS WOMAN PUT TO CHRIST.   
Her question was, Where then do You get that living water? How did You come to have it? If You have living water, how is it that You have it? It is not in that well. And even if it were there, You have nothing to draw with and the well is deep: Where then do You get that living water? What an important question this is to put in a spiritual sense! Lord Jesus, we hear that You have an abundance of Grace treasured up in You which You freely distribute among those who ask You for it, but where did You get it? How is it that You have this Grace? In what way did it come to be stored up in You? Where then do You get that living water?   
While I am asking this question, I pray every unconverted one who desires to find peace with God to say to himself or herself, I am now to hear how it is that Christ can save. I am now to learn why it is that He is the Giver of Grace to the guilty. Perhaps, dear Friends, while you are listening you may see something in Christ which you never saw before and faith may spring up in your soul almost insensibly to yourselfand before you go out of this place, you may be able to say, I cannot fully explain this great mystery, but I know enough of the Lord Jesus Christ to believe in Him. I cannot but believe in Him, now that I see how it is that He is so mighty to save!   
The first answer to the question, Where then do You get that living water? is thisHe has it in His very Nature. Jesus Christ is able to save because He is Divine. With God, all things are possible and Jesus Christ is God, so all things are possible with Him! God is Love and Jesus Christ is God, so He, too, is Love! God possesses all things and Christ is God, so He has all things freely to distribute among the sons of men! Jesus of Nazareth, as He sat on the well at Sychar, seemed to that woman, at first, to be only an ordinary Jew and she wondered that He, being a Jew, should even speak to her, a woman of Samaria. But veiled under the form of that Son of Mary, there was God, Himself, made flesh and dwelling among men! Oh, it is glorious to think that He who has come to redeem you is no mere man, but over all God blessed forever!   
If a man were to tell me that he was going to take the world upon his shoulders, I would distrust his power to bear such a burden, even though he were as strong as Samson! But Jesus Christ, the Son of God, cannot only bear up this world, but the entire universe in His hand, for all fullness of power dwells in Him! If any man were to say that he would take upon himself the sins of the whole world, I would be even more diffident than if he proposed to play the part of Atlas and to bear the world upon his shoulders. But when Jesus, who counted it not robbery to be equal with God, takes upon Himself the form of a Servant and yet has the iniquity of us all laid upon Him, I can understand how He can bear the tremendous load, for He bears the earths huge pillars and spreads the heavens abroad! When we think of Jesus as Divine, nothing seems to be impossible to Him! The strength of sin, which is the Law, is not too great for Him who made the Law and kept it, too! The sting of death, which is sin, shall certainly not be able to destroy, or even to resist the Almighty Power of Him who has the keys of death and of Hell!   
If you commit your soul, my dear Friends, to the keeping of a man, or of an angel, you will have made a fatal mistake! If all the angels in Heaven were to band themselves together to save a soul and were to ask me to be the soul that they would seek to save, I would have nothing to do with them! Nobody who is less than Deity can save sinners! But Jesus is mighty to save because He is God as well as Man! This is a basis upon which the souls hope may well be founded and established forever. If the interposing Mediator is, indeed, very God of very Godand He iswe see from where He has this Living Water and we can come to Him with the utmost confidence, knowing that He is able to save unto the uttermost all that come unto God by Him!   
Another answer to the Samaritan womans question is that Christ has this Living Water by the Divine Purpose and Appointment. It was the Divine Plan that Jesus Christ, the second Person of the blessed Trinity in Unity, should be appointed to be the Treasury of Grace for all His elect ones. In the council chamber of eternity it was ordained that the Son of God should, in due time, come into this world and take upon Himself our nature and also our sin. And He was set apart, in the eternal purpose, to do so and, in the proclamation of the Gospel, that decree of the Lord is published to the sons of men! The Lord God has set forth His Son Jesus as the one Propitiation for the sins of men! He is authorized by God to be a Savior and He comes here, by Divine appointment, to bestow upon us the blessings of His Grace. When an ambassador comes to this land from another country, he brings credentials to prove that he is duly accredited by the authority that he representsand our Lord Jesus Christ comes to men with credentials which prove that He was appointed by God to this service before all worlds were madeand that He will be Divinely sustained in that Appointment till time shall be no more! And then, having completed His mediatorial work, He will surrender the Kingdom to His Fatherand God shall be All-in-All. So now, as Mediator, He stands, appointed by the Most High to distribute the blessings of His Grace which is the Living Water of which our text speaks!   
To me, this Truth of God is inconceivably sweet, for, when I trust in Jesus Christ to save me, I rejoice to know that He is no amateur Savior who has come on His own authority and at His own bidding. But, behold, the Father Himself has sent Him! He is the Messiah, the Sent One, the Anointed, the Christ of God! God must accept His Son, for He sent Him into the world for this very purpose. If I bring to God the blood of Jesus as the Atonement for my sin, He must accept it, for He Himself ordained it as the medium of reconciliation! My blessed Savior, if I hide in You, I cannot be either dragged or driven from You, for God has set You apart to be the City of Refuge to which my poor soul may flee for protection and shelter! God has appointed Jesus to be a Prince and a Savior, to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. It seems to me that these are two grand answers to the question of the Samaritan woman, Where then do You get that living water?first, from His own natural and essential Deity and, secondly, as the Mediator appointed and sustained by the eternal Father!   
But, thirdly, the Lord Jesus could give a further answer to the womans question by referring to the anointing which He had received from the Holy Spirit. On the day of His Baptism in the Jordan, the Spirit descended upon Him like a dove and sat upon Him. He could truly say, The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me because He has anointed Me to preach the Gospel to the poor. He has sent Me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised and to preach the acceptable year of the Lord. He was anointed by the Holy Spirit for the work of distributing the Living Water to the sons and daughters of men. He was Gods CHRISTOS Gods Anointed. Those are two very precious titles which are often put together, Jesus Christthe Anointed Saviorthey describe both His office and His qualification for that office. Well, then, behold Jesus Christ, with the fullness of the Spirit abiding upon Him, coming into the world endowed with all those Divine gifts which, as Mediator, He needed, that He might be able to carry out the work which the Lord had of old appointed Him to do! The Spirit of God is still with Him and He gives the Spirit to those who seek Him. This, then, is the third answer to the womans question, Where then do You get that living water? He has it because the Spirit of God is upon Him.

There is another answer which may convince some who have not been comforted or enlightened by the previous ones. It could not have been given to the woman, at the time she put the question, except by way of anticipation. But say that Christ has this Living Water because His redeeming work is finished. He had it, virtually, during His life on earth, in foresight of the work which He had undertaken to finish. Hence it was that multitudes of souls went to Heaven long before Christ had paid the ransom for them. His pledge and promise being a guarantee that the great deed would surely be accomplished. Think of thisthat the Son of God whom the holy angels worshipped without ceasing, should have come here in the form of a Baby who nestled in a womans arms that He might save us! Oh, let the joy-bells ring as we think of God in human flesh! Does not the thought of Christs Incarnation bring hope to the lost? May not sinners see, in it, how the Living Water finds a channel in which it can flow down to them in the Person of the Incarnate God Emmanuel, God With Us? Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulders: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. He lived for 30 years in this world, a quiet, humble life, working out a righteousness for all His people, fulfilling all the relationships of life into which He was brought and so, when He came to be baptized, He openly revealed the work that He was doing all His life, namely, fulfilling all righteousness! Throughout the whole of His earthly career He was living for us and working for usand the merit of His unique life stands to the credit of all who believe in Him.   
At last the time came for Him to die, for, without shedding of blood there is no remission of sins. The Living Water could not come to us unless Christs heart was opened to let it out. He must give His life a ransom for many or else there could never be any ransomed souls. You know the sad, sad story. Jesus goes forth from the place where He had instituted the memorial supper. He enters Gethsemanes garden, utters a series of agonizing prayers in the course of which a shower of His precious blood falls upon the earth where He kneels. He rises from the ground, meets His betrayer and receives the cruel traitor kiss. He thrusts aside the sword with which His too eager disciple would have defended Him and He is led like a lamb to the slaughter. And like a sheep dumb before her shearers, He opens not His mouth to answer His accusers. He gives His back to the smiters and His cheeks to them that pluck out the hair. He hides not His face from shame and spitting. Yes, though He is Lord of All, He voluntarily yields Himself up to a felons death and gives up His immaculate body, which had never been stained by sin, to be pierced with the nails and every bone to be dislocated by the jar as the Cross is first lifted up and then hurled down into its place!   
He hangs in the burning sun, parched with fever. He has no friend or comforter, for even God has forsaken Him while He is bearing His peoples sin! His enemies mock and laugh at His agonies. He yields up His soul unto death without a murmuring word. He knew that the price of pardon was His blood, but His pity never withdrew and, until He could say, It is finished, He held on to life. When it was finished, He submitted Himself to deathand the Lord of Glory was laid in the new tomb in the garden. Now, if you ask me, from where, then, has Jesus of Nazareth, God Incarnate, got that Living Water, I answer in three words Gethsemane, Gabbatha, Golgotha. Put these three togetherthe place where He sweat great drops of blood, the place where He was scourged and the place where He diedand you can comprehend why He has this Living Water!   
Another answer to the womans question, Where then do You get that living water, is that He has it in the reward which His Father promised to Him for His mediatorial work. He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied: by His knowledge shall My righteous Servant justify many; for He shall bear their iniquities Gods only-begotten and wellbeloved Son is to receive a full reward for all that He enduredand all that He has so far received of His Father is not for Himselffor He needs nothingbut He has received it that He may distribute it among the rebellious children of men! The Psalmist truly sang, You have ascended on high, You have led captivity captive: You have received gifts for men; yes, for the rebellious, also, that the Lord God might dwell among them. And this is where He got that Living Water! Poor Soul, groping in the dark and trying to believe in Jesus, ought not this to enable you to believe in Him? Christ has lived, loved, bled, died and now there is a reward due to Him which can only be met by the salvation of all for whom He died! See, then, how He has the Living Water and come and trust Him to give it to you freely!   
There is one other answer to the womans question, Where then do You get that living water? It is this. Because of His intercession at His Fathers right hand in Glory. Jesus, the God-Man, the Mediator between God and men, ever lives to make intercession for us. Therefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever lives to make intercession for them. Look at Him, my Brothers and Sisters! The risen Christ at Gods right hand! If you can, see Him standing there in His robes of glory and beauty, for He is no longer a sacrificing Priest, for His one Sacrifice in which He offered up Himself is finished forever! Now He has put on the royal robes of the High Priest, for He is both a Prince and a Priestand there He stands with our names engraved upon His breastplateeach glittering jewel dear to the eyes of God. Wherever He moves, the bells and the pomegranates upon His glorious garments pour forth sweet music in the ear of the Most High, for Christ is altogether lovely in the eyes of His Father and He is always dear to the heart of His Father.   
There He stands as the great Representative Man, fully acceptable to Godno, moredearly beloved of God and, for His sake, God looks upon all who are in Him with Infinite Love and Divine Complacency! Some of you may know what it is to have a beloved son away in America or Australia for many years. By-and-by he comes home and he brings his wife. You have never seen her, but you love her for his sake. Possibly he also brings home a dozen children. Well, that is a large addition to your family, but you welcome them all for your boys sake, do you not? I am sure you do! And you seem to see his image in them all! All who belong to him are dear to you for his sake. So, the ever-blessed God looks with unspeakable love upon the whole family of Christ because of the love which He bears to their Covenant Head, Lord and Surety. This eternal life that is in Himthis boundless love that God gives to Himthis intercessory power that He has with the Father and that He uses on our behalfthis is from where He got that Living Water!   
III. Now may God the Holy Spirit especially aid us while we briefly notice, in the third place, THE INFERENCES TO BE DRAWN FROM THIS TRUTH OF GOD. If this is from where Christ got this Living Water, then He is still able to bless the children of men.  
If He had received Divine Grace from some temporary source of supply, it would have been exhausted long ago. But, since He received it from His own Divine Nature, from the purpose and plan of God, from the anointing of the Holy Spirit, from His own finished work and from His ever-living power and infinite meritsince all these fountains of Grace are as full today as they ever were and since they always will be just as full the stream of Grace will continue to flow from the same Source! If the deeps from which a well draws its water are always the same, then depend upon it, the supply in the well will always be the same! If, therefore, the great deeps from which Christ draws the Living Water cannot be supposed to be lessened, the Living Water is in Him, at this moment, as much as it was 1800 years ago!   
The remembrance of this Truth should bring consolation to the soul of anyone who may have said, I wish that I had lived long ago when Christ was upon this earth in visible form. You should not speak so, for you may as readily receive Grace from Christ as did the woman of Samaria. The very words which Jesus spoke to that poor fallen creature, He also addresses to you, If you knew the gift of God...you would have asked of Him, and He would have given you Living Water. Ask and you shall have, even as she asked and received! It is abundantly clear that there is an ample supply of Grace stored up in Christ Jesus for all who trust Him.   
It is equally clear that He needs nothing from us. If He had drawn the living water out of the well at Sychar, He would have wanted to borrow the womans water pot. He would have said, Now, Mistress, you must lend Me your rope and your water pot, for, otherwise, I cannot get at the water in the well. But, as the Living Water comes only from Himself, He needs nobodys water pot or rope! This is a very important matter, because you, Sinners, will persist in bringing your water pots and your ropes to help Christ. You want to aid the Lord Jesus Christ, in some way or other, in His work of saving you. Ah, you say, I know that He is a Savior, but then I must Well, what must you do? Oh, says one, I must do this, and another says, I must do that. I will tell you all, the must there is about your caseyou must be willing to be nothing and let Christ be everything! You must be the emptiness and He must be the fullness. You must be the poverty and He must be the riches. You must be the poor miserable beggar and He must be your great Enricher, your All-in-all. That is all that is needed.   
Then, once more, since this Living Water comes to Christ from His essential Deity and all the other grand things of which I have spoken,

it is not exhausted at this present time. There is an abiding fullness in Christ since the Living Water comes thus to Him. Millions of happy spirits are now in Heaven who have drunk of this Living Water, but Christ is just as able to save millions upon millions more! Your sins cannot exhaust Christs fullness! I remember when the thirst of my soul was so strong, by reason of my acute sense of sin, that I compared myself to behemoth, of whom the Lord said to Job, He trusts that he can draw up Jordan into his mouth. Well, now, if your souls thirst is so great that it will take more than Jordan to satisfy youand the rivers of Abana and Pharpar after that and Kishon after that. And the Mediterranean Sea after that and the Pacific and Atlantic oceans after all thoseif you could drink up all that is good in the whole universe and still thirst for moreif you will receive Grace from Christ, He will fill you to the full, yet He will still be just as full of Grace as He ever was!   
There was a sailor, who, if I remember the story rightly, once called at Lubbocks Bank to cash his pay notes. I think he was to draw £50, so he said to the clerk, I dont like to be hard on anybody. As you have to pay out all this money, I will take ten pounds now and I will call again another day for some more, as I dont want to break you up. Of course, you may imagine how they smiled at the simplicity of the man who thought that he might break the bank by drawing out such an enormous sum of money as fifty pounds all at once! You smile at the illustration, yet that is just exactly how many sinners treat the Lord Jesus Christ. They seem to think it is too much to expect to receive from Him the full and free forgiveness of all their sins. They imagine that it is too much for Christ to give all at once, but they do not know that the Lord Jesus Christ has already pardoned enough sinners to make Heaven as bright with redeemed spirits as the sky is with stars! And yet He has as much pardoning mercy left as He ever had! After you draw from a perennial fountain as much water as you need, it still springs up as copiously as ever and so is it with the Living Water which is stored up in Christ! And you may have it, poor thirsty Soulas much as you need. I will not underestimate the greatness of your sin. It is, indeed, enormous. But since Christ has borne it in His own body on the tree, He knows its weight and all about it. And as soon as you trust in Him, you will realize that He has put it all away forever!   
So I think that the final inference to be drawn is that we should all take of this Living Water which Christ so freely gives. Ah, says one, I bless God that I drank of it years ago. Never mind, Brother. Never mind, Sister. Come and drink of it again! Keep on receiving Jesus Christ again and again, continually looking unto Him as the Author and Finisher of your faith. Let us all go to Himsaints and sinners, saved and unsavedthis very moment. May the Holy Spirit draw us and may we all, as one man, say, I give myself up to You, O Savior, to save me; and I trust You to cleanse me from all my sin and to present me at last, faultless, before the Presence of Your Glory with exceeding joy. I am nothing, and I have nothing that I can bring to You to merit Your esteem. I am nothing but a mass of sin and miserynot even feeling my sin as I ought to feel it. Look upon me, O Savior, in love and mercy, and give me the Grace to drink of the Living Water this very hour, if I never drank of it before. And if I did drink of it long ago, let it spring up within me just now, and may I be conscious of its power to my own comfort and to Your praise and Glory!   
If this is your prayer, my Brothers and Sisters, God will bless you! And we shall meet in Heaven, by His Grace, still to drink of the Living Water forever and ever! And to His blessed name we will ascribe all the praise and glory for our salvation, for Jesus sake! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **JOHN 4:1-34.**

Verses 1-4. When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, (though Jesus Himself baptized not, but His disciples), He left Judaea, and departed again into Galilee. And He needed to go through Samaria. And, surely, not only because it was the more convenient way, but because He had designs of love for some souls there that His Father had given Him. There are many needs in Divine Providence because of the needs of Divine Grace!

5, 6. Then He came to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Now Jacobs well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with His journey, sat on the well: and it was about the sixth hour. Wearied and needing rest, yet there was no rest for Him except that He found His sweetest rest in winning immortal souls unto Himself!

7. There came a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus said unto her, Give me a drink. That is practically what Jesus still says to the sons and daughters of menGive me a drink. He asks for your love, for your trust, for your confidence. It is His food and drink to bless your soul and to give you the blessing that you needand it is a refreshment to His spirit when you give Him the opportunity of thus blessing you.

8. (For His disciples were gone away unto the city to buy food). It was a great mercy that the disciples were out of the way just then. Had they been there, they might have tried to keep this poor woman from speaking to the Savior and, sometimes, Brothers and Sisters, it may be well for us to be laid aside. God may do more good without our presence than with it. Who can tell?

9, 10. Then the woman of Samaria said unto Him, How is it that You, being a Jew, asks a drink of me, who am a woman of Samaria? For the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans. Jesus answered and said unto her, If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that says to you, Give Me a drink; you would have asked of Him, and He would have given you living water. See, then, the evil of spiritual ignorance! And also see how the chain of Grace works, If you knewyou would have soughtand He would have given. When God gives the knowledge of Christ to the soul, then there comes the spirit of prayerand then consequent blessings!

11, 12. The woman said unto Him, Sir, You have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where then do You get that living water? Are You greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle? She took the Saviors figure literallyand there are still many who cannot see the spiritual meaning of Gods Word and run their heads against the hard stern letter which killsinstead of seeking and finding the inner living spirit which gives life. These are the people who build their hopes of salvation upon outward ordinances and who impute saving power to sacraments. Would God that they knew better!

13-15 *.* Jesus answered and said unto her, Whoever drinks of this water shall thirst again: but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. The woman said unto Him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come here to draw. She was still unable to see the inner meaning of the Saviors words! The outward sense still held her fast. She needed to have her conscience aroused, for that would prove to be the way into her heart. Christ has different doors for entering into different peoples souls. Into some He enters by the understanding. Into many, by the affections. To some, He comes by the way of fear. To another, by that of hopeand to this woman He came by way of her conscience.

16-19. Jesus said unto her, Go, call your husband and come here. The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, You have well said, I have no husband: for you have had five husbands; and he who you now have is not your husband: in that said you truly. The woman said unto Him, Sir, I perceive that You are a Prophet. Something had come home to her conscience through what the Savior said to her, so she began to speak about what He was, not about what she was! This often happens when the preacher is enabled, by Divine Grace, to come home to the conscience. The result is that the hearer says, What a wonderful preacher he is! But that will do no goodthat is not the point at which we are aiming. The woman said unto Him, Sir, I perceive that You are a Prophet, and off she goes, on a tangent, to enquire about various forms of religious observance! Evil as she was, she was still a person who wished to be regarded as a religious woman! And it is strange how often a certain religiousness will flourish even in the most depraved heartnot true godliness, however. So she propounded this difficulty to the Savior

20. Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and You say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship. There are so many sects, can You tell me which is the right one? That is the question which men often put to us when we begin to touch their consciences.

21. Jesus said unto her, Woman, believe Me, the hour comes when you shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. This question is of very temporary interest. The hour comes when neither of these places, nor yet any other, shall be considered sacred!

22-24. You worship you know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour comes, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeks such to worship Him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth. No longer is any consecrated building necessary to true worship! Indeed, no building can be consecrated. No longer are we to be confined to canonical hours. No longer is God to be sought with the sensuousness of sweet music or of fragrant incenseHe is to be sought with the heart, soul and spirit!

25, 26. The woman said unto Him. I know that Messiah comes, which is called Christ: when He is come, He will tell us all things. Jesus said unto her, I that speak unto you am He. This great Truth of God burst upon her with all the forge of a Divine Revelationand faith came with the information! The words that had gone before had prepared her to expect this manifestation of Christ to her soul.

27-34. And at this point His disciples came and marvelled that He talked with a woman: yet no man said, What do You seek? Or, Why do You talk with her? The woman then left her water pot and went her way into the city, and said to the men, Come, see a Man who told me all things that I ever did: is not this the Christ? Then they went out of the city, and came unto Him. In the meanwhile His disciples urged Him, saying, Master, eat. But He said unto them, I have food to eat that you know not of. Therefore said the disciples, one to another, Has any man brought Him something to eat? Jesus said unto them, My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work.

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PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #1202 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

HOLY WATER   
NO. 1202

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, NOVEMBER 8, 1874, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**Whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst.**

**But the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.   
John 4:14.**

ALL things that are of earth are unsatisfactory. Our spirit craves for something more than time and sense can yield. Nothing which comes of earth, even if it should yield a transient satisfaction, can long maintain its excellence. Pointing to the water in Jacobs well, our Lord said, He that drinks of this water shall thirst again. And therein He took up His parable against all earthly things, whether they are fame, or riches, or fleshly pleasure, or anything else beneath the sun. He that drinks at these shallow wells shall not quench, but thirst, or if, for a time, he imagines that he has done so, he will be deceived and, in a little season, the old craving will return. That which is born of the flesh is still flesh at its bestand all flesh is grass and the goodliness thereof is as the flower of grassthe grass withers and the flower thereof fades away and in like manner fades the flesh and its glory.

The religion of the flesh shares in the common fate. If it has a mans own self for its author, his own energy as its impulse and his own opinions for its creed, it may, for a little while, flourish like the flower of the field, but the wind passes over it and it is gone. Waters from his own cistern may stay a mans desires for a while, but before long he must thirst again. Nothing can abide forever but that which comes from the Eternal One. Not from the will of man, but from the work of the Holy Spirit, all truly satisfying religion must proceed. It is the prerogative of the Gospel of Christ to thoroughly satisfy the soul of man and to do this abidingly. The chief object of our present discourse is to set forth that most admirable fact.

I. Finding that it greatly helps the memory of the hearer if the preacher keeps to the words of the text, I shall do so, and note, first, that we have here before us THE WAY OF OBTAINING TRUE RELIGION. Whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst. It is clear from this that true religion must come to us as a gift. The water that I shall give him, says Christ. There is no suggestion as to digging deep with much learning into the deeps of mysterious truth to find the water for ourselves. This priceless drink is freely handed out to us by our Redeemer, without our bringing either bucket or line.

There is no hint in the text that we are to purchase the life-giving water. It is presented to us without money and without price. There is no allusion to a certain measure of fitness to qualify us for the drinkit is purely a gift to be received by us here and now. Our Lord Jesus told the woman that had she known the gift of God she would have asked and He

would have given. Sinner as she was, she had only to ask and have! There is no other way of obtaining eternal life but as the free gift of Sovereign Grace. The Divine Life is not in us by nature. It cannot be produced in us by culture, nor infused into us by ceremonies. Nor can it be propagated in us by natural descentit must come as a blessing of infinite charity from Heavenunpurchased, undeserved.

Wisdom cannot impart it. Power cannot fashion it. Money cannot buy it. Merit cannot procure it. Grace, alone, can give it! If men desire wages they may earn them beneath the mastership of sin, for, The wages of sin is death. On the side of God all is of Grace, for, the gift of God is eternal life. Whoever, then, is to be saved, must be saved by the boundless charity of God. In other words, by the free gift of the Father through Jesus Christ our Lord. This is an elementary Truth of the Gospel, but it needs to be told in every sermon, for man is so hostile to it and the natural mind so runs upon merit and its own boasted doing, that man will not understand the doctrine of Salvation by Grace though it is as plain as the sun at noonday.

Observe, next, that true religion is a gift from Jesus. Our Lord says, the water that I shall give him. The only true religion in the world is that which comes from Jesus Christ. And the only realization of that true religion in your own soul is by receiving it from the hands of Christ, for it is, in all its details, connected with Him. Do we want peace of conscience because sin is forgiven? We have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins! Do we desire deliverance from the power of sin within us? We can only overcome by the blood of the Lamb! Do we need teaching? The best instruction comes from His lips! Do we desire an example which will inspirit us to obey the teaching? He is our pattern, yes, He is made of God unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. He is our All in All!

If any man dreams that he has a God-given religion, he is in deadly error if there is not the mark of the pierced hands upon it. That peace which does not come to us sealed with the blood of the Mediators sacrifice is a false peace! Your soul is deceived with the semblance of satisfaction, but its thirst will soon be upon you again, like an armed man, unless you have been drinking from the fountain opened upon Calvary. Drink from the cup which Jesus fills! Do not think that satisfying waters can be drawn from any well but Himself!

True godliness is next described in the text as a gift which must be received. Whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him. It is received, you see, not merely into the hands, but inward. When we drink water it enters into us, saturates us, becomes a part of our being and helps to build up the fabric of our body. Even so we must receive Jesus Christ into our innermost self. We must not profess to believe with the creed of the head while the heart remains in unbelief. We must not pay to our Lord the empty compliment of praising His Character while we reject His mission. We must so trust Him, depend upon Him, love Him, follow Him, yield ourselves up to Him, live upon Him and in Him that it may be clear that He has entered into and become one with us forever! We need Christ in us Christ in the secret fountain of our being. The Holy Spirit must create in us a new heart and a right spiritand then dwell in our renewed nature as a king in his palace.

My Brothers and Sisters, be sure that this is so with you. Be not content with the outward name which is no more a part of yourself than if it were a label hung about your neck. Be not satisfied with mere externals which do not enter into the heart. Never rest till you have the Divine Life within you. We need not the faith which prates and talks, but the faith which eats the flesh of the Son of Man and drinks His blood. What we need is not Jesus Christ pictured on the wall, nor His name on the lips, nor words about Him from pious books! We need the Lord Himself received into our heartChrist in you the hope of glory. Oh for Christ living, dwelling, reigning within our entire nature, looking out from our eyes, speaking by our lips, blessing the poor by our hands, going about doing good with these feet and magnifying God in these mortal bodies as once He did on earth in His own body! This, then, is true religionJesus Christ received by an act of faith into our inner-most soul.

Dear Friend, have you got this? Before we go an inch further let every man and woman among us press this question home. Do I know what it is to drink of the life-giving stream which Jesus Christ bestows?

II. We notice, in the second place, THE SATISFYING POWER OF TRUE RELIGION. We are told in the text, Whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst. Grace relieves our soul-thirst as soon as it is received. In Eastern countries the idea of thirst is much more vivid than it is with us. Owing to the great heat and the dryness of the atmosphereand the frequency with which thirst really happens to menthey feel it to be one of the most severe physical sufferings.

To the Oriental, thirst would be a forcible metaphor of the longing of an awakened soul. Let it be so to us. A man, once startled from the sleep of sinful indifference so as to look about him and to ask what he is, and where he is, and where he is going, finds in his spirit an eager craving. He scarcely knows what it is, nor what will satisfy itbut urged on by an insatiable sense of need, he searches after a something which will fill what Dr. Watts has very aptly called the aching void within him. He tries the virtue of riches, but gold and silver cannot fill a soul. He seeks after knowledge, and it is no mean pursuit, but science has no well from which a weary spirit may be refreshed. Of making many books there is no end, and much study is a weariness of the flesh.

It may be he dazzles his fancy with fame, or charms his eyes with beauty and his ears with music, but, Vanity of vanities, all is vanity, thus says the Preacher. And the Preachers verdict finds a thousand echoes in experience. There is a horseleech in human nature which continually cries, Give, give! And had it all the stars for a possession, it would still cry for more, for like the sea it cannot be quiet. Man, though he knows it not, needs his God. He needs reconciliation to his offended Maker, and until he gets it, he cannot rest. He is like a rolling thing before the whirlwindhe is tossed up and down like a thistledown in the breeze. And like Noahs dove, he finds no rest for the soles of his feet.

He who believes in Christ has received the Atonement and finds in it an at-one-ment with Godthe great quarrel is ended! His Nature is also changed and now he seeks after that which God delights inand in the Lord his soul is satisfied. He has the new birth. He belongs to the family of God. He begins to understand Divine realities and to see them, taste them, handle them and to find rest for his soul in them. Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Faith in Jesus quenches our souls thirst and it continues to do so. This is the beauty of it. He that drinks of the water from earths wells is refreshed, but after a little while the effect of his drinking is gone, and he thirsts again.

But he that drinks of the water that Christ shall give him, shall never thirst. That one draught has created in him an inexhaustible fountain of supply which will satisfy his mouth with good things, so that his youth shall be renewed like the eagles. Though the thirst will forever strive to return, yet shall it be always met by the well within which shall spring up into everlasting life! Accept the Gospel of Christ, poor thirsty Heart, and you have accepted a satisfaction which will endure as long as you endure! Glory be to God that we have such living water to present to you in Jesus Christs name this morning!

Here is the secret cause of this abiding satisfactionit continues because Divine Grace continues. Our Lord adds, The water that I shall give him shall be in him. The water drank today has its uses and is gone. It serves our present purpose and disappears. But he that drinks of the water which Jesus gives, has it always in him and hence he always enjoys a freedom from spiritual thirst. Whatever effect the Grace of God produces today, it will be capable of producing the same tomorrowand other effects as they shall be requiredfor it retains its potency and the same cause will produce the same effect. O the matchless draught, which never leaves the man who drinks it, but remains in him as part and parcel of his noblest self, forever contenting his whole nature and causing rivers of living water to flow out of him, even the Spirit which those who believe in Jesus have received! Well may every instructed heart pray, Lord, give us this water.

Now this final and abiding removal of thirst by a draught of Grace, which remains in the man, is a matchless blessing and averts a thousand ills. It is often useful to measure our mercies by their negative aspect, asking ourselves, What should we have been without them? O Sinner without the living water, you are thirsting nowor if not thirsting, a deadly stupor is upon your soulwhich is worse than thirst! How mournful is your condition! And yet, my Brother in the Lord, you would be in the same pitiable case had you not believed! You would be cast into the same lethargic sleep with which sin steeps the senses of your fellow man! Or had you been awakened out of that sleep, you would be in bondage to fears, dreads and innumerable horrors!

Sin would have been as a burning fever to your nature and all the joys of earth a mockery to your anguish. You would have been crushed beneath an awful sense of present wrath and a deadly fear of coming judgment! Perhaps, also, at this time you had been going from bad to worse, trying to satisfy your cravings with the delusions of Satan, poisoning your heart by drinking down what seemed to be water but turned out to be liquid fire, inflaming your passions with intoxicating vices and preparing in your heart a fame which shall burn even to the lowest Hell! Your fleshly lusts might at this hour have been steeling your spirit more and more with a dreadful hate of God and proud disdain of His Gospel. Ah, perhaps at this moment you would have been in Hellwhere thirst rages both in body and in soul foreverand not a drop of water can be found to allay the torment.

But now you have drunk of what Jesus Christ has given you and you are satisfied and at peace. Blessed be the Lord for this! The ills averted and the good bestowed you can not sufficiently calculate, but you can, today, adore that dear hand which bestowed this matchless draught upon you. I think I hear someone interpose the observation that there is still in the Believer a thirst. I answer, yes, it is true, and blessed be God for it! We sang right well in our hymn just now

*I thirst, but not as once I did,   
The vain delights of earth to share.   
Your wounds, Immanuel, all forbid   
That I should find my pleasure there.*

The moment a man knows Christ, he thirsts to know more of Him. But there is a very great difference between the thirsting of horrible unappeased longingsand the thirsting of unutterable joy which longs to continueand of burning love which gladly would know more and more of its adorable Lord.

The inward desires of the Christian after more holiness, more communion with God and more love to Christ are not so much a thirst for Grace as the bubbling up of the well of spiritual life which is in the soul already! I would not wish to be in such a state as to be satisfied with myself, or satisfied with my attainments. Satisfied with Christ, the Christian always is. But altogether and entirely satisfied with his own realization of the blessings which Jesus bringsso as to desire no moreI think he never will be till he gets to Heaven! Have you never heard of that great painter who, one day breaking his palette and putting aside his brush, said to a friend that he should paint no more, for his day was over. And when his friend inquired why he had come to that singular conclusion, he said, Because the last painting which I executed perfectly contented me and, therefore, I feel that the high ideal which led me on has departed and I shall succeed no more.

It is so. There is in every man who is a master of his art a high ideal after which he strains. And the fact that he has that ideal ever above him is one of the tokens of his lofty genius. I suppose that Milton, as a poet, never reached the height of that great argument as he desired to reach it. When he had composed a portion of his wondrous epic he would feel that his thoughts were above his words and that he had an inner, unshaped conception towering higher than his actually formed and shaped thoughts. He was a poet because that was the case. Other rhymesters are not poets because their verses please them.

That man is holy who mourns the unholiness of his holiest deedsand that man is no longer holy who conceives himself to be without sin and to have reached the highest attainable excellence. The mariner who has

reached the Ultima Thule and dreams that he has cast anchor hard by earths utmost boundary, where the universe comes to an end, will never be a Columbus. Up with your anchor, my Brother, for there are wide seas beyond and a land of gold across the main! Self-satisfaction is the grave of progress! He who thinks himself perfect is never likely to be so. Brothers and Sisters, shun the spirit of self-content! Whatever doctrinal views you may hold as to the higher life, I will not dispute with you. But I practically beseech you to shun the spirit which lulls the heart into soft slumbers by the music of spiritual flattery.

Whoever you are, I make bold to say that you are not all you should be, nor all you can be. There is a blessed hunger and thirst after righteousnessa panting after God as the hart pants after the water brookswhich still abides in the Christian. But it is in no degree akin to the thirst which is mentioned in the text. Grace in the heart gives rest, peace, joy and holy calm of soul. It satisfies our cravings and fills our largest desiresand all because by the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit it daily enables us to realize Jesus and God in Jesus. What fullness there is in Him

*In want, my plentiful Supply;   
In weakness, my almighty Power;   
In bonds, my perfect Liberty;   
My Refuge in temptations hour;   
My Comfort midst all grief and thrall,   
My Life in death, my All in All.*

III. Having noticed the way of obtaining true religion and the satisfying effect of it, we will now observe ITS ABIDING CHARACTER. The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. There is a theory of religion which supposes that a man may be regenerated and yet may so depart from the Lord that the inner life may become extinct. And I have met with persons of whom I have been told that they have been born again three or four timesthat after experiencing regeneration they had fallen from Grace altogetherand yet had been renewed again unto repentance.

I must confess I have not believed what I have been told, for it is contrary to those many Scriptures which declare that if these shall fall away it is impossible to renew them again unto repentance, for, if the salt has lost its savor wherewith shall it be seasoned? My heart believes, and as I read the Scriptures I believe it more and more, that where a good work is begun by God, He will carry it on and that the new life bestowed upon us is an incorruptible seed which lives and abides forever, so that, the righteous shall hold on his way and he that has clean hands shall wax stronger and stronger.

Notice how the text describes the matter. The water that I shall give him

shall be in himnot of him, not upon him, not around himbut in himand hence it cannot be lost. You know how we use that expression. Here is a man trying to write poetry. (Ah, how many are guilty of that folly)? But it is not in him and it cannot come out of him. So he rhymes his nonsense, but a poet he never becomes. But if a man has it in him, who can take it away? Another sits down to paint. But if it is not in him, he becomes eminent in the school of Van Daub, but reaches no further it is not in himbut if in him who shall deprive him of the gift?

True religion is, however, more than a faculty, it is a new life. And so it is even more abidingly in the man than my illustration sets forth. The poet may be despoiled of his goods. He may be deprived of his liberty. He may be shut up within iron barsbut he still singsyou cannot rob him of his poetic faculty, for it is in him. The artist may scarcely be allowed a ray of light in the dark dungeon into which he is thrust. But he follows the lone sunbeam around his prison wall and works by its light, for his art is in him. We all agree with the remark that it is better to give a lad an education than a fortune, for the one he carries in him and cannot lose, but the other may soon be gone, since it is no part of himself. That part of our inheritance which we carry in us is beyond the thiefs cunning and the tyrants power.

If we have the Grace of God we shall have it still, for Jesus saysit shall be in him. Blessed be God it is not in our frail body nor in our feeble mind, but in our Heaven-born spiritand so it is in that part of our nature which Death, itself, cannot cause to diewhich no power on earth is able to touch. If religion were a garb it could be laid aside. If it were a rite, its efficacy might cease. But since it is a life, a vital principle, an essential part of our new nature and is interwoven with the warp and woof of our renewed manhood, it is ours eternally! Christ has said it, and we believe it, The water that I shall give him shall be in him, and in us it shall be as long as we live!

Our Lord also promises that this water shall be in the man, a well of living water. It shall always remain in him as an operative force, full of freshness and life. It shall not be there like water in a cistern which may gradually evaporate and cannot have the freshness of spring water. Nor as a stagnant pool which becomes useless and even pestilential to all around. It shall not even be as water forced into our houses by pressure it shall have a springing up power of its own! It shall be as permanent and changeless as Jacobs well which was there in the Patriarchs day and is there, still, as full as ever! It shall be forever new, yet ever the same. It shall have an energy and force in it which shall cause a perpetual uprising in the soul.

Like the village brook born at the springhead, our new life shall flow on, and as it flows it shall sing   
*Men may come and men may go,   
But I go on forever.*

As surely as the well continues to fill itself without machinery of mans invention, or a pump of earthly power, so surely shall the new life within the Christian continue to stir and move and bubble up. There will always be in it a vitality which comes from the quickening Spirit. Mechanical religion, which consists in ceremonies and observances, is a very stale thing. I should think, after seeing the mass, or any other Popish display some 50 times, it must become rather a dreary business, however prettily the show may be arranged. And the mere repetition of a liturgical service, without heart, with the same words and tones, must become very monotonous. Certainly extempore prayer and the most varied service is heavy enough when the soul is taken out of it.   
Anything which has not spiritual life in it becomes, in due time, insipid, flat, wearisome. As well be a blind horse going round in a mill as the performer of religious acts without the inner life. Coming to this place, sitting in these seats and listening to me may soon become a piece of mere clockwork to you if your hearts are not alive towards God. How very different is worship in Spirit and in Truth! Real inward vitality is as perpetually beautiful as the sea which never appears to be twice alike, though it is always the same. Or like the rising of the sun, a perpetual novelty, forever exhibiting some new phase of Gods Glory. It is a joy for me to linger near a spring and mark the widening circles, the countless wavelets, the sparkling ripples and the translucent streams which, in their perpetual variety and laughing joyousness, are the very image of youth and freshness.

True religion is like a well because it is independent of its surroundingsit flows in summer and in winter. The pond overflows because there has been a shower of rain, but the deep well is full in the drought and the villagers flock to it in the driest season, for they never knew it to fail. Its secret sources are too abundant to be affected by a few weeks of parching heat. Would you go in search of them, they are far away on yonder cloudcapped hills, where the river of God, which is full of water, empties itself into reservoirs which the Lord has dug. I will look unto the hills from whence comes my help, says the Christian. He directs his expectations to the all-sufficiency of God and sings, All my fresh springs are in You.

He knows that it is the Lord who sends the springs into the valleys which run among the hills. The Believer is independent of his outward surroundings. He is not exalted by riches, nor crushed by poverty. He trusts not in man whose breath is in his nostrils, for in which he is to be accounted. Nothing earthly can feed or famish the Divine Life in man and even the visible means of Grace are not absolutely necessary to it, for concerning them it may be said, man shall not live by bread alone. Should a Christian be cast into a heathen land, or cared to live where the Truth of God has fallen in the streets, and zeal is dead, and corruption abounds, he is greatly triedbut still the inner well springs up because his faith has tapped the deep which lies underand he draws his supplies from the Infinity of Godnot from outward ordinances.

Elijah is strong amid idolaters and Pauls faith is vigorous on board ship among heathen, just as wells are found in places where all around is arid as a desert. Elim was in the wilderness, not in the kings garden. And many a Believer is found in a dry and thirsty land where there is no water. God is Infinite and All-Sufficientand the man whose sources lie in the All-Sufficient One receives of His fullness! When natural religion and fleshly excitement are gone, the faith, hope and joy of vital godliness manifest the dew of their youth. Alas, how often is the contrast seen! Do I not know some who were converted under a very earnest preacher and as long as they heard him they remained in their apparent godliness? But when he was gone, what became of them?

I enquired the other day as to the permanent results of a certain revival which, at the time, I hoped was a genuine one. Some two or three hundred were added to a certain Church, but the pastor left and I asked his successor whether the converts remained. He replied, I cannot give a good account of them. Very few are with us now. That is not a rare case. I have other instances within my knowledge where Churches have been revived into absolute annihilation! The balloon has been filled till it burst! Warmed up into a furnace heat by tremendous blasts of excitement, a cold of corresponding intensity has set in when the heating apparatus has consumed its fuel. Not a word have I to say against real spiritual revivals, but I warn you excitable people that principle is the main matter, not passion.

Give me a man who does not depend upon a preacher, nor drink in his inspiration from warm-hearted friends and crowded meetingsbut has inward, vital experience by which he knows the Lord for himselfand has had personal dealings with a personal Savior! Such a man will follow the Lamb though every preacher should die and every outward ministry should be struck dumb. The indwelling power of the Holy Spirit rises superior to all disadvantages, like a spring which cannot be kept under, do what you may! Our engineers and builders know how hard it is to bind up the earth-floods from overflowingand the spiritual floods are yet more unconquerable!

It is wonderful how springs will bubble up in places where we least expect them. The great Sahara Desert will, no doubt, be made a very easy country to traverse and, perhaps, may even become a fertile plain, from the fact that there is water everywhere at no great depth below the surfaceand when it is reached an oasis is formed. The Government of Algeria has sent engineers into parts of the Sahara bordering on the French possessionand these men have bored the rock by Artesian wells and greatly astonished the natives, for in the wilderness have waters leaped out and streams in the desert! At the magic touch of the living water, palm trees have sprung up and an undergrowth of vegetation, so that the solitary places have been made to sing together.

When the Lord gives our souls to drink from the fountains of the great deep of His own eternal Love and to have a vital principle of Divine Grace within us, our wilderness rejoices and blossoms as the rose! Neither can the Sahara around us wither our verdureour soul is as an oasis, though all around is barrenness! Happy is the man whose life is hid with Christ in God, for he shall be filled with all the fullness of God

*From You the overflowing spring,   
His soul shall drink a fresh supply;   
While such as trust their native strength   
Shall melt away and droop and die.*

When God shall fail, the Believer will fail, but not till then. On him He fits the blessing given to Joseph, securing to him the precious things of Heaven and of the dew and of the deep which couches beneath. Observers tell us, and we may have noticed ourselves, that wells are not always equally full, for verily earthly things must change and none of them are full types of the heavenly.

Springs which are never frozen in the coldest winter and never dry in the hottest summer, yet exhibit certain ebbs and flows and, even so, the Christian, because he is still in the body, is not always at his best by reason of infirmity and fault. There are happy times when we overflow delightfullyand there are other seasons when we have to cry most anxiously, Spring up, O well. Yet, blessed be God, the well is always there

and as it is never disconnected from its springs, it never utterly fails. Our Lord says the well shall always be in us and, therefore, we may exultantly cry, Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Who shall destroy the life which is one with His?

The notion that our Lords spiritual body is undergoing a constant change in the loss of its members and the growth of new ones is so strangeand so dishonoring to Himthat I must leave its defense to those who can tolerate it. I believe that no member of Christ shall be amputated from His body and, not a bone of Him shall be broken. He says, I give unto My sheep eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of My hand. Because I live, you live also. He has said, moreover, Verily, verily I say unto you, he that believes in Me has everlasting life. But a life which expires is not everlasting and, therefore, we are sure that it will live on eternally. The principle implanted in us when we believe is an abiding one, for we were, born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which lives and abides forever. If it is so, how can we perish? No, Brothers and Sisters, Grace will remain in us and the Lord will perfect that which concerns us.

The text further says it is a well which is springing, a well which never ceases to flowupon which we will not dwell. We will only say thisthat God works up to now, and works alwaystherefore the life of God in the soul is usually operative in some form or other. The great motives which set the Christian working at first are as forcible in his old age as in his youth. And his obedience to them is even more complete. Therefore he ceases not from spiritual activity. His soul bubbles up in prayer, praise, love, hope and joy forevermore. He must do the will of Him that sent him. He cannot but work out his own salvation, for God continues to work in him to will and to do of His good pleasure. Thus all that happens to a Christian, overruled by the Grace of God, tends to keep him springing up.

Is he surrounded by the wicked? He feels it his duty to bear his protest the more vigorously. Is he in the midst of the righteous? He owns that in such congenial society he ought to do more for Christ. Is he poor? He feels that he had need be rich in faith to sustain his spirits. Is he rich? He knows that uncertain riches are certain temptationsand that he needs great Grace, both to escape the snare and bear up under the responsibility of his station. Thus even adverse things are made to help him! And even as the Nile overflows in the hot season because of the melting of the snows on the far-off mountains, so does the inner life. How all the more when we might have imagined it would be drawn dry.

The text adds, Springing up into everlasting lifenot to life, merely, but to that life which is everlasting! I, for one, shall never be able to attach any meaning to the word everlasting but that of lasting forever! The Believer lives on forever and Divine Grace blossoms into Glory. The life of the saints on earth is of the same essence as the life of the saints in Heaven they receive no new life when they enter into Gloryonly that which they received in regeneration is purged from every hindrance and is developed to perfection! Our life below tends in the same direction as the heavenly life, for both flow towards God and seek His Glory and delight in fellowship with Him.

We have now within us the germs of the glorified charactera holy life, a humble life, an obedient life, a blessed life, we always have hereand such is the life of the golden city. Our life is sustained by the same power as the life of those in Heaven. Because I live, you shall live also, is the gift both of saints in Heaven and saints on earth. It is guaranteed by the same Covenant and if a child of God on earth can perish, a child of God in Heaven may, for anything I can see. The fidelity which will keep the blessed is the same fidelity which preserves us while here below. And if our life, which is hid with Christ, can fail, I know not what additional security belongs to a soul in Heaven. The whole text together gives us this full assurance, that if we have drunk of the water which Christ gives us, it cannot be extracted from us or fail to save us! It is a living well, and must spring up into everlasting life!

The practical outcome of it all is just this. Let each one answer this questionwhere did you get your religion? Does anyone reply, I am of the religion of my father before me, and thats enough for me. Yes, that is what the old heathen chieftain said when he had one foot in the baptismal font. He turned round to the missionary and asked where his ancestors souls were. And when he heard that they had gone to Hell, he said he would not be parted from them. I see no sense in such talk! I suppose if your parents had been blind you would have put your eyes out. Or if they had been lame, you would have made yourself a cripple!

No, dear Friends, we should follow our parents so far as they followed Christ, but when they leave Jesus we must take another road! Where did you get your religion from? Is it of your own manufacture? Is it the creature of your own power and will? Then it will come to nothing! Nothing is worth having as to everlasting life but that which comes from the hand which was nailed to the Crossand there bought our redemptionand now freely bestows it upon us. The next question is, what has your religion done for you? Has it satisfied your heart? Does it bring rest to your soul? Has it quenched your thirst?

Now, there are many religions in the world which do not profess to do this. When nine persons out of 10 talk of what they call the Christian religion, their notion is that perhaps a man may know he is safe when he is dying. Perhaps he may get his sins forgiven in the last solemn article. But as to any idea of being saved now, they do not comprehend ittheir religion does not deal with present salvation. How few rejoice in that text, Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear we shall be like He, for we shall see Him as He is! How few can say, Being justified by faith we have peace with God! They think it presumption, for they are ignorant of the power of faith. Go to Jesus Christ then, dear Friends, and receive from Him the free gift of His mercy and you will say, Lord, it is enough, my soul is satisfied.

The next question is this Does your religion abide with you? You had great joy in it once. Do you possess it now? Is it in you? That religion which you can lose, it might be well to lose at once so that you might be driven to seek a better! But that religion which you never can lose is the

religion of Christ! Now for a straightforward question. Does your religion always dwell in you? I know some people whose godliness lies in their best hats. They put them on when Sunday comes round and then they are wonderfully religious! And when they get into a place of worship they look into the hats to which they owe so muchbut when the new garments are laid by and the work-day hat is on in which they go to the city or the workshopthey act as badly as other men.

The Sunday bonnet and go-to-meeting dress make a deal of difference to some people. When the hymn book and the Bible are near at hand, they are devout. When the ledger and the day book are near, what a change comes over the scene! Genuine religion is in a man. You cannot lay it aside as the soldier may hang up his sword or put away his uniformyou carry it with you everywhereit is your delight to do so.

Lastly, does your religion spring up within your soul by the secret energy of the Spirit of God? Do you feel emotions, longings, regrets and desires arising in you without any outward prompting? You do not pray by order, but because you cannot help ityou are in need and must pray. Nobody stands by and says, Lament before God. You groan because you must groan, and sing because you feel like singing! You pray continually because your souls needs are constant. And you praise frequently because your souls gratitude bursts forth like a mighty spring. Your obedience does not arise from a Law upon stone, but from a Law written on your hearts, from life in you, from heavenly instinct, from the sacred impulses of the Spirit!

For me to live is Christ. Happy is the man who feels the well within him bubbling up, so that it is in his very life to obey the Lord Jesus! God grant we all may drink of the living water for Jesus sake Amen.

**PORTIONS OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON-John 4:1-42.** HYMNS FROM OUR OWN HYMN BOOK 435, 775, 805.  
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LIFES EVER-SPRINGING WELL   
NO. 864

**DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, APRIL 4, 1869, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.   
John 4:14.**

YOU have been busy all the week with external things. You have had to deal with the questions, What shall we eat and what shall we drink and with what shall we be clothed? It is well that at least on this one day in seven we should turn our eyes away from the external to the internal from the less to the greaterfor as life is more than meat and the body than raiment, so is the soul more important than all that which surrounds it. It were most unwise in any man to be so continually attending to the exterior of his house as to neglect the comforts of the inner apartments and the warmth of the fireside. It were extreme folly in any of us to be very careful in the dressing of our person and meanwhile to permit our body to pine away under some dreadful disease.

That which is the more important should have the most of our thoughts, and if it must, necessarily, be otherwise during the week, at least let it be so now. Let us forget our buying and selling, toiling and suffering, caring and enjoying! And turning away from all that lies abroad, let us look at home and view our inner natures by the light of the Word of God. We have a great tendency, dear Friends, to make even our religion too much external. There are certain externals of religion which are exceedingly important, but the danger is lest in our great zeal for these, we forget that, after all, there is something better and higher to be thought about.

I pity the man who takes no interest in the great discussion of the hour with regard to the separation of Church and State, but I should far more pity him if he were so absorbed in that discussion as not to enquire whether he was, himself, a member of the true Church of Jesus Christ. Assuredly the questions concerning ritualism, liturgies, episcopacy and so on, are very important and a man who takes no interest in them is unmindful of great interests. But still, if a man were so occupied with the circumstances of outward worship as to forget the inward drawing near unto God with heart and soul, it were a thing to be deeply deplored.

I shall invite you, this morning, to forget everything that has to do with the external part of religion, whether correct or incorrect. Forget the form of worship, the mode of song, the manner of prayer, the way of celebrating ordinancesall these may, for awhile, be put upon the shelf and left there. We have now to do with the interior life, the secret power which dwells withinwe have to consider that water which the Lord Jesus gives to Believers, which is in them, a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

In a word, the subject of this morning is the spiritual lifethe inward work of Divine Gracethe life which proves a man to be saved. The life which comes from God and labors to ascend to God. The life on earth which is the bud of the eternal life in Heaven.

I. Our first observation is that THE SPIRITUAL LIFE IS A DIVINE GIFT. Observe the words, The water that I shall give him. First, the new life is a gift. It is not a principle dwelling in the man naturally and to be brought out from obscurity. I have heard it said and I have been horrified when I have heard so gross a falsehood, that there is in man something good, noble, spiritual and that the object of the Christian minister in delivering the Gospel is to take away the ignorance and folly that may overlay this innate nobility and so to bring out and train up the precious vital principles which otherwise had lain latent within the human heart.

Taking holy Scripture to be the Truth of God, the doctrine I have just stated is, of all lies, one of the grossest! There is nothing spiritually good in man whatever by nature. The carnal mind is enmity against God and is not reconciled to God, neither indeed can be. We might long enough rake the dunghill of human nature before we found the priceless jewel of spiritual life concealed within it. Man is dead in sin! How long will you hunt the sepulcher before you shall discover life within the ribs of death? Long enough may you ransack yonder moldering bones in the cemetery before you shall discover the germs of immortality within the ashes of the departed.

If man were but faint, we might, perhaps, by a sort of spiritual friction or electricity, arouse him to life. If he were lying in a state of coma, we might, by some gracious surgery, at length rekindle the embers and make the life burn forth in its strength. But when we are informed, over and over again, by the Holy Spirit Himself, that man is not only dead, but that he is corruptwhere is the hope of finding life within him? The living and incorruptible seed of Divine Grace is a gift, yet further, because it is not produced in men by efforts of their own, through the imitation of good example, or through early instruction, or gradual reform.

Though for centuries the dead should be located in the neighborhood of the living, they will not, thereby, come to life. The example of life is lost upon dead men! For many a day might you read a homily upon life in the ears of the corpse before you shall thereby cause the skeleton to make any effort towards vitality. In fact, efforts after life are efforts of life. Life is where there is a desire for life. Life is already, in a measure, kindled in that heart where there is a true and sincere effort made to lay hold on eternal life. Life, spiritual life, is a gift, wholly a gift. It is given according to the good-will and purpose of God. If the Lord gives the new life to some and not to others, He is perfectly free to do as He wills with His own.

Gifts are not regulated according to the law of debts. If God owes to any man eternal life, he shall have it, for God will be debtor to no man. But He owes nothing to sinful man but wrath! And if He chooses according to His good pleasure to give a new and spiritual life to His chosen, none shall dare to question Him, or say to Him, What are You doing? The Divine challenge is, May I not do as I will with My own? Is your eye evil because Mine is good? The spiritual life which is possessed by any man was given to him as the result of an eternal purpose on Gods part, framed absolutely according to His Sovereign good will and pleasureconcerning which He has Himself told usthat He will have mercy on whom He will have mercy and He will have compassion on whom He will have compassion.

This life is never received in any other way than as a gift. It is not obtainable in any other way but as a gift and, coming as a gift, it always illustrates the sovereign rights of God to give or to withhold as may please Him. Now, I said that it is not only a gift, but according to the text it is a Divine gift. Christ has put itthe water that I shall give him, by which we are to understand that Jesus Christ does not give us the inner life apart from the Father and the Holy Spirit, but that still He does give it.

The fact is that the Father causes spiritual life in us in some respects, for He has begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. As we are the children of God the Father, we, therefore, salute Him by the name, Abba, Father. But this life also comes to us through Jesus Christ. In Him was life and the life was the light of men. He is the medium of life. It is as the result of His atoning sacrifice that we receive it. It is when by faith we look to Him that we begin to live and it is in proportion as we live upon Him that we enjoy true life.

At the same time, this life comes to us from the Holy Spirit and is a result of the Holy Spirits graciously dwelling in us. He consecrates our hearts into a temple. He resides within our spirits. Then we, who once were dead, are made to live. It is the indwelling of the Holy Spirit within the soul which is the great secret Source and spring of the Divine Grace which wells up within us and causes us to live in the life of Christ. Observe, then, if you or I would be real and true Christians, renewed and quickened into celestial life, we must receive a mysterious life from God Himself as a gift.

Take this doctrine to be true! And what is the practical lesson of it but this? If this day I tremble lest I have it not, let me learn the way by which this life must come to me if it come at all. Certainly not by my own striving and struggles in the way of merit, for it is represented not as a reward, but as a gift. Certainly not by any power of my own apart from God, for it is spoken of as coming from Jesus Christ and not as growing out of human nature. What, then, had I better do than make a solemn appeal to the mercy of God?

This is the only attribute which smiles upon me! Justice awards me nothing but death. Grace alone can bring me life! If the Lord should refuse the living water to me, I could not complain, but His name is love and I know that He has made a promise that whoever believes in Christ shall not perish, but have everlasting life. Let me come as an undeserving sinner, then, this day and appeal to the bounty of God, and ask Him for His names sake and for His mercys sake, to have pity upon me!

Some of you think, perhaps, because you have been to a place of worship from your youth up and have been doing your best to lead reputable and respectable lives, that perhaps you shall obtain salvation as a matter of course! But it is not so. You must learn that saving Grace can only come to you as the gift of mercyto that end you must feel that you do not deserve any good thing from God and you must confess your unworthiness, as I beseech you to confess it this morning. You must turn to the Lord your God with penitential confession on your lips and pray Him in all His infinite compassion to give to you a life which you cannot create for yourself and cannot find within yourself, but which He alone can bestow according to the riches of His mercy in Christ Jesus.

I wish not, this morning, to preach mere dry doctrine which may seem to be an iron bar to shut up a sinner in the prison of despair, but, rather, I desire to turn this Truth of God to a practical and stimulating purpose. You Sinners, seek the favor of your offended God in Christ Jesus, for He is the Lord and Giver of life and your quickening must come from Him and from Him alone!

II. Secondly, we gather from the text that the principle which makes the Christian is something INWARD AND PERSONAL. The water that I shall give him shall be in him. In him. Put the emphasis on another word and we get another sense, In him, that is, in the man himself. The worth of true religion, like the value of gold, prompts men to counterfeits. Where there is a life within, it naturally shapes for itself some kind of outward manifestation. Unconverted men find it too much trouble to look after the inward life, so they take an easier method and carefully imitate its outward manifestation.

If a man who really hears God does this and that, then, although they do not sincerely fear the Lord, they count it decorous to do the same. Do they suppose that it is as easy to deceive the Lord as to satisfy themselves, or having the imitation of godliness are they satisfied to enquire no further and to rest without the reality? Many of the superstitions which encrust the Christian religion, have, no doubt, taken their rise from some harmless eccentricities on the part of really gracious men. In them a practice might be pardonable and possibly commendable, which in others, who have not their holy zeal, has degenerated into a vain oblation. Life demands and should be allowed great latitude of methods in its display even Siamese twins, dwarfs and giants must not be slainbut to set up mere monstrosities of life as models is ridiculous! We can endure the odd ways of a really fervent lover of Jesus, but the mere wax-work of superstition is not to be tolerated.

I frequently see persons coming into a place of worship looking into their hats, or shading their eyes with their hands, as if they were praying to God to grant a blessing on what they were about to hear. But I suppose, in three cases out of four, they are doing nothing of the sortit is only because it happened to be the custom with some good people thus to pray, that, therefore, formalists must pretend, at any rate, to do the same. In days gone by, certain Christian people set apart days of fasting and then, in due time, everybody took to a course of salt fish. True Christians love the Cross of Christ, therefore formalists must needs wear crosses of wood or ivory on their bosoms.

If earnest Believers practice true family prayer, others must sham the doing of it, though their heart is not in it. There is no Christian practice, there is no Christian habit but what has been, or will be before long, imitated by people who have no vital godliness whatever! If there is no good cheer within, at least the landlord will hang out a sign. If there is no kernel, men put up with the shell. Let all washers of the outside of cups and platters remember that true religion is not an outward but an inward thing! It is not a matter of the surface, but of the core of our nature! It is not a robe to be put on and to be taken offit is a life, an inward principle which becomes a part of the mans self! And if it is not so, it is not real at all. The water that I shall give him shall be in him.

How like to a Christian a man may be and yet possess no vital godliness! Walk through the British Museum and you will see all the orders of animals standing in their various places and exhibiting themselves with the utmost possible propriety. The rhinoceros demurely retains the position in which he was set at first. The eagle soars not through the window. The wolf howls not at night. Every creature, whether bird, beast, or fish, remains in the particular glass case allotted to it. But you all know well enough that these are not the creatures, but only the outward semblances of them! Yet in what do they differ? Certainly in nothing which you could readily see, for the well-stuffed animal is precisely like what the living animal would have been!

And that glass eye even appears to have more of brightness in it than the natural eye of the creature itselfyet you know well enough that there is a secret inward something lacking, which, when it has once departed, you cannot restore. So in the Churches of Christ! Many professors are not living Believers, but stuffed Believers, stuffed Christians! There are all the externals of religioneverything that you could desireand they behave with a great deal of propriety, too! They all keep their places, and there is no outward difference between them and the living, except upon the vital point the life which no power on earth could possibly confer! There is this essential distinctionthe life is absent.

It is almost painful to watch little children when some little pet of theirs has died, how they can hardly realize the difference between death and life! Your little boys bird moped for awhile upon its perch and at last dropped down in the cagedo you not remember how the little fellow tried to set it up, and gave it seed and filled its glass with waterand was quite surprised to think that Birdie would not open his little eyes for his friend as it did before and would not take its seed, nor drink its water? Ah, you had at last to make him know that a mysterious something had gone from his little favorite and would not come back again.

There is just such a spiritual difference between the mere professor and the genuine Christian. There is an invisible, but most real indwelling of the Holy Spiritthe absence or the Presence of which makes all the difference between the sinner and the saint. Beloved, as saving Grace is an inward thing, so I also remark that it must be a personal matter. The presence of life in 50 relatives of a family is of no service to the 51st person if he is dead. If in the midst of this vast congregation there should be one dead person, the existence of life in us all could have no power whatever to resuscitate that corpse. Everybody knows that is true and the remark is therefore trite, but everybody does not appear to perceive that in religion the same statement is correct!

We are all Christiansthat is the common talkWhy, we belong to a Christian nationare we not born Christians? Or, Surely we must all be right. We have always attended our parish Church and is not that enough? Or, with some, Our parents were always godly. We were born into the Church, were we not? Did they not take us up in their arms when we were little and make us members of Christ? What more do we need? Our solemn answer is that all the religion which is not personal is vain and void! Men have no spiritual birthrights which can take them into Heaven that come to them by the way of the flesh, for that which is born of the flesh is flesh!

All Covenant heritages come by the new birth. We are not heirs of God after the flesh but by the Spirit! You must be born of the Spirit in order to partake of spiritual things! And if you are not so born, there is no truth that you need more to hear than this, You must be born again. All the virtue that adorned your ancestors cannot save you. The Divine Grace that was in your grandmother, Lois, or your mother, Eunice, can be of no good to you unless you are a Timothy and love the Scriptures for yourself!

Unless you unfeignedly repent and heartily believe in Jesus Christ, you might as well, perhaps better, have been a Caffer than a Christian! Unless you, yourself, lay hold on eternal life, you might as well be a street Arab as the son or the daughter of the most godly saint in our Zion! The water which Jesus gives us must be in each of us if we would be saved. I shall now pause again and invite you to heart-searching, for my one object is to be practical and to deal with each one personally.

Dear Hearer, what about this matter? How fares it with you? Have you this life within you? I do not ask, Have you been baptized? I make no enquiry about whether you have taken the communion of late. Have you within you a life which only God can give? Is your religion only a thing of saying prayers and reading chapters and singing hymns, or is it a life? Come, now, suppose there were no Churches, no Chapels, no sermons, no assemblies for worshipwould you still be a Christian? Have you a secret something within you which cannot be weighed in the scales, nor measured, nor comprehended in the balance? Have you a secret something within you which the eagles eyes have not seen and which the lions whelps have not discerneda secret inner life which philosophy cannot detect, which carnal reason will not perceive, but which is most sure and truethe incorruptible seed within your soul?

Have you a life within you, strange, unearthly, supernatural? Do your prayers come from within? Do your praises well up from the deeps of your spirit? Have you had personal dealings with God? Say, have you ever told Him your sins out of a broken heart? Have you looked to Jesus with tearful, but believing eyes and for yourself rested on Him? For oh, remember, as surely as this Book was written by the finger of God, so is it true that you can never enter Heaven unless you have within your own heart the Holy Spirit dwelling there and unless you are yourself renewed in the spirit of your mind. Except you be converted and become as little children, you cannot enter into the kingdom. You must be born again! How is it with you? God help you to search yourself and give a just and true answer.

III. We must pass on to a third point which is clearly in the text. The inward principle which Christ implants within those who are His is a VIGOROUS AND ACTIVE PRINCIPLE. The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up. Not a pool of water standing still and becoming stagnant. Nor even a stream of water gently gliding onbut a spring perpetually forcing itself upward. You have seen springs at work and you have noticed that they never cease, they never pause there is never a moment in which they are quiet. Let all things else change their occupation, the spring could fairly say

*Men may come and men may go,   
But I go on forever.*

In the silent night watches, when no eyes gaze upon them, the springs bubble on. And when the hot and broiling sun is parching the meadows, cool and clear is the ever-flowing springs. Springs are in perpetual motion and no known power can stop them. If for mischief heaps of rubbish are piled upon them, they somehow percolate the mass, upheave and find a vent for themselves at lastfor their force must win a course for itself. So Brethren, when God puts the new life into a man, it is a very active and vigorous principle! How have I seen Divine Grace well up from under a mass of ignorance! The man hardly understood the Gospel, but yet he had a love to Christ and that love displayed itself despite his defects.

Even when a man falls into error, if Divine Grace is in his heart it will yet reveal itself. Even in the case of Romanists, where there has been a true and genuine love to Christ, it is apparent in their looks to every candid spiritual eye. Though all around it is the desert of superstition, the gracious heart, like a wellhead, makes a little verdure and creates a few lovely flowers which none could disdain. We have known persons who could not read the Scriptures and have, therefore, had very crude notions of what the doctrines of the Gospel were and have, in fact, been much misled and much mistaken, to their own sorrow and injury. But yet, for all that, God the Holy Spirit being in them, they have shown a crystal life like sparkling well water for purity.

How am I to account for it that there have been men of every extreme of doctrine, from Dr. Hawker down to Fletcher of Madeleymen ranging from semi-Pelagianism right up to the verge of Antinomianismwho, nevertheless, were so eminently holy that one has hardly room for selection, because they have been equally seraphic, equally consecrated to Christ! Their doctrinal sentiments were so divergent that in some of their minds it is clear that there must have been much confusion. But the life-spring within was not to be stopped by the rubbish of their misapprehensions and through all their mistakes of doctrine the Divine life came welling up in all its delightful purity and produced its legitimate results!

God forbid we should foster ignorance, or that we should for a moment settle down quietly under any errors of creed! But still it is a delightful thought that the inner life is not destroyed by our misapprehensions or lack of knowledgeit still gushes upward a vigorous and powerful principle, overcoming all. The Divine life is such a thing of force that surrounding circumstances do not operate upon it as you might have supposed. In frosty weather, when we have seen the rivers frozen across, we have been told by peasants that the old springhead on the side of the hill was flowing on the same as ever. Decorated with icicles up to the edge of the old spout, still the stream gushes out!

So a Christian may be placed in the worst imaginable circumstances. He may live in a family so ungodly that the name of Christ is only used to blaspheme with. He may scarcely ever meet with a Christian associate. He may even be denied the means of Gracethe Bible itself may be taken from himbut if the inner life is there, such is its native heat that you cannot freeze it! Such is its constant force and power that it will continue flowing, still! It might have been more happy with the manit certainly would have been more for his comfort and usefulnessif he had been under other conditions. But here is joy for our heart to recollect that under the worst possible conditions such is the energy of the Divine Grace which God implants, that it will continue to spring upward into everlasting life!

Brothers and Sisters, pause a minute to remember that the life which Jesus Christ places in our souls is one which passes through the most severe ordeals and yet survives them. Some of you have been in acute bodily suffering, but your love to Christ was not destroyed by that long period of sickness. You have been very poor, but your faith made you rich. You have been slandereda trial always hard to bearbut your heart was not broken. You still maintained and upheld your integrity. Perhaps you have been under desertions of Gods Spirit, which are worst of allthe light of the Divine Countenance has been hidden from youstill you have said, Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him. And when you have walked in darkness, and seen no light, you have still continued to trust in God.

Rough usage from Gods hand is a severe trial to the life of the trueborn Christian and yet it is a trial in which the true Christian life has triumphed a thousand times and it has come forth out of the furnace like gold seven times purified. No afflictions, however severe, can separate the child of God from Christ! None of the trials which surround the believing heart can stamp out the vital spark of heavenly flame. Temptations, too how frequently they threaten to devour our spiritual life! Have not some of you known temptations of so severe a character that you would not like to communicate them to your closest friends?

Or, there have been times with some of us, when the temptation which has beset us has been perfectly horrible, devilish! We have stood still and wondered with amazement how such a thing could be suggested to us and, on the other hand, how we have marveled that we came out of it untouched, without the smell of fire having passed upon us! Ah, there may be temptations yet to assail us of which we have not dreamed. Satan is studying us. He knows most of our weak points already. Every day he is considering the Lords servants to see where will be the best joint in their armor through which to send a poisoned arrowand he will probably assail us from some fresh quarter in a way quite new to us.

But here is the blessed part of itlet man cast what rubbish he may or will into a living spring, the spring will still, by degrees, purify itself and eject the filth and still continue to flowand so will the truly living Christian! Whatever may be the temptations that would beset him, his life within him will conquer all, to the praise and the glory of Divine Grace. If afflictions and temptations thus are overcome, so is it with prosperity. Many a professed Christian has been ruined by his prosperity. When the man was poor, he was well enough, but when he grew richthen he did not like to associate with the poor saintshe carried his head much too high to enter the gates of Heaven.

Alas! Alas! Alas, Prosperity! If Adversity has slain its thousands, you have slain your ten thousands! Garnished as you are with gold and silver, yet are your robes purple with the blood of men who have fallen, slain under you. But the genuine Christian is not destroyed by his prosperity. He might be rich as Croesus, yet would he serve his God. He might be wrapped in purple and fine linen and fare sumptuously, yet would he still banquet with Christ! As poverty could not make him envious, so wealth could not make him vain!

Brethren, the inward spiritual life is so vigorous that it is not suffered to be destroyed by negligence and sins. I speak guardedly hereI wish to do so, at any rate. Alas, alas, some Believers have become very negligent in spiritual things. Who among us must not confess that he has been? But though I hope we shall never try this in order to discover what comes of it, yet we are bound to say that such is the power of life in a genuine Christian that no Believer ever could be happy while living in disobedience and backsliding! Whenever I have been base enough to restrain prayer, I have never been at peace. There was no one to drag me to my knees, but I could not help praying! Nobody would report upon me whether I spent so many minutes or so many hours in supplication, but, for all that, I could as soon cease to breathe as cease to pray!

What if I could not rise from my bed, or reach my accustomed place to kneel, it did not matterthe inward life pleaded, Forget not to draw near unto God. Lift up your heart! And if the monitor was put aside and multiplicity of work called one away, yet if there was a minutes peace, the inner life could be felt welling up and producing a condemnation of conscience not to be endured. You have forgotten your God today! You are not walking in communion with Him today as you should! Such voices as these would ring in the ears and the conscience would whisper, You are out of joint today with yourself and out of order with your God.

A true Christian finds it impossible to live long away from his Godthe Divine life will not let him leave his Fathers house. Though he may sin and this is a dreadful possibilityhe may even sin foullyyet this Divine life checks him the moment the sin is past. How could you do this great wickedness and sin against God? He cannot go on in sin as another man does! His heart smites him! And when the heart smites, it is a strike, indeed! A wandering Believer is not merely pricked by conscience, but all the powers of the mind together cry to him, After such love, such mercy and such goodness and such favor, can you, the elect of God, redeemed by Jesus blood, act as you have acted? Oh, what shame is upon you! What a disgrace are you to the name of Christian, that after receiving so much you could act so ungratefully!

No, the Divine life will not be quiet! Like the troubled sea, it will not rest! If it is really in a man, he will have no peace except when he is walking in conformity with Gods will. And when he once gets out of the straight and narrow path of obedience and of communion, the Divine life will be a continual source of pain to him. Like David in the penitential Psalms, he will groan and cry out because his heart feels the Divine displeasuretill with many a sigh and many a cry he comes back again to the Cross where his Master waits to be gracious, stillreceives once more pardon through the precious blood and goes on his way restored to acceptance with God and to conscious enjoyment of communion with Him.

Thus you see, Beloved, the power of the inner life as it works within the soul. It is a living, active, energetic principle, like a spring within a man. I shall earnestly ask all of you again, before leaving this pointare you conscious of the existence within yourself of such an active power as this? I pause to let every man give the reply honestly. My spiritual life seems very dead, says one. But do you mourn your deadness? Do you feel you cannot be happy while it is so dead? Well, that mourning is one of the signs that you are alive! It is a poor sign, but still it is a true one. Ah, says one, I am not what I want to be. No, my dear Friend, I am glad to hear you say that, for if you were all you wanted to be, I should be afraid you had set up a very poor standard of what a Christian ought to be.

Alas! cries another, I am very conscious that my private prayers, my secret inner life, is not at all in the healthy state it should be. Then amend it, my dear Brother! Earnestly seek to improve it, but at the same time be very thankful that you do not feel satisfied. Bless God that you are not content, that you do not say, Peace, peace, where there is no peace. I tell you the living spring cannot be stopped in its action. If you have but a cistern full of water, it will be quiet enough, but if it is a spring, it is forever seething, bubbling, gushing.

When I have watched certain springs, I have seen them apparently casting up little particles of sand and dust, making and casting down little circular mounds of earthand so the inner life within the spirit often brings to light to our own minds, our faults and our imperfections, so that nothing appears to be so active as our corruptions! Then we anxiously ask, Is it living water that is bubbling up, or is it only the sand of my sin that is so full of energy? Beloved, Grace lives and aspires! It is a rising flame, a springing well and not a waterfall flowing down! It is a great mercy when the master principle within our spirits is not a going down, but a springing up! Be thankful for upward tendencies and say unto the Lord

*You of life the fountain are   
Freely let me take of You.   
Spring up within my heart,   
Rise to all eternity.*

IV. I shall now turn, in the fourth place, to another Truth of God taught us by the text. This Divine life is A CONTINUAL AND EVERLASTING THINGIt shall be in him a well of water, springing up into everlasting life. Jesus was sitting upon Jacobs well and He might well have brought to the womans memory how many classes of people had gathered around that well and had passed away forever. Men had gone. Harvests had been reaped. Cattle had drunk and flocks had been watered. Generations of men and beasts innumerable had come and gonebut there was the old well unchanged.

So all in the world may change and alter, but the life within the Christian is intrinsically identical. It is evermore the same. Because Jesus lives we live, also. Some tell us of a godliness which comes and goesbeware of it, it is of no use! I have heard some speak of a grace that may be in a man and yet he may lose it! Brethren, lose it? It is not worth havinglose it at once and so avoid disappointment! But there is a Graceand of that the text speakswhich cannot be expelled from a man, but springs up into everlasting life! Get it, my Brethren! And if you get it, it shall hold you fast and abide in you, not to some degree of lifebut to life everlasting!

What is the reason why the inward principle in a Christian does not decay? Is it not because it is essentially immortal? This flesh would soon corrupt, but it is kept from corruption by the presence of the soul which acts as a refined salt to preserve the frame! Genuine Grace is preserving and is in itself incorruptible! The Christians spring never dries up for this reasonhe has struck the main fountain. I have heard of some wells which are drained dry by drought, or because some deeper well has taken away the supplies. The well which strikes the main fountain can never be dried under the severest drought.

I am not afraid that anybody will reach a deeper life than the true Christian has found, for his life is hid with Christ in God! All his fresh springs are in God! He has struck into the eternal fountains of the Divine life in Christ Jesus! None can go deeper! None can deprive him, therefore, of the hidden sustenance of his soul! You who live upon excitement will be but deceitful brooks. You whose religion depends upon the elocution of the preacher, you whose piety depends on sacraments, you whose godliness rests in your own doingsyou may very well become like the dry and stony beds of occasional torrentsbut those who depend upon the work of Christ which He has finished and upon the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit, who shall abide with them forevershall renew their strength like the eagles! They shall run and not be weary! They shall walk and not faint!

V. The last point is this. According to the text, this inward principle is PRE-EMINENTLY AND CONSTANTLY SATISFACTORY. Read the whole verseWhoever drinks of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. That is to say, he who has Christ in him, the hope of Glory, is perfectly satisfied. He could not have been content with all the world besidelearning would only have revealed his ignorance! Fame would only have made him more ambitious! Wealth would have bowed him down with avarice! But Christ in his soul has filled him he is perfectly satisfied!

His heart is satisfied. He needs no better Person to love than Christ. Once he pined for a lover worthy of his immortal nature, but he has found the Son of God and his soul goes out in rapturous affection towards Him. As for his intellect, the more that expands with ripening years and enlarged experience, the more satisfied he is with the Truth which is in Christ Jesus. He believed it once, but he perceives its Truth more clearly now! He accepted it before on the testimony of othershe receives it now on the testimony of the Holy Spirit within his own spirit! As year rolls after year, he becomes more in love with his Savior than ever he was.

Other things lose their novelty, but Jesus has the dew of his youth. Strange is it, but I am sure it is so, the Gospel never seems so fresh to a man as when he is just about to close his eyes on earth! It never beams with so new and glorious a light as when he has known it longest. The babe in Christ thinks that he has perceived the whole of the doctrines of the Gospel, but the veteran soldier feels that he is at the doorsteps, and has scarcely entered upon the knowledge of Christ Crucified.

Dear Hearers, I shall leave you when I have put to you again the same question which I have before suggested, namely, Have you a satisfying life within your soul? Have you a life which makes you feel that there is nothing more for you to desire except to know more of God and more of Christ? Is your soul at peace? Now suppose the result of these questions should be to make you reply, I am persuaded I do not know anything about this! I shall be much more happy if you come to that conclusion, than if you should merely listen to my sermon and think of the preacher only. Forget me, but do, I pray you, reason with yourself, This man has told us very simply and in plain language, about a spiritual, supernatural, inward lifeI do not understand it. Then is the man mistaken, or am I in deplorable ignorance?Which of the two is the fact?

I invite you to try that question by the standard of Gods Word. If you find I am mistaken according to the tenor of this Book, why it need give you no further anxiety! You may pity me for my fanaticism! But if you find that I am right, as I am sure you will, O then, do not hesitate to condemn yourself for ignorance, but rather confess it and seek your chamber and say, Now, in the name of God, if there is this new life to be had, I will have it! If there is no entering Heaven without it, I will not live without it! If I must be cast away if I possess it not, then I will find itI will find it now.

Never did a man sincerely seek but what he found the Lord willing to give! Go to your chamber. Look at your past lifesurvey your mistakes and your sins and confess them! And then lift up your eyes to the Cross and say, O Jesus, given for sinners, have mercy upon a guilty onehave mercy upon me! He cannot refuse you! As I read in an old Puritan this week, he says, Come to Jesus, Sinner! And if you are lame, come lame! And if you say you have no feet, come on your stumps! Come as you can, for He cannot reject you till He denies Himself. He must cease to be faithful before He can reject any sinner that comes humbly to rest upon Him.

Try Him today, you aged people! Seek Him and He will be found of you! You young people, turn not your backs upon Him! And you in middle life, O close in with Him this day, and may He give you the water of life! Did not He say to that woman, If you knew the gift of God and who it is that says to you, Give Me to drink, you would have asked of Him and He would have given you living water?

Ask and He will give! What? Not ask when it is to be had for the asking? Ah, Lord, we ask! Grant it now for Jesus sake. Amen.   
*PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMONRomans 8.* Adapted from The C.H. Spurgeon Collection, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307. Sermon #770 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

THE WATER OF LIFE

NO. 770

BY C. H. SPURGEON,   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON. The woman said unto Him, Sir, give me this water. John 4:15.

You will remember that our Savior had been speaking to the woman of Samaria concerning living water. He had endeavored to catch her attention by using a metaphor to her work and her position. Water was uppermost in her thoughts and Jesus sanctified the element to His own gracious end. Sitting at the wells mouth, I think I can see His earnest face and note the womans wondering eyes while He talked to her as she had never been spoken to before concerning water which caused a man never to thirst again.

At first the woman raised questions: the skeptical part of her nature took its turn and quibbled, and carped, and argued. Sir, You have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep, and so on. Do you not see all the elements of the infidel in her? But she is in good hands, and soon she has passed from the period of questioning into that of petitioning, and she cries this time, Sir, give me this water. She was still, I am afraid, very ignorant. She did not even understand her own petition. That is clear from the words which follow the text, That I thirst not, neither come here to draw.

She was giving a material meaning to a spiritual utterance. She was thinking of the water that could moisten her lips, when Christ was speaking of that Living Water, His own Grace and love which touches the heart, and the heart only. Her eyes were dark but her face was turned the right way. And, best of all, Jesus was there, who can lead the blind in a way which they know not. It will be all well with heryou may leave her alone and think of yourselves.

I hope I am now conversing with some here who have gotten clear of this womans ignorance and have passed away also, as she did, from the period of questions. You know best who you are and where you are, but I hope you are desirous to partake of the Divine Grace which saves. You have got away from raising difficulties. You have had enough of that unprofitable hair-splitting and cobweb-making. You feel that you get no good by constantly insinuating doubts as to the possibility of your salvation and questioning whether Christ is a Savior or not.

And so you are about to leave the skeptical business, and try another route. You are now arrived at the point of desiring, not, I hope, the terminus of the route, but only the first or second station. I am glad that you have come so far. If there is Grace to be had, you are saying, O that I might have it! If there is pardon, peace, eternal lifeyou believe all that Jesus Christ says of it and you want to possess it. You are stretching out your hands like the drowning man who is ready to catch at the plank.

Your desires are awake. Your better thoughts are no longer slumbering. You have broken away from indifference and obstinacyyou are now anxious and desirous to obtain salvation by Jesus Christ. It is to you that I wish to speak this evening, and I shall first take the text and try to use it to excite your desire still further by a description of the water spoken of in the text. Secondly, I shall try to assure your hearts by some remarks upon the likelihood of your obtaining this water. And then we shall close by urging you not to leave this House of Prayer until the prayer has been registered in Heaven, Lord, give me this water; give me this water tonight!

I. To begin, then, I am TO TRY TO EXCITE YOUR DESIRE BY A DESCRIPTION OF THE WATER SPOKEN OF IN THE TEXT. Water is an essential element in the natural world. There is a spiritual world, in which describing we are obliged to use analogies taken from the natural world. And the Grace of God in the mental and the spiritual world is just what water is in the natural world. You need water as a man. You must have iton certain occasions it becomes an imperative necessityyou must drink or die.

You need Divine Grace as a mannot for your bodybut for your soul, and it is imperative that you should have it or else your soul will first be in pain here, and then at death the pangs of remorse will seize it, and afterwards an everlasting thirstan unsatisfied need will be the second death to you. The Grace of God is like water in no less than eight senses. But let me not alarm you. I will not weary you, be sure of that, for I long to win you and weariness will not serve my purpose. I shall only mention the eight parallels with a few remarks, and pass rapidly on from each one.

1. Water, first, is thirst-removing, and so is the Grace of God. The man who drinks water thirsts not. His bodily need is removed. The man who receives the Grace of God in his heart gets that which his nature is lacking, and his painful longings are over. Man by nature is so foolish that he does not know what his nature needs, but he feels that it needs something. Awakened men talk to themselves in this fashion, I needI do not know what I needbut I know I need something which the world cannot give me, which I cannot find within myself, which my fellow men cannot bestow upon me. I know I I need something: O my God, what is it? Tell me what it is!

Friend, if you are in this condition, the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ is just the thing for you, for in it the Lord not only tells you what you need, but He presents it to you! He tells you that you need His love, that if His Grace is shed abroad in your heart, and your sin is pardoned, and you are made to be His child and accepted through Christ Jesus, then will your soul say, Now I have what I needed. Now I need no moreI can sit still and say, Blessed be God that my desires are full. The aching void which the world could never fill is now filled to overflowing, and my soul has what it was always needing though it did not know what it really needed. I can sit down now perfectly content!

It is a grand thing for a man to be able to say, I am satisfied, but the genuine Believer in Christ can say that. You have satisfied my mouth with good things, so that my youth is renewed as the eagles. Believers in Jesus carry the pearl of content in their bosoms. Jesus takes away the restless spirit and gives us rest. Jesus is the door that fits the heart, and when He is near to us He shuts out the worlds cold and heat and gives us sweet content.

O ambitious Man, you that run after something and you cannot tell what it is that can gratify your immortal spirit, turn to the Cross! At the foot of it there springs a sacred fountain of soul-satisfying delight, and if you will but stoop and drink, your ambition shall be over and you shall want no more. There is satisfaction for the deepest longings of heart, and head, and conscience in the fountain which springs from the wounds of Jesus! Faith is the silver cup. Dip it into the overflowing stream and drink! O Holy Spirit, put the cup to my poor thirsty Brothers lips!

2. Secondly, water is also life-preserving. In the wilderness, where there is no water, the lips becomes chapped. The skin is driedthe tongue is like a firebrand, and the mouth is like an ovenand the weary traveler must drink or die. O for a draught of water there! A bag of diamonds could not buy a flagon there! Priceless is the life draught. And far out on the salt, salt sea, with

*Water, water everywhere,*

*But not a drop to drink,*   
the mariner, though he may seek to satisfy himself with the brine around him, feels that it will be death sooner or later to him unless he can get some pure, clear, refreshing drops of water to drink.

Drop, you heavens in pity, or let some friendly boat see the castaways. Such is the Grace of God to the soul of man. The whole world over there is nothing that can save a soul apart from the Grace of God. Your good works can no more save you than the salt sea can give the sailor drink. Ceremonies can no more fill your heart with peace, and give it life, than the hot sand of the wilderness can quench the thirst of the weary traveler. God must lead you to the river of Eternal Life flowing out of the Rock that was struck!

You must get Grace through Jesus Christ, or hope shall never dawn upon youdespairs midnight shall be your everlasting portion where lost spirits wail out their undying lives in one endless death. O Soul, if you get Gods Grace, you shall never die! Do you believe this? If that Grace of God shall come flowing into your soul, you shall possess eternal life, an immortal principle which shall bid defiance to the grave and make you sing in the very jaws of death! He that drinks of this water shall live in Christ forever.

He that lives and believes in Me shall never die. He that believes in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. This Grace of God, then, is life-preserving, as well as thirst-quenching! Have you found it so? Friend, I cannot afford to let you hear me, and yet escape a squeeze or two. If you forget this sermon, it shall not be because I did not press you to remember it.

3. Water, in the third place, is filth-purging. Man seeks no more than to get to the stream to wash when he is defiled. Many and many a time in passing through a country, the poor traveler comes to a brook so clear that he can see his face reflected in it, and he stoops down and washes his brow again and again, and takes his bath and goes his way all bright and shining as though he had exchanged sorrow for gladness, and received the oil of joy for mourning! Now, the guilty sinner, and such are we all by nature, however foul he may be, has but to stoop down at the river of Eternal Grace and wash and he shall be clean!

This stream can take out spots which nothing else can remove. Our sin is of such a crimson dye, naturally, that it might incarnate the Atlantic before it should be washed away. But this Water of Life can do itit takes away the stain of blasphemy and lust. It removes the pollution of theft and murder. All manner of sin shall be forgiven unto that man who comes to the Cross and trusts in Jesus. Whoever believes in the worlds great Redeemer shall find full and complete pardon for every offense that he has committed.

O try it, you blackest of the black, if you are here! You who have gone to the greatest extent of sin, cast your guilty soul into this fountain and see if you do not rise from it with your flesh like unto that of a little child, clean and pure, and not a spot remaining on you! This filth-removing is the Grace of God streaming from the Cross where Jesus suffered in our place the wrath which was due to us for our transgressions

*Calvarys wonders let us trace,   
Justice magnified in Grace.   
Mark the purple streams and say,   
Thus my sins were washed away.*

Friend, can you do this by faith, trusting for pardon in the blood of Gods dear Son?

4. Water, again, is well known, very frequently, to be softening. There are some things which, when laid in water, soon lose their hardness and become soft and pliable. This water of the Grace of God, which it is my longing desire to commend to you, has a marvelous softening power. Adamant millstoneyes, the nether millstone, northern iron and steel have been melted when laid to soak in this fountain. The hardest heart yields before the power of the love of God revealed in Christ Jesus.

I think I hear one of you exclaim, That is good news for me! I know that Christ can pardon me, but I cannot feel my sin as I ought. I am such a stiff-necked sinner, so hardened, so perverse, I cannot feel my need as I would wish to. Soul, if the Grace of God shall flow upon your heart it shall turn the stone, by a wondrous transformation, into flesh at once! There is no stubbornness which the Grace of God cannot overcome. What a blessed thing it is for the preacher that he has not to give his hearers soft hearts, nor even to find tender hearts in them to begin with! How delightful it is for him to remember that he preaches a Gospel which works wonderswonders even greater than the rod of Mosesfor when with the Gospel we smite even a rock, penitential streams gush forth, and yet morethe rocky soul is itself dissolved under a sense of sin.

O that some Saul of Tarsus might be washed by this stream tonight! He would no longer be the enemy of Gods Church, but would seek out some poor disciple to ask him what he must do to be saved. It is a heartsoftening water. May the Lord give it to every one of us who have hard hearts remaining! Gladly would I bathe in it anew, that I might the more tenderly feel for you. Friend, will you never feel for yourself?

5. In the fifth place, this water has the property, like earthly water, of being fire-quenching. There is nothing like water, after all, with all your new inventions, for putting out fire. We run for the engines and turn on the mainwhat can we do better? But there are fires that burn within the human heart! Deep volcanic fires fed from the depths of Hell! Furious flames which roar within the inner man and soon roll over in torrents of sinlava in his daily life! These are fires which never will be put out except by heavenly water.

Oh, that fire of lust! How many a man has been consumed by it! It has devoured him as the fire devours the stubble. But when the Grace of God comes, how soon that fire is dampened and even quenched forever! And there are other fires which burn in the soulthe fire of envy and of malice, the flames of anger and of unholy desirehow these will rage and glow until the Grace of God comes! I know it puzzles many a man to know how he could live without such-and-such sins. Oh, he says, I could not live without them! I have fallen into the habit of them, and I must have them. Ah, but you shall be made a new man, such a new man that if you were to meet your old self, you would avoid the wretch or struggle with him in deadly hand-to-hand combat!

Let me tell you, you will never be on good terms with your old self so long as you live. You will hate that old self of yours and it will be your daily desire to kill him. You will try to drive the nails through his hands and feet, and crucify him upon the Cross of Jesus! And you will not be content unless you can kill him daily, mortifying him with his affections and his lusts. Oh, mighty Grace of God that can put out the flames of sin! O Sinner, the very flames of Hell are put out by this Grace of God! I mean so far as the saved soul is concernedfor the soul that is washed in this fountainthere is no Hell in which God can punish it. How can He punish a pardoned sinner? How can he that is in Christ Jesus be cast into the

flames? *No condemnation now I dread,   
For justice smote my Suretys head.*

Who shall lay anything to the charge of Gods elect? He that has Christ to be his Substitute is beyond all fear of Hell. He can look down into that dread abyss and feel that there is not a burning coal there for him, and that whoever may perish, yet he, being in Christ Jesus, can never die. Friend, have the fires in your soul met with this glorious Antagonist? Are the engines of Grace casting their floods upon your soul? Let conscience give its reply, and let it have your ear.

6. A sixth property is one that is not found in ordinary water, and that is that it is a spring-creating water. Wherever the Water of Life falls it makes a new spring which begins to bubble up directly. By this I mean that if the Grace of God enters into a mans heart it is an immortal principle, and, as the Savior says, Out of the midst of him shall flow rivers of living water. The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

What a great difference there is between a pool and a running spring! Frequently in crossing the Alps, when one has been very faint and thirsty, it has been a sweet rest to sit down by a running spring and wash ones face and feet, or bathe ones self in it. You may have walked till you are very footsoreyou sit down to bathe your feet, and if you have found a mere pool, you will stir the bottom of it, and it will soon be very filthybut when it is a running spring, you can sit and wash, and wash, and wash again, and if you do stir the sand at the bottom, the earth is all gone in a moment, because the water still comes bubbling up clear and fresh, and therefore it is always clean.

So it is with the Grace of God in a Christian: it never gets flat, and dull, and deadand the daily pollutions and washing of our feet do not stain itbecause it is a living spring and arises from those fresh springs which David sings about which he rejoiced to find in the Lord his God. It is very hard work to play the part of a Christian if you have not a spring within you. For a man to have to keep up, year after year, a profession without life, why, it must be slavish work! Do you think that I would come and take a seat in this place, or in any other place of worship, and occupy it merely because it was respectable to do so if I had no care for it? I would as soon be a slave!

Base is the man who even in his religion is the serf of tyrant fashion! To come up to the House of God because you love to be there, and to sing because you cannot help singing, and to unite with Gods people because birds of a feathers must flock together and you love to be among themwhy there is something in that, something which tastes of reality and sincerity! He who has no great deeps of godliness in his soul makes a bondage of religion. He lives the life of a dog and does not even get the crumbs from under the table as his portion. Mark you, Brethren, it is harder to preach without this spring than it is to hear without it, because if you have not a spring in you, you may go foraging this dead mans books, and that other dead mans stores to find a subject, but you will soon run dry.

But if God the Holy Spirit is a spring within you, you may remain full of the precious Truth of God, and pour it out so long as God shall give you utteranceand you shall not run dry! What a blessing it is when the Living Water makes a spring within the Christian! What a curse to be one of the stagnant ponds of formality exhaling the putridity of hypocrisy! Friend, where are you? I must have my hand on you again! What are you in this matter as in the sight of God?

7. Seventh, it is fruit-producing water. What fruit would there be upon the trees, what pasture in the meadows, what harvest in the field if it were not for the rain? Everything would be barren without water and even where there is fruit, if there is not, also, a fair share of water, what poor stuff it is! When I was in the country in June, and there were some heavy showers, I could not help thinking what good they were doing. There was the wheat just needing plumping out, and the rain came to fill it and to make the ears full. It might have been wheat, of course, without it, but the ear is likely to be more full of grain when the drought is gone.

So, Brothers and Sisters, we may produce some little fruit when we have but little Grace, but if we had more Grace, how that fruit would plump out! How would our fruit be more rich, and fat, and mellow! How would our service to God be improved and perfected if we had more of this fruit-producing water! You cannot serve God without His Grace. You cannot give Him true praise, nor true prayer, nor true service, nor anything that is acceptable unless He first shall give you of the rain of His GraceGrace for Grace. By their fruits shall you know them. Friend, what fruit have you? O that Grace may turn the barren fig tree into a good fruit-bearing tree!

8. And lastly upon this point, it is Heaven-ascending water. You know there is a rule of this sort in hydrostatics, that water will rise to its own level. Not long ago I thought such things were gone out. I was riding along where the road was in a little cutting, and a spout was actually taken over the road to carry water from one field to the other, it was dripping fast upon the passengers and making an ugly place in the road.

Now they might easily have taken the little stream under the road and up again in a pipe, but I suppose when the spout was made it was not known to those who made it that water will rise as high as its source. Now, the Grace of God will rise as high as its source. If you and I have grace that began with us, it will never get higher than we are. If you have grace that the priest gave you when you were christened, it will never get higher than the priest. But if you get the true Grace of God which descends from Heaven, it will take you as high as the New Jerusalem from which it came!

High up in the Throne of God are the everlasting springs of Divine Mercy. At the foot of Divine Sovereignty it wells up a spring, clear as crystal, pure without a stain, and it flows down to earth, leaping down by the way of the Cross. And it will ascend as high as its Source. It will go up to the Throne againthat is where it came fromand it will rise to its own level and it will float you up there with it. If, by the Grace of God, you have been taken up by the stream of Jesus dying love, it will take you up to its own Source, and where God is there you shall be.

Because you have been made to taste, to feel, and to be saturated with the Grace that came from God, from a Divine Source, you shall also have a Divine portion forever. The rivers go to the sea because they originally came from the sea. Did not the sun kiss the sea and make it ascend to him in clouds, that it might descend in rain? And so all the rivers of Grace in us shall flow into the sea from where they camethe bottomless, shoreless sea of everlasting lovebecause that is the eternal Source and Fountain of them all! Clouds of suffering went up from the heart of Jesus to return to earth in showers of mercy for poor sinners. Friend, do you know anything about this in your very soul?

Now, I have thus spoken of the Grace of God which is revealed in Jesus Christ. I only hope that someone here may say, I wish I were washed in it! I wish my thirst were satisfied with it! I wish that my soul were made to overflow with it! I wish that I might be lifted up to Heaven though its energy! Oh, then, Soul, I am glad you have the desire! Turn it into a prayer and let the prayer be the text, Give me this water!

II. And now, with great brevity, indeed, we shall take the second point, that is, TO CHEER YOUR HEARTS WITH SOME REFLECTIONS UPON THE LIKELIHOOD OF YOUR GETTING THIS LIVING WATER. I am supposing, now, that you really want it. If you say, Sir, give me this water, you will have it. And I will tell you why I think you will have itbecause, in the first place, I do not think that an ordinary man would deny another water. If I stood by a well, and you approached me, and said, Sir, give me this water, I should say, As much as you like of it

Who would not give water? It is the most common of gifts. Even in the East, with all the value that is attached to water there, the Savior mentions that as one of the most ordinary acts of benevolence. Whoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, He shall in no wise lose his reward. Who will deny another a glass of water?

Then note that according to our text, the giving of Saving Grace is to the great Redeemer no more than the giving of water to you! Grace is a priceless gift for you to receive, but to Jesus it is a delight to give it. If you give water, you have a little less water leftbut if Christ gives Grace, He has not any Grace the less. He still has as much Grace in the inexhaustible fullness which dwells in His adorable Person. As the sun is just as bright for all its shining, and the ocean still full, notwithstanding all the clouds exhaled from it, so Jesus is as abundant as ever in pardoning mercy and saving power! I tell you that for Jesus Christ to be gracious is as much according to His Nature as it is for you and for me to be generous enough to give away water.

The blessing of poor needy souls is no labor with Jesus, no loss to Him, no tax upon Him. All the pain and cost He has borne long ago, and now to save the guilty is His reward in which He sees the recompense of His travail. Now, if in this place the Grace of God had been compared to gold, that metaphor would have suited well to express its value. But you would have said, Who gives gold away? But here it is compared with water water which man freely givesand which our Lord Jesus never denies to those who seek it of Him. I do not believe, then, if an ordinary man will give away waterand Christ compares His Grace with waterthat He will let you say, Sir, give me this water, and then send you away without it! Friend, be not so unbelieving as to think that the Lord Jesus is ungenerous and unkind, but ask for the Living Water and it shall be given you.

Again, even if you would refuse water to some persons, I am very sure that you would not refuse it to a thirsty person. If you saw him panting and the hot sweat starting to his brow, and if he could scarcely speak, but had only strength enough to gasp out, Sir, if you would but give me a cup of water, I would bless you for it with all my heart, why, you would run and bring out the sparkling crystal and feel a great pleasure in seeing him drink. Would you not? I am sure you would!

Now, if you are a thirsty soul I am quite sure Christ will give you the Water of Life. He will give it to any that ask, for He refuses noneand to you He will give it so quickly that He will seem to give it twice over. He will not let you thirst in vain, for has He not promised, When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue fails for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them. I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys. I will make the wilderness a pool of water and the dry land springs of water. Oh, says one, how I desire to be saved! How I long to have Christ! You may have Him, then, for Jesus Christ never did deny a thirsty sinsinner, never did refuse to give of His substance to the poor, His clothes to the naked, or His medicine to the sick. He came on purpose to bless such. I say that in all likelihood you shall have the blessing if you will but pray earnestly, Lord, give me this water. No, more, there is a certainty of it! Another reason gives me comfort for you, and that is there certainly is plenty of it, for the Apostle John says he saw a river of the Water of Life. Now, nobody is afraid, when there is a deep, broad flowing river to draw from! Who fears to exhaust the Thames or drain the Danube by his thirst? Moreover, as John Bunyan reminds us, a river is free to everybody to drink.

The source of it is private. Many rivers rise in a park or private grounds, but the river itself is public. As soon as it becomes a considerable stream it becomes a public highway, and a universal water supply. It is free, it flows the way it wills. Rivers possess a sort of sovereigntyyou cannot bid them flow in a straight course, or order them by rules of geometry. They will have their own sweet will. If the river chooses to go by one town and not by another, it will have its way! Who may try to stop it? But while it is sovereign in its course and direction, yet it is free for public use. The cattle come to drink and even a poor dog is not refused when he gets to the rivers brink. If he wants to lap and cool his feverish tongue in the dog days, who shall say no to him?

And you, poor Sinner, you shall find the Grace of God free to you, for there is enough of itit is up to the banksno, it overflows the banks, there is a flood of it! Such a flood that there never can by any possibility be any lack, though all men should come. Though 10,000 times 10,000 should come, there would still be found sufficient Grace in Jesus to meet the needs of allfor whom the Lord brings, the Lord can provide for in Christ Jesus. The Grace of God is sovereign in its choice and discriminating in its course, but still it is free to all thirsty ones who long to partake of its everlasting fullness.

I am comforted, also, by another thought, namely, that this river is on purpose for the thirsty. I am sure I do not know what there is mercy in the world for unless it is for those who need it because of their sin and misery. What could Christ have made an Atonement for except for sinners? It is not possible that the beloved Physician came all the way from Heaven to heal those who were well and needed no medicine! It is not likely that He opens His great granaries to feed the nations who have a harvest of their own! It must be that our Joseph has stored up the wheat for hungry perishing ones!

O you that need, come and welcome, for the Fountain is opened especially for you! It flows that such as you may come and drink. Friend, shall our invitations have no power with you? O Holy Spirit, make men willing in this the day of Your power! I feel sure, too, that you who seek the Lord will find His Grace because there never has been one refused yet. A dear Brother, who I believe is now present, told me that he owed his conversion in early life to hearing a sentence or two of a sermon from a man whose name he never knew but whom he heard preach standing on a log of wood on a village green.

He had never gone to listen to the Gospel anywhere, but happened to be straying through the village and he heard the man say that there never was a soul that sincerely sought God through Jesus Christ, but what ultimately, sooner or later, it was brought into a state of peace. And let me say to you allit may sink into some heart and one day yield it comfort it shall not be said by you in eternity that you sought the Lord and He would not hear you! I remember what comfort this gave to me when I heard my mother say that she had heard many wicked things in the world, but she never heard a man wicked enough to say that he had sincerely sought God through Jesus Christ and yet had been refused.

When I heard that, I thought I could say it, for I was confident that I had sought the Lord, but I had had no comfortable answer. But I have never said it. I have never had cause to say it, for before I could be driven to that state of despair I looked unto Him and was lightened, and so I am persuaded it shall be with you! There never was one refused who said, Give me this water, and you shall not be the first!

To close this point, it is to Jesus Christs glory to give of His saving mercy, and therefore be certain that He will not withhold it. It cannot make Christ more glorious to deny a poor sinner His mercy. It cannot be to His profit to shut His door in a seeking sinners face. It is impossible that the bleeding Lamb should cease to be pitiful to poor bleeding hearts. By everything that can make the name of the great Physician glorious. By every pang of His soul on account of sinners I am persuaded that He will not deny you! Why, the more a physician cures, the greater is his fame! The more the Savior saves, the higher is His honor! The more Jesus Christ can bless, the more lofty will be the praise and the more exalted that mighty shout of Hallelujah, that shall go up from 10,000 times 10,000 of sinners who have been washed in His blood!

Come, then, seeking Sinner! Come now, and by humble faith trust in the Mediators sacrifice. Wipe those eyes of yours. Be of good cheer! Be bold in heart! He calls you! There is room at His table! The door is open! There is room in His heart! He died for those who rest in Him! If you wish for Christ, He wishes for you! If you long to go to the feast, He wants guests as much as you want the feast! Only trust Him! God help you to trust Him by His Spirit and you shall live.

III. The last thing was to be to urge you tonight, before you leave this housebut my urging will be of no service unless God the Holy Spirit owns itTO URGE YOU TO PRAY THE PRAYER OF THE TEXT. A desire is like seed in the bag, but prayer sows it in the furrow. A desire is like water in the bottle, but prayer drinks it. Now I commend to you the prayer of my textSir, give me this water. Begin then, your prayer by honoring Christ. Do not call Him, Sir, but call Him, Lord. She gave Him the highest title that her respect could accord. She did not know Him in any other capacity, so she called Him, Sir.

Now call Jesus, Lord, for you will get no mercy if you dishonor Christ. Think of Him as Gods only Son suffering for sinners. Call him, Lord. Can you do that? If you reject His Divinity, you shut yourself out of His kingdom! He must be owned as Lord and God as well as Savior. Oh, you say, I have long ago called Him Lord. I know Him to be Divine. I rejoice in the thought of His eternal power and Godhead. I would honor Him with all that I have. Well, then, you have well begun, but may Divine Grace make you go further!

Now in the next place, if you would pray this prayer aright, notice it, and confess your undeservingness. It is not, Sir, sell me this water, but, Sir, give me this water. Confess that it is a gift. You shall never have it otherwise. Away with your merit-mongering. Away with your trusting in your prayers, and your tears, and your sense of need! Mercy must be given or else you shall never have it. Sir, give me, give me, give me this water. O Lord, give me Grace, or else I die! Give it to me of Your free mercy because You have promised to save the chief of sinners. Give it to me, Lord. I have done with boasting. I have done with the Pharisees thanking You that I am not as other men are. I come with empty hands. I come naked, poor, and miserable! Give it to me! I have nothing to buy it with. Oh, give it to me without money and without price! Give me Your salvation!

Friend, does your pride kick at this? Be wise, I pray you, and bow your neck to the yoke of Divine Grace. Take care, too, that you make it a personal prayerLord, give it to me. Never mind your neighbors just now. Care for them after you are saved. Look after their salvation when your own is securebut just now you have first to do with yourself. Your children? Yes, pray for them. Your relatives? Yes, consider them. But meanwhile, now it is yourselfyour own proper self that is concerned. Do not think of the whole congregation. Think now personally of your own soul, and say, Lord, give me this water.

I mean you, Mary. And you, Thomas. And you, Johnlet the prayer come from your own lips as distinctly being from yourself. As you sit or stand now in this House of Prayer, silently breathe the petitionLord, give Your Grace to me, even me.

*Pass me not, O gracious Father,   
Sinful though my heart may be.   
You might curse me, but the rather   
Let Your mercy light on me,   
Even me. Pass me not,   
O tender Savior!   
Let me love and cling to You!   
I am longing for Your favor.   
When You come, call for me,   
Even me.*

Once more, I want you to offer this prayer in the present tensenot, Give me this water tomorrowbut, Tonight give it to me, Lord, save my soul now!

The worst of most of men is thisthey want to be saved, but it must be when they die. You would serve the devil all your life and then cheat him of your soul at the last? Mean, miserable thought! If God is God, serve Him, serve Him now! And may the Lord have us in life as we hope He may have us in our death. Give me this water. But you are going out next Wednesdaythat will be awkward! Yes, said some young woman at a revival meeting, who was in much concern, but I am going to a ball tomorrow. And so everything good was put off for that! But she dropped down dead at the ball!   
God grant there may be no such cases of postponing here, lest we postpone ourselves into eternity where there are no acts of pardon past. May we have Christ now! We may not live to see tomorrows sun. Albeit that the sun is well-near gone down, yet the light of this evening may not have gone before our life may be ended. How near to death we stand, and yet we scarcely think of it! Right on the edge of our graves sometimes we are, and yet we sport and laugh as though we had a lease on life! You forget death, most of you. The cemetery is so far out of town but still you should not quite forget, for the hearse goes to and fro with awful regularity, and the Church bell that tolls is not rusty! And those words, Earth to earth, dust to dust, ashes to ashes, are still familiar to the ears of some of us.

It will soon be your turn to die. You, too, must gather up your feet in the bed and meet your fathers God. God grant that you may then be found right with Him. Little do I know for whom these sentences may have a special bearing, but they may have a bearing, dear Friend, upon you! I see some of you dressed in blackyou have had to go to the grave mourning because of others. That black will be worn by others soon for you, and the place that now knows you shall know you no more forever.

Oh, by the frailty of life, by the near approach of the Master, or by the certainty of death, I pray you see to it that you breathe the prayer, Lord give me of Your Grace. The Lord help you to pray it. Amen.

Adapted from The C.H. Spurgeon Collection, Version 1.0, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307 Sermon #695 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

THE AXE AT THE ROOT A TESTIMONY AGAINST PUSEYITE IDOLATRY

NO. 695

**DELIVERED ON SUNDAY MORNING, JUNE 17, 1866, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**But the hour is coming , and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth, for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth. John 4:23, 24.**

THE womans conscience had been aroused by Christs declaration of her sin. He was touching upon matters of the most vital importance and her depraved heart naturally shrunk from the lancet. From the truth which was becoming inconveniently personal she flew to that natural resort of the carnal mind, namely, to religions discourse upon points of outward observance. Instead of confessing her sin and asking how it may be forgiven, she said, Our fathers worshipped in this mountain, and You say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.

The carnal heart dreads the contact of spiritual truth and finds a most convenient way of avoiding it by running to questions of holy places, holy times, and holy customs. Jesus, to her astonishment, informs her that the question which she had asked was of only temporary importance. There had been a time when it was well to know that salvation was of the Jews and that the rival temple of the Samaritans was an imposterbut He says in effect to her, Woman, believe Me that question is of no importance now, for the hour is coming, yes, and now is, when the external is to be abolished and the ritualistic is to be put away, and a purer, simpler, and more spiritual worship is to take its place.

The worship which our Lord Jesus Christ established involved a change. That is implied in the expressions used. He announced to her that the hour was just then come when all questions about this or that place must cease and be superseded by spiritual worship. Our Lord gave a very brief, but I think a very instructive description of what this worship was to be. If you carefully observe the words you will see that it was a distinguishing kind of worship, for He mentions true worshippers. There had been but little distinction beforeso long as they all passed through the same outward form they all seemed to be worshippers.

But a distinction was now to be made clear and manifest. Merely outward worshippers were now false worshippers and only those who pressed into spiritual worship were to be regarded as true. The Gospel of Christ is a great discerner and an accurate judge. Christ has the winnowing fan in His hands. He sits as a refiner. He is compared by the Prophet to the refiners fire and to fullers soap. And therefore you see He discerns at once between worshippers and worshippers.

There they stand both alike with bended heads, perhaps both repeating the same words, but the Savior distinguishesthere is, said He, a false worshipper, and there is a true worshipper, and he alone who is spiritual is true. He announces further that under the Gospel God is to be worshipped in the Character of a Fathertrue worshippers shall worship the Father. This had not been the case before. The Lord had been adored as the Adonai and reverenced as Jehovah, but to say, Our Father which are in Heaven remains the prerogative of the enlightened Christian who, having believed in Christ, has received power to become a son of God!

True Christian worship addresses God, not merely as Creator and Preserver, or as the great Lord of the Universe, but as One who is very near of kin to usour Fatherbeloved of our souls. Jesus likewise states that Gospel worship is to be of a kind which does not result merely from the man himself, but comes from God, and is a work of Divine Grace. This is implied in the sentence, The Father is seeking such to worship Him, as if no true worship would come from any man unless God sought it.

True devotion under the Christian dispensation is not merely human but also Divine. It is the work of the Spirit in the soul returning to its Author, or as our hymn puts it

*Prayer is the breath of God in man,*

*Returning from where it came.*   
These are very grave points and draw a broad line of distinction between the living worship of the chosen of God and the dead formal worship of the world which lies in the Wicked One. Furthermore, the Savior goes on to say that they who worship God are to worship Him in spirit. No longer with the visible sacrifice of a lamb, but inwardly trusting in Him who is the Lamb of Gods Passover. No more with sprinkled blood of goats, but heartily relying upon the blood once shed for many. No longer worshipping God with ephod, breastplate, and miter, but with prostrate soul, with uplifted faith and with the faculties not of the body but of the inward spirit.

We who worship God under the Christina dispensation are no longer to fancy that bodily exercise in worship profits anything, that genuflections and contortions are of any valuebut that acceptable worship is wholly mental, inward, and spiritual. But He adds, lest there should seem an omission in the description, must worship Him in spirit and in

truth. For though we should profess to worship God only with the spirit and so despise forms, yet unless the soul shall truly love, and really adore, and sincerely bowour worship will be as unacceptable as though it were formal and outward.

See then, Brothers and Sisters, putting the whole three together, the worship under the Christian dispensation which God ordains and which He accepts through Christ Jesus is a worship distinguished by an inward vitality from the outward worship of the carnal mind. It is the worship of a child towards a father, feeling within himself a kinship with the Divine. It is a worship worked in us by God the Holy Spirit, because the Father has sought us out and taught us how to worship Him. It is a worship which is not outward, but of the inner man and occupies not hands, eyes and feet, but heart and soul and spirit. And it is a worship which is not professional and formal, but real, hearty, earnest, and so acceptable before God.

Let me give a sketch of this worship as it actually exhibits itself. A man may have been to a place of worship from his youth up and he may have fallen into a habit of repeating a sacred form every morning and every evening. He may even have been a tolerably diligent reader of the Word of God! And yet, though this may have been continued for sixty years and more, he may never once have worshipped God after the fashion prescribed in the text. But look at him! The Father seeks him! The Truth of God comes home to his soul and in the light of that Truth he feels himself a sinnerand feeling himself so, he cries, Father, I have sinned.

That is his first true worship! See, Brothers and Sisters, his spirit feels it and he means what he says. All that he said before was as nothing, but that first cry, I have sinned, has in it the vitality of worship. He hears the story of the Cross, the full Atonement made by Gods appointed Sacrifice and he prays, Lord, I believe in Jesus, and I trust Him. Here is another specimen of true worship. Here is the spirit resting upon Gods appointed sacrifice and reverencing Gods way of salvation by accepting it. Being saved by the precious blood of Jesus, he cries, Father, I bless You that I am saved! I thank You that my sins are washed away. This is true worship.

Whether a man sings in the assembly, or sings alonewhether he prays aloud, or prays in silenceif he feels gratitude to God for pardon received, he offers the true worship. The whole of the Christians lifeconsisting as it must of dealings with the invisible God through Jesus Christ by his heartis a life of worship! And when at last he comes to die, you perceive that his worship will not cease with death because it has always been spiritual and did not depend upon the body. So that while the outward man fails him, the inward spiritual man grows more strong in devotion than ever it was before. And when at last the spirit leaves its earthly tenement and is disembodied, it has still a song for God and throughout eternity its spiritual worship can continuewhich worship must have been suspended if it had been connected with the body and not with the immortal part of man.

If I understand the Saviors words, and I hope I do, not only theoretically but practically, He means that those of us who are His true worshippers must worship Him with our better and our nobler partour soulwith all the power she has, must pay reverence to the unseen God. Brethren, this is the kind of worship that men will not render to God. They will render Him anything else but this! And until effectual Grace shall work such worship in mans heart it is obnoxious to him! He will worship God with robes, and incense, and flowers, and banners, but he will not consent to worship Him in spirit and in truth.

I. I shall proceed to my work by giving A BRIEF OUTLINE OF THE HISTORY OF WORSHIP in connection with the doctrine that we are now to worship God more manifestly than ever in spirit and in truth. It appears from Scripture that worship before the flood was of the very simplest form. The outward ordinances were very fewthe chief of them being the offering of sacrifice. This was probably instituted by God Himself when He clothed Adam and his wife with skins of beasts.

It has been thought that He then indicated to them the slaughter of beasts for sacrifice. Certain it is that the first worship of fallen man was by sacrifice. There was connected with this, no doubt, the meeting of gracious hearts for prayer and also the ministration of the Truth of God, for Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied concerning the coming of the Lord. So that they appear to have had what was tantamount to a ministry, and the sons of God had appointed times for meeting.

But this simple form of worship seems to have been too high, too spiritual for fallen man at first. At any rate the seed of the serpent could not endure it, for Cain, at the very first commenced a schism. Instead of bringing a sacrifice by blood he brought a sacrifice of the fruits of the ground. Perhaps he was a man of taste and desired to bring something that should look more decorous than a poor bleeding victim. He would lay those rich grapes, those ruddy fruits upon the altar, and those fair flowers that gemmed the bosom of the earthsurely he might consecrate those! At any rate he was the first man who set up taste and self as the guide in religious worshipand God had no respect unto his sacrifice.

The two stood by their altars. Abel, by faith, exercising spiritual worship offered a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain. Cains offering was possibly even more fair to look upon but it was of his own invention. Abel was accepted, but Cain discarded. The ultimate result of mans sinfulness in connection with this early type of worship was general neglect of all religion. The sons of God seem to have maintained their simplicity for a time, but at last, by unholy alliances with the ungodly race, there arose a widespread neglect of all thought of God so that they were married and given in marriage. They ate and they drank till the day when the Flood came and swept them all away.

Depraved nature thus refused to render spiritual worship. After the Flood we find worship restored in very much the same formlet us distinguish it as the Patriarchal method of worship. The head of a family was accustomed to offer sacrifice, and no doubt if Job is taken as a type, family prayer and household religion were maintained. But you see very early the indication that man, although he could not forget Godfor the deluge had struck to the very heart of manhood an awful dread of the Most Highbegan to interpose symbols and visible objects between God and himself.

The use of teraphim became very common, so that even in the house of Abrahams ancestors teraphs were found. And when we come down to the time of Jacob, we find one of his wives stealing her fathers images, thus proving that Laban, one of a once God-fearing family, had become a worshipper of God through the medium of images. Thus was it among those who still had some knowledge of Godbut the nations, being dispersed soon lost the pure idea of the invisible One, and worshipped gods of their own devising.

From the plagues of Egypt, which were no doubt intended to be a blow against all Egypts gods, we find out that in addition to the worship of the calf or bull, the Egyptians paid religious reverence to flies, the river Nile, the elements, beetles, and all kinds of creatures. And throughout the world, as a general rule, through the introduction of visible symbols of the unseen Being, the Lord Himself had become forgotten and spiritual worship had almost ceased, except in one elect household.

And even there, alas, how fallen had spirituality become! Keeping to the line of Divine Grace, we shall now introduce you to the ceremonial form of worship which God instituted after the more spiritual method had entirely broken down. He saw that the children of Israel whom He loved were but a mob of slaves. Their spirits had been broken by bitter bondage. Like the poor African race of the present day, they seemed as a whole incapable of rising at once to mental dignity and needed to pass through a generation or two before they could, as a nation, achieve manly self-government.

So when He brought His people out of Egypt, the Lord did not try them with an altogether spiritual form of worship. Because of the hardness of their hearts, among other reasons, though He was still to be worshipped as a Spirit, yet He gave them certain outward signs by which they might be enabled to understand His Character. A great deal has been made of the symbolical worship of the Jew, as if it were an excuse for the manmade symbolism of the Roman and Anglican Antichrist. We would remark that nothing ought to be made of it at all, now, since it has been positively declared many times in Scripture that the age of the shadow has gone, and that the age of the substance now reigns.

Whatever may or may not have been the excellence of the old Jewish economyand being divinely ordained, God forbid we should say a word against ityet the Apostle Paul always talks of it as being but a yoke of bondage to which we are no more to submit ourselvesbeing but the shadow and not the very image of the good things which were to come. And he speaks of it as a thing so passed away, that to go back to it is to go back to the rudiments, and not to go onward in the full-grown manliness of Christianity. If there were no other passage, my text might show that the ceremonialism of the Jew is no excuse whatever for ceremonialism now, but that we ought to stand in direct contrast to that, hearing the Savior declare that whatever may have been before His time, the hour had come when the true worshipper must worship the Father in spirit and in truth.

Remember that symbolic worship was suitable merely to the infancy of Gods Church, and that now, having received the Spirit of God to dwell in us, it would be as unsuitable as would the swaddling bands of babyhood to full-grown men. Besides, even while it existed it was spoken of as soon to be superseded by a new and better covenant. It was frequently broken through by Divine authority. Elijah, though not of the house of Levi, offered sacrifice! Prophet after Prophet, as he arose, manifested and declared by his actions that God did not intend to give the Levitical form of worship undivided sway, but that when He poured His Spirit upon special men they were to break through all ritual regulations in order to show that they were not meant to be fixed and permanent.

It is not sufficiently remembered that the most of Gods people in the Jewish nation had very little to do with this symbolic worship. When they were all in the wilderness and gathered round the one tent called the tabernacle, they might all see the fiery cloudy pillar. But when they came into the land which God had given them, what had they, most of them, to see? Why the Temple itselfthe most would only see once or twice in a year. Scarcely anyone ever saw the ark, the cherubim, or the golden candlestickthey were always within the veiland only once in the year did the High Priest enter that sacred place.

Even the place where the sacrifices were carried on continually, no one entered but the priests. So to at least eleven tribes out of twelve the ceremonies were mainly invisible. Little was done outside the court of the priests. Most of the sacrifices and the typology of Judaism was as much a hidden thing as the spiritual things of God are to us at the present day. And thus there was a great exercise of the spiritual faculties and comparatively little of outward display!

Moreover, it is to be remembered that there was nothing whatever visible for the Jew to worship. It is not so in the symbols of that false church which is trying to raise up and revive the beggarly elements! There men bow before a cross! A piece of bread inside a box is reverenced and treated with worship! Cast-off clouts and rotten rags, called relics, are the objects of adoration! But there was nothing like this with the Jews. They did worship toward the temple, but they did not adore the temple, or Mercy Seat, the altar, or any other emblem.

Is it not said expressly, You saw no similitude? When God descended upon Sinai, and all the people worshipped there, they saw nothing which they dared to worshipGod was to them still invisiblethey had to exercise their mental faculties in the worship of the invisible God. When at one time it was thought that the miraculous powers of the bronze serpent entitled it to be worshipped, Hezekiah called it Nehushtan, that is, a piece of brass, and broke it to pieces. So with all its splendor of imagery, embroidered vest and glittering breastplate, to a great extent there was a powerful element of spirituality even about Aaronic worshipI mean, of course, only to spiritual men.

David himself utterly outstripped the outward when he declared, Sacrifice and offering You do not desire. And when he said again, You desire not sacrifice, else would I give it You. The Prophet declares that God is weary of their sacrifices. And in another place the Lord Himself says that if we could come before Him with rivers of oil, or ten thousand of the fat of fed beasts, He would not accept us with these. To obey is better than sacrifice is told us even under the Law, so that even there, though not so distinctly as now, the spirituality of worship was taught and declared.

But, dear Friends, what became of this accommodation of worship to the childhood of the Church? You know that very soon after Israel came out of Egypt they said, Let us make gods that they may go before us. They could not do without a visible God. Do not think that when they set up the calf they meant to worship the calf instead of Jehovah, that would be a slander upon them. They worshipped Jehovah through the calfthat was their plea, for they said, Tomorrow is a feast unto Jehovah.

They thought to represent Jehovah by a bull! They changed their glory into the similitude of an ox that eats grass. Though severely rebuked, it was the constant sin of Israel to desire to worship God under the favorite Egyptian emblem of the bull. At last they had gone so far into idolatry that they were driven far awayand in captivity they were so chastened and brought into such contact with the abominations of idolatry that they were heartily sick of itand no Jew has been an idolater since.

Still, spiritual worship they would not offer and therefore fell into rigid ritualism, reverencing the mere letter of the law and fighting over trifling refinements of regulation and observancein Christs day they made broad their phylacteries and the borders of their garmentsand they forgot the Great Spirit who is to be worshipped in spirit and in truth. Since that day the Lord has been treated by carnal men in one of three ways either God is adored by outward symbols as among Brahmins, Romanists, Puseyites and other idolatersor else He is worshipped through ritualism, as among too many who claim to be orthodox, who contend for prearranged, and unbending formswritten or unwritten as the case may be. Or else men show an utter indifference to God altogether and then rush into superstitious reverence for something or other which is evil and therefore to be dreaded and spoken of with awe.

This is the history of religious worship. Let spiritual worship assume what form it may, man always will, if he can, get away from it and forget God and set up something seen, instead of bowing down before the unseen. Hence the necessity of the Second Commandment in the Decalogue, You shall not make unto you any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in Heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: you shall not bow down yourself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, and so on.

This is not a command against worshipping another God that is the First Commandmentbut a command against worshipping God under any shape, or through any medium, or under any symbol. For He is a Spirit and must be worshipped in spirit and in truth and not by symbols. Against this command the human mind is always dashing itself, and in one shape or another idolatry is the ruling religion of mankind. Christ comes to tell us that now His worship is to be wholly spiritual, even the altar which belongs to antediluvian times is gone, for we have an Altar of another kind.

Even the sacrifice which belonged to the early period has departed like a shadow because we have the Sacrifice of Christ in which to trust. As for the institutions which suited the infancy of the Church, they also have disappeared, for now Jesus would have the worship of men enlightened by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. He would have us understand that a perfect revelation demands of us that in the perfection of our spiritual powers we should adore the invisible God without the interference of visible signs.

Now He would have us cast away all outward types and signs, except the two which He has Himself ordained, and even these are types of the Saviors manhood and not of His Godhead at all, to be only valued because of the spiritual communion which they enable our hearts to hold with Jesus. Baptism being intended for spiritual men, that they may enter into the Saviors death and burial, and the Lords Supper that the same persons may remember His body broken and His blood shed for them. The water, the bread, the wine being mere emblems, not to be treated with reverence, but put to their proper emblematic use.

II. I shall now, in the second place, try to ACCOUNT FOR THE EXTREME RARITY OF SPIRITUAL WORSHIP. The reason is, my Brothers and Sisters, because man has fallen. If man were what he once was, pure and holy, I cannot conceive of his wanting holy places and crosses, capes, and dalmatics, crosiers, and chasubles. I cannot conceive of the temptation to bow down before a bull, or a Virgin Mary, or a wafer. Had men been unfallen, the noble creature would have walked in Paradise, and if he reclined beneath a shady tree, he would have lifted up his eyes and said, My Father, You have made this grateful shade, here I will adore You.

Or if he had walked in the full heat of the sun, he would have said, My God, it is Your light that shines on meI adore You. Up yonder on the mountains brow, or down by the gleaming river, or the silvery lake, he need build no altar. His Altar is within himself. He needs make no temple, his temple is everywhere. The morning is holy, and the evening is holy. He has no prescribed hour of prayer, it is devotion all day long. His morning bath is his baptism. Each meal is his Eucharist. Depend upon it, the nearer we get back to the nakedness of worship, the nearer we get to its truth and purity. But it is because man has fallen, that as his body wants clothing, so he is always dressing up his religion.

Moreover, it is far more difficult to worship God in spirit than in form. To patter through a dozen Ave Marias or Pater Nosters is so easy that I can nearly go to sleep over them! To repeat a form of prayer in the morning and evening is a very small matter and one can be thinking of the shop all the while! To go to Church or Chapel so many times a week is a cheap duty, and one may still be a thief or a hypocrite! But it is difficult, very difficult, to bring the heart down to humble penitence and the soul to holy meditation.

The last thing that most people will do is think. The noblest part of our nature is still the least exercised. Humbly to tremble before God, to confess sin before Him, to believe Him, to love Himthis is spiritual worship! Because this is so hard, men say, No, no, let me crawl on my knees around a shrine! Let me kneel down before a pyx, let me help to make a cape, or to manufacture some pretty piece of millinery for the priest to wear. Let me go every morning to the steeple house and come out in half an hour, and feel I have done my religion. That is quite easy, but the hard part of religion is the part of spiritual worship.

And yet again, to worship God spiritually men would have to part with their sins. There is no effect produced upon a mans conscience by his being sprinkled, or by his taking the sacraments. He can do all that and be as much a pleasure-lover, or a worshipper of mammon as he was before. But to worship God spiritually, a man must give up his sins! He must overcome his pride and lust, and his evil concupiscence must be cast out of him. Many persons might honestly declare, I do not mind worshipping God if it consists in doing penance, or going without meat on Fridays. But if I am to give up my sins, love God, seek Christ, trust HimI cannot attend to that.

Furthermore, man, for the most part, somehow cannot get the idea of this spiritual worship into his brain. Oh the many times I have tried to preach spiritual worship here and yet I am conscious that when I try at it I do not interest many of you! And some of you think, if he would only give us more metaphors, more anecdotes, and so on. I say I will do that, for I believe we should speak by parable, but sometimes I do not know how to clothe these spiritual things without making you look at the clothing rather than the spirit.

It is not your worshipping God by words in hymns and prayers, or sitting in a certain place, or covering your faces at certain times that is acceptable to Him! True worship lies in your heart paying reverence to Him, your soul obeying Him, and your inner nature coming into conformity to His own Nature by the work of His Spirit in your soul. And because men can scarcely get the idea of this till the Holy Spirit gives it to them, this is a reason why it is so rare, so exceedingly rare!

There is one other reason, dear Friends, why spiritual worship is unusual, and that is because man cannot traffic in spiritual religion. The priest is up at arms directly. Oh, he says, spiritual! Spiritual! Why they will do without me one of these days. Spiritualwhy, if you tell these people that every place is holy and that there are no holy places, and that one Believer is as much a priest as another, and that prayer is as acceptable at home as it is in a particular spot, why, he says, that is the end of me. Yes, Sir, that is the end of you, and the sooner the better for the worldfor of all the curses that have ever fallen upon the human race, the priesthood is the worst! Its claims are false and its actions are full of deceit.

In the age of witches and ghosts the priesthood might be tolerated, but he who now sets himself up as a priest is as much a common nuisance as a fortuneteller. Nothing has been such a nightmare upon the intellect of man! Nothing has sat like old Sinbad the Sailor upon the back of humanity as the pretensions of the priesthood! God forbid that Christianity should even for a moment endorse the lie! Christ has put it all down. Christ says, All you are brethren, and He says of the whole body of His elect, You are a royal priesthood.

Concerning all the saints, Scripture declares, You are Gods clergy, for that is the Greek word in the passageYou are Gods heritage. We know no clergy and no laity! We know nothing whatever now of priesthood and of the common people, for you are made priests and kings unto God to offer spiritual sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God by Jesus Christ!

III. Turning from that point, a third subject is thisWHY IS SUCH WORSHIP TO BE RENDERED? Why did not God ordain worship by windmills as in Tibet? Why has He not chosen to be worshipped by particular men in purple and fine linen, acting gracefully as in Roman and Anglican churches? Why not? He gives two reasons which ought to suffice. The first is, He Himself seeks spiritual worship. It is His own wish that the worship should be spiritual. And in the second place, He is Himself a Spirit and is to be spiritually worshipped. Whatever kind of worship the great Ruler desires, He ought to receiveand it is impertinence on my part if I say to HimNo, not that, but this.

It is true, I may say, I am very sincere in all this, very earnest in it. It suits my taste. There is a beauty about it. It excites certain emotions which I think to be devotional. What is all that but saying, Great God, You have chosen such-and-such a way of being worshipped, but I will not render it to You? Is not that in effect saying, I will not worship You at all? For must not worship, to be worship, be such as the person worshipped himself will accept? To invent our own forms of worship is to insult God! And every mass that is ever offered upon the Romish altar is an insult to Heaven, and a blasphemy to God who is a Spirit!

Every time any form of worship by procession, celebration, or ceremony of mans invention is offered to God it is offered in defiance of this Word of Christ, and cannot and will not be received. However earnest people may be, they have violated the imperative canon of Gods Wordand in fighting for rubrics they have gone against the eternal rubric that God as a Spirit must be worshipped in spirit and in truth.

The second reason given is that God is a Spirit. If God were material, it might be right to worship Him with material substances. If God were like ourselves it might be well for us to give a sacrifice congenial to humanity. But being as He is, pure Spirit, He must be worshipped in spirit. I like the remark made by Trapp in his commentary on this passage, when he says that perhaps the Savior is even here bringing down God to our comprehension. For, Trapp said, God is above all notion, all name. Certainly this we know, that anything which associates Him with the grossness of materialism is infinitely removed from the Truth of God.

Augustine said, When I am not asked what God is, I think I know, but when I try to answer that question, I find I know nothing. If the Eternal were such an one as you are, O Man, He might be pleased with your painted windows! But what a childs toy must colored glass be to God! I can sit and gaze upon a cathedral with all its magnificent architecture and think what a wonderful exhibition of human skillbut what must that be to God who piles the heavens, who digs the foundation of the deep, who leads Arcturus with his sons? Why, it must be to Him the smallest trifle, a mere heap of stones!

I delight to hear the swell of organs, the harmony of sweet voices, the Gregorian chantbut what is this artistic sound to Him more than sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal? As a sight, I admire the choristers and priests, and the whole show of a grand ceremonybut do you believe that God is imposed upon by those frocks and gowns of white and blue, and scarlet, and fine linen? It seems to me as if such a notion brings down God to the level of a silly woman who is fond of finery!

The infinite God, who spreads out the heavens and scatters stars with both His handswhom Heaven and earth cannot contain, to whom space is but a speck, and time is as nothingdo you think that He dwells in temples made with hands, that is to say, of mans building? And is He to be worshipped with your organs, and your roodscreens, and your gaudy millinery? He laughs at them! He treads on them as being less than nothing and vanity! Spiritual worship is what He regards because He is Spirit.

My Brethren, if you could get together a procession of worlds! If you could make the stars walk along the streets of some great new Jerusalem dressed in their brightest array! If, instead of the songs of a few boys or men you could catch the sonnets of eternal ages! If, instead of a few men to officiate as priests you could enlist time, eternity, Heaven and earth to be the priesthood! Yet all this would be to Him but as a company of grasshoppers, and He would take up the whole as a very little thing.

But let me tell you that even God Himself, great as He is, does not despise the tear that drops from a repentant eye, nor does He neglect the sigh that comes from a sinners soul. He thinks more of your repentance than of your incense, and more of your prayers than of your priesthoods. He views with pleasure your love and your faith, for these are spiritual things in which He can take delight. But your architecture, your music and your fine artsthough they lavish their treasures at His feetare less than nothing and vanity. You know not what spirit you are of. If you think to worship my God with all these inventions of man, you dream like fools!

I feel glowing within me the old iconoclastic spirit. Would God we had men now like Knox or Luther who with holy indignation would pull in pieces those wicked mockeries of the Most High against which our soul feels a hallowed indignation as we think of His loftiness, and of that poor paltry stuff with which men degrade His name!

IV. WHAT THEN? What is the practical drift of this? Why two things. The first is, my dear Brothers and SistersI mean you who have learned to worship God in spirit and in truthwho have got above the beggarly elements of the outward and can worship Him in spirit and in truth. What then? Why, in the first place, let us be particularly jealous of anything which looks at all like going back to ceremonialism.

As a matter of taste I have a great liking for noble architecture. Many an hour have I lingered in the ruins of some splendid abbey or our own majestic buildings still used for sacred worship. I have a great delight in a well-painted window. I cannot say that I like most Dissenting painted windows because they look to me as if they were a sort of would be if you could. I cannot say I have any kind of liking for most of our Dissenting Gothic, for it seems to me such a paltry thing to build a front just like St. Pauls or Westminster Abbey, and then as if to cheat the Lord to make the back part shabby. I cannot say I care for that kind of thing.

But a really splendid place of worship I admire as a matter of taste. I like an organ very well, as a matter of musical taste. But, my Brothers and Sisters, I feel that these are times when we must stand out even against allowable things, lest going one step we should go another. I do pray that you, therefore, if you have any influence anywhere, always use it in favor of simplicity. And if you see at any time in the churches of which you are the members a tendency to creep on to something a little nearer, a little towards the way of Rome, cry Halt!

Let us go back to the barns in which our fathers worshipped, or better still to the hill side, and to the green sward than go forward to anything like symbolism which will tempt the soul away from spiritual worship. We ought ourselves to guard against falling into formalism by means of simplicity, for we may do it the one way as well as the otherby laying it down as a rule that a service must begin with prayer or begin with singingthat the preacher must preach at such a time in the servicethat the service must commence, continue, and conclude in some fixed fashion.

That seems to me to have a tendency to breed another form of ritualism inconsistent with worshipping God in spirit and in truth. I am afraid I have hardly Divine Grace enough to worship God for two or three hours in silence as our Quaker friends do. I do enjoy a quarter of an hours silence every now and thento sit quite still seems to me to be an admirable way of getting into contact with God. Our service is so much words, words, words, that I am almost afraid you get to think as much of words as other people do of banners, and flags, and so on.

Now, to sit stillto get away from words, if so your heart keeps to God is better even than preaching and singing. Juan De Yaldes, a Catholic, but a good Protestant for all that, remarks that the vulgar in seeking to remember Christ by the crucifix do not exercise their mind but stop at the crucifix. And therefore that which was intended to be a help becomes a hindrance. So the learned get their Bibles which should help them to think upon Divine things, but being content with having read the letter of Scripture they often fail to reach the spiritual truth which it contains, and so after all do not worship God.

Remember that while we should be jealous of anything which would make it easy to be of formal worship which might be adopted, yet we may still, after all, have missed the main thingthe worshipping of God in spirit and in truth. Let us make it a matter of heart-searching as to whether we, ourselves, have been in the habit of worshipping the Father in spirit and in truth.

Dear Friends, I am fearful of some of you that you do not do this. If the preacher happens to be away you do not feel in so good a frame. Somebody else takes my place and there are certain feeble folk among you who feel as if the Sabbath had lost its enjoyment. But God is here and you might worship God as much surely without me as with me! And though the instruction received from one man may not seem so edifying as that which may come from another, and possibly may not be so, yet still if your object is the worship of God, which should be the main object of our gathering, surely you should do that as well under the ministry of Mr. A as Mr. B!

I am afraid, too that many of you are content with singing through the hymns. Now all that singing which is not thought-singing is of no use. You may have very sweet voices but God does not regard your voiceHe hears your heartand if your heart does not sing you have not sung at all. When we stand up to pray it may be that the preachers words may happen to be suitable to your case. But it is not prayer so far as you are concerned, though it may be as far as he is, unless you join in it. Remember that if you do not put your hearts into the worship of God, you might as well be at home as here!

You are better here than at home for other reasons because you are in the way where good may come to you. But for worships sake you might as well have been in bed as here. You who have no spiritual worship may even clog the devotions of those who have! An invisible savor of death unto death may be oozing from you, helping to pollute or to render dead the worship of those who truly adore God. At any rate, my dear Hearers, if you have not with your whole hearts loved and worshipped God, repent over it and pray the Holy Spirit to make you spiritual.

Go to Christs Cross, and trust in Him! Then, and not till then, will you be capable of adoring the most High God in a style in which He can accept your worship. God grant that this may be impressed upon the hearts of all of us, that we may worship God in spirit and in truth.

Adapted from The C.H. Spurgeon Collection, Version 1.0, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307 Sermon #1678 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

THE SAMARITAN WOMAN AND HER MISSION   
NO. 1678

**DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, SEPTEMBER 10, 1882, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**And upon this came His disciples, and marveled that He talked with the woman, yet no man said, What do You seek? or, Why are You talking with her? The woman then left her waterpot, and went her way into the city, and said to the men,   
Come, see a Man which told me all   
things that ever I did: is not this   
the Christ? Then they went   
out of the city, and   
came unto Him.   
John 4:27-30.**

Behold our Lord and Master with divinely skillful art seeking after a single soul! We must have large Congregations or we are disinclined for soul-winning. The habit of the age is to do nothing but what is ostentatiousevery work must be with beat of drum or sound of tambourine! I pray that the Lord may work in us the steadfast desire to do good on the quiet, by stealth, when no one looks on, when not a single disciple is near. Oh that we may have such an estimate of the value of a single soul that we count whole days well spent to bring one fallen woman or one drunk to the Saviors feet! Blessed is he who works on though he is never heard of and looks for his reward from his Master.

In the heat of the day the Lord Jesus found rest and refreshment in speaking to one whom many would scarcely look upon except with eyes of scorn. Blessed Savior, we do not marvel, as the disciples did, that You did speak with the woman, but we do wonder with a higher kind of astonishment that You ever did speak to the likes of us who have so sadly fallen, done You dishonor and grieved Your heart! We are amazed that He who is the Glory of Heaven, Light of light, very God of very God, should shroud Himself in the likeness of sinful flesh and, being found in fashion as a Man, should seek after us unworthy ones. Oh, the compassion of the Redeemers heart!

Read this chapter through carefully and see the skill which that compassion taught Him. How sweetly ready He was to converse with her and take up her questions. Never imagine that the 30 years of retirement at Nazareth were wasted. I would gladly go, if I were young, for 30 years to learn how to talk as He did, if His own Spirit would teach me the lesson. He was a perfect Teacher because as Man, He had lent a willing ear to the heavenly instruction of the Holy Spirit and, therefore, grew in knowledge and fitness for His work. As says that notable Scripture, The Lord God has given Me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary: He wakens Me morning by morning, He wakens My ear to hear as the learned. The Lord God has opened My ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back.

By communion with God in private and by watching men in seclusion, He learned both the mind of God and the nature of man, so as to know how to handle the human mind. Men are unpredictable cattle, and can only be managed by a wise hand. Many an earnest fool has driven a soul to Hell in his endeavor to drag it to Heaven by force, for human wills yield not to such rough force, but rebel the more. Souls have to be brought to salvation by a gentleness and wisdom such us the Savior used when He fascinated the Samaritan woman into eternal life and enticed her to the truthso I can only describe that wondrous power which He exercised over her in the few short but blessed sentences with which He addressed her.

Now, turn a moment from that Glorious One, that perfect Man and yet infinite God, whom we would lovingly adore before we look away from Him. Here come His disciples! They have been in the city to buy foodan errand most necessarythat they and their Teacher might live. But look! When they perceive Him talking with a woman, they marvel, each in his own way. Some are dumfounded and cannot explain the phenomenon! Others look as if they would interpose, if they dared, and would cry to the woman, Away you vixen! What right have you here, speaking to such a One as our Leader, whose shoe-laces even we are not worthy to unloose? Your approach dishonors Him! Take yourself away.

They did say so with their eyes, though awe of their Lord restrained their tongues, for these disciples of Jesus were steeped in the customary antipathies of the age. First, it was sufficiently offensive that the person with whom Jesus was conversing was a woman. My beloved Sisters, you owe much to the Gospel, for it is only by its agency that you are raised to your proper place. For what said the Rabbis? Rather burn the sayings of the Law than teach them to women. And, again, Let no man prolong conversation with a woman. Let no man converse with a woman in the streets, not even with his own wife. Women were thought to be unfit for profound religious instruction and altogether inferior beings. My Sisters, we do not think that you are superior to us, though some of you, perhaps, fancy so, but we are right glad to acknowledge your equality and to know that in Christ Jesus there is neither male nor female! Jesus has lifted you up to your true place, side by side with man!

Even the Apostles were tainted, at first, with that horrible superstition which made them marvel that Jesus openly talked with a woman. Moreover, they wondered that He could talk with such a woman! I do not suppose they knew all about her character, but there is a look about the fallen which betrays themthey cannot conceal the boldness which a course of vice usually produces. They may have thought, If He had talked with an aged matron, a saintly mother in Israel, it might not have been surprising; but how can He converse with such a woman? They did not, as yet, understand His mission to rescue the perishing and save the lost. This poor woman, also, had the misfortune to be a Samaritan and, above all things, Jews hated Samaritans as aliens and heretics who dared to call Jacob their father and to believe themselves orthodox!

Jews and Samaritans were much alike and you know the sects that approach nearest to each other usually reserve their most bitter hatred for their next of kin. They will tolerate those who are far removed from them because they are altogether in the darkness of error and so, are somewhat excusable. But those who have so much light, they detest for not seeing eye to eye with themselves. We pity a dumb man, for he cannot speak at all, but we are indignant that one who can say, Shibboleth, will not take a little more trouble and pronounce it, Shibboleth, as we do! Surely he might go that other inch and be quite right. This woman was one of those Samaritan heretics who had dared to set up an opposition temple to the one at Jerusalem and say that they, also, were the people of Godso the disciples shrank from her and marveled that Jesus did not do the same. How could so good a man mix Himself up with such people?

I have, myself, heard a great deal of foolishness spoken about mixing up with certain people because we dare to meet with them upon some common ground to accomplish a right purpose. I have sometimes wondered whether people ever read of Abraham, when he fought for the cause of the king of Sodom. A horrible man, I have no doubt, that monarch was, yet when his country had been plundered by the invading kings, Abraham marched out on behalf of the King of Sodomnot that he cared for him but that he desired to deliver his nephew, Lot. For that reason he is found in some measure of association with Sodoms kingbut when the object upon which they were united was achieved, then see how the princely Abraham washes his hands of the man. He says, I will not take from you a thread even to a shoe-lace lest you should say, I have made Abraham rich. Thus there may be a temporary union among men, between whom there is the widest difference, and this apparent unity may be lawful and expedient because the end to be gained is altogether good.

Our blessed Lord was seeking the good of this unholy woman and, therefore, He was fully justified in talking with her. Thereby He rebuked the superstition of His followers more effectually than by words. There is another side to the question. How could these disciples marvel that He spoke with anybody, after having chosen them and called them? Surely, when they frowned on others, they forgot the dunghills where they grew! If they had only remembered where they were when He found them and how often they had grieved Him by their perverseness, they would have reserved their surprise for their own cases. Ah, Brothers and Sisters, ever since the Lord spoke with me, I have never marveled that He spoke with anybodyit has not crossed my mind to make it any subject of wonder that He should stoop to the lowest and meanest, now that He has stooped to me!

Yet I fancy I have seen, in certain Brothers and Sisters, evident signs that they forget that they were, themselves, once strangers in Egypt. They forget that Grace washed and cleansed them, or else they would have been filthy still, for Paul truly says, such were some of you. I am sorry when saved ones affect superfine purity and marvelous spiritualityand turn away from such as Jesus would have welcomed. Alas, such disciples have little of the tenderness of their Master! Our Divine Lord has more tenderness for sinners than the whole of us put together! There is more love in His soul towards lost ones than there is in all these thousands of Believers here present, though I hope that many of your hearts beat high with a loving desire that the guilty may be delivered from the wrath to come.

But look at the disciples! Look, yonder is John, that sweet-souled John, and yet he marvels! And there is Peter, good but faulty, and he marvels! And there is Thomas, the thoughtful, and he marvels! They are all good men and yet they are marveling that Jesus is gracious to a poor woman! Oh, Peter, and John, and James and the rest of you, look into your own hearts and let a glance of the Holy Spirit lighten up the darkness of your spiritsand you will renounce this self-righteous marveling which grieves the womanand you will enter into deeper sympathy with your Lords love. Dear Friends, let us never disdain the worst of men or women, but seek, with all our might, to woo and win them for our Lord! Oh, to have hearts of mercies as Jesus had! This will well become the followers of the compassionate Son of Man.

Look, as the result of this conduct of the disciples, one of the sweetest conferences that was ever held was broken up and brought to a close at its very climax. Just when Jesus had said, I that speak unto you am He, then it must end, for here they come, these cold, unsympathetic ones! Yet they were disciples, were they not? Oh, yes, and true disciples, too! But, alas, no breakers of communion are more blamable or more frequent in the offense than Christs own disciples when they are out of sympathy with their Master. You see, they are thinking about the meat and about the Saviors need of itand these thoughts were most properbut not very elevated or spiritual. They come, amazed that Jesus speaks with a woman, and so the holy conference ends and the woman must go!

Oh, when any of you draw near to Christ and He is just lifting the silver veil from His dear face, and your eyes are beginning to behold Him, mind that you keep your door shut! Oh, but it is a good man at the door. Yes, but he will be just as likely to mar your fellowship as anybody else! The best of men may sometimes intrude between you and the Well-Beloved and fellowship which seemed as if it must mellow into Heaven, itself, will come to a speedy and sorrowful close! I do not blame Peter that he wanted tabernacles in which to remain upon the top of the mount, for he was pretty well aware of what he might meet upon the plain. Do you not often wish that you could sing

*Sequestered from the noise and strife,   
The lust, the pomp, and pride of life;   
For Heaven I will my heart prepare,   
And have my conversation there?*

Although the conference was thus broken up, the consequence was the Lords Glory, even as often out of evil He works good. Since the woman cannot sit and gaze upon the Divine face of her Lord, nor hear the strange music which flowed from His blessed lips, she will give herself to holy activityshe goes her way to the city and she speaks to the men. This is wellthere is little to deplore when mens hearts are so right that you cannot take them away from glorifying Christ, do what you may! When, if you disturb their private communion, they are ready, at once, for public service! Driven away from sitting, like Mary, at the Masters feet, let us rise to play the Martha, by preparing a table for the Lord! Always reckon, dear Friends, whenever you are taken off from your usual course of life, as it were, by a jolt, that the Lord has some special work for you to do.

Do not fret, or try to buck the engine to get on the old lines again. No, if the switch is turned by the Divine hand, go onHe that has the management of all the railroads of your life knows better which way your soul should go than you, yourself, can know! I have observed Christian people jerked out of a pious family, where they were extremely happy, and placed in the midst of ungodlinessa situation not of their own choosing or seeking, but appointed of the Lordthat they may bring godliness into that house and shed light in the midst of the darkness. Friend, you, too, may be taken away from this Church where your soul has flourished, and you may feel like one banished and bereaved. Well, never mind! If you are sent to some Church where everything is dreary and dead, go there like a firebrand to set them on fire!

Your Lord would not have permitted the breaking up of your peace unless He had some high service for you. Since you are His servant, find out His will and do it! God will thus honor Himself in you and, by-and-by, He will honor and comfort you, also. Observe that the woman, now, becomes a messenger for Christ. She has to quit conferring with Him to go and testify about Him! She did not go unbidden though, for she remembered that the Lord had said at an early period of the conversation, Go, call your husband and come here. So she goes to call her husband! It is well to have a warrant for what we do. Observe she interprets her orders very liberally. She thought as the Christ had said, You have had five husbands, and he whom you now have is not your husband, He could not have limited her errand to one who was not her husband except in nameand so she might as well call any of the six men with whom she had dwelt and, therefore, she might speak to all the men who were loitering about the public square and tell them what she had seen!

Remember how our Savior gave a large interpretation of His own prophetic mission. He was not sent as a Teacher except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, but He went to the very edge of His diocese, if He did not go over it. He went to the borders of Tyre and Sidon and when a woman came out of those parts, He had healing for her daughter! Though He did sow most of His seed upon the acres of the Holy Land, yet He made it fly over the boundary. In fact, He sowed all the ages and, on this once barbarous island there have fallen blessed handfuls which are bringing forth fruit to His Glory! Always go to the verge of your commissionnever stop short of it. Try to do more good than you can and it is very possible that you will be successful. Indeed, if you only try to do what you can do, you will do little! But when, in faith, you attempt what you cannot, alone, accomplish, God will be at your backand in your weakness His strength shall be made clear!

Notice that the woman leaves her waterpot. The Spirit of God thought well to record this circumstance and, therefore, I think there must be a measure of teaching in it. She left her waterpot, first, for speed. Perhaps you have got it into your head that it was an ordinary English waterpot, such as you water the garden withpossibly you so picture it, rose and all. Nothing of the sort! It was a big jar, or large pitcher of earthenware she had to carry on her head or her shoulder. It was quite a load for her and so she left it, that she might run the more quickly. She was a wise woman to leave her waterpot when she needed to move rapidly. Others think she did so because she was so taken up with her errand that she forgot her pitcher. It is blessed forgetfulness which comes of absorption in a holy design!

When the Kings business requires haste, it is wise to leave behind everything that would hinder. Our Lord Jesus, Himself, forgot His hunger in His zeal to guide a soul to peace. And it is said of Him in the Psalm, I forget to eat My bread. He was so absorbed in His heavenly work that He said, I have meat to eat that you know not of. A man has hardly felt the power of eternal things, unless, at times, he forgets some earthly matters. If a man is called to rush for his life through a room full of crockery there will, probably, be a number of breakages. You cannot think of everything at onceyour mind is limited and it is not advisable that you should divide the strength of your thoughts by having two or more aims.

So she left her waterpot. Without thought she hit upon as good an action as thought would have suggested. The waterpot would have hindered her, but it might be useful to the Christ and His disciples. Thus they could give Him to drink. He was thirsty and probably so were theyand with her pitcher, they could help themselves. Besides, it was a pledge that she was coming back. She said, I am running away on an errand, but I shall come back again. I have not listened to the great Teacher for the last time. I shall return and hear Him further, till I know Him better and trust Him more fully. So it was significant that she left her waterpot.

Sometimes you will have to leave your shop to win a soul. You will cast up a row of figures wrongly and wonder whyand the reason will be that before your mind there fluttered the soul of a swearer or the figure of a drunk, or the image of a fallen womanand your heart was filled with the longing to find the lost sheep. Never mind. I dare say the woman had her water pot, again, and you will get back to business, again, and rectify your blunder, attend to the shop and set all matters right. And if a soul is saved, you will have made a profit by any loss you have sustained.

We have started the woman on her mission. Now I want you to observe particularly her mode of address, for there is teaching here. She said to the men, Come, see a Man which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ? Observe first, when she did go back to the men, she had but one aim and that was to bring them to Jesus. She cries, Come, see. She did not tell them anything about their sin at the time, nor try to reform their habits. She called them at once to Him who could set them right. She knew that if she could bring them to Christ, all things would inevitably come right. It is good for you to shoot only at one target. Choose your design and aim at it, but not at two objects. Drive away at the souls of men in the name of God to get them to Christ, and nothing short of Him. Labor for this. Be willing to live for this and to die for this, that men may be saved by Immanuels love, blood and Spirit.

This Samaritan woman aimed at this object and tried to gain it by an exceedingly earnest address. I guarantee you she said it very prettily Come, come, come, see a Man that told me all things that ever I did! Perhaps with all her charms, with all the softness of her winsome tongue, with all the entreaty of her bright eyes, she cried, Come, every one of you; come, see for yourselves, a Man which told me all things that ever I did. If you go upon the Lords errands, take your heart with you! Speak every single syllable earnestly and, if you are thoroughly alive, you will not need to be taught the way of doing it! The way comes naturally to those whose hearts are set upon the end. She spoke self-forgetfullyshe seemed entirely to have forgotten herself and yet she remembered herselfa paradox, but not a contradiction. She said, Come, see a Man which told me all things that ever I did.

She quoted herself and yet if she had thought of herself, she would not have said a word on the subject of her own life. She might have feared that the men would have repliedA pretty story that must be! They knew her well and might have turned round and said, You are a beauty, to come here and talk to us in this style! No, she let them talk of her as they pleased. Come, see a Man which told me all things that ever I did. That putting aside of all affectation; that genuine simplicity was part of her power. Never try to be otherwise than you are. If you have been a great sinner, be ashamed of it, but do not be ashamed of that love which saved you from it, so as to refuse to bear witness to its power! Put away the thought of what people will think of you and only look to what they will think of Jesus for having forgiven and renewed you!

Note how short she was. Ralph Erskine calls her the female preacher. I am not so sure of the correctness of the title. If women preached just as long as she did, and no longer, no one could find fault with them. Her testimony lies all in one verse and is an invitation and a question. There needed no more words, no, not another half a word. She said exactly enough, for she was successful in leading the men to Jesus, who could do the preaching far better than she could. I cannot call her words a sermonat any rate, you would not care for me to preach so briefly! However, brevity is a great virtue. Do not crave to be fluent, only ask to be earnest. Then, how vivacious she was. Come, see a Man. The words are all alive and very far from being dull and heavy. Come, see. It is almost as laconic as Julius Caesars famous dispatchI came, I saw, I conquered. Come, see a Man which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?

Then, it was so sensible. There is a dispute about the exact force of what the woman said, but most of those who give us precise translations differ from our common version. It is what she meant and believed, but not exactly what she said. She probably said, Come, see a Man which told me all things that ever I did: Can this be the Christ?or, This is not the Christ, is He? She did not say He was, but she suggested it with great modesty for the men to examine. She believed that Jesus was the Christ, but she knew that men do not like to be taught by such as she and so she humbly threw it out for their examination. Can this be the anointed One whom we are expecting? Come and judge.

She did not express all she believed, lest she should provoke them to oppositionshe was adept and wise. She fished after the manner of her Master, for she could not but feel how dexterously He had fished for her. She was an apt scholar and humbly copied the Friend who had blessed herCome, see a Man who told me all things that ever I did: can this possibly be the Christ? This led them to come, if it was only to set the woman right! Possibly they thought her a poor, mistaken woman, but, in their superior wisdom, they would look into the matter and so the thing she desired was granted her. Oh, to have our wits about us for Jesus!

But the argument is exceedingly strong, let her put it how she may. This Man has told me all things that ever I did. She might have said, if she thought it wise to say it, He must be the Christ. And that is my last point, namely, the grand argument drawn from herself and adapted to the men. Observe the force of her reasoning. His power to read her heart and manifest her to herself, was conclusive evidence to her that a special anointing was upon Him. But before I get at that I must have you examine more fully the whole of the womans little message, of which it was a part. It divides itself into two parts. You have been looking for my firstly and secondly all this while, and now you shall have them! There are two parts in her sermon. The first is the invitationCome, see a Man which told me all things that ever I did. The second is the argumentIs not this the Christ?

I. Consider at once THE INVITATION. It is a clever as well as a genuine and hearty invitation. She says, Come, see. This was putting it most fairly and men like a fair proposaland the Holy Spirit works by means which suit the mind. She does not say, You must and shall believe what I say. No, no, she is too sensible. She says, Come and see for yourselves, and that is exactly what I want to say to every unconverted person here, this morning. My Lord Jesus is the most precious Savior that I ever dreamed of. Come and test Him! He is altogether lovely and He has blessed my soul unspeakably, but I do not want you to believe because of my saying socome and see for yourselves! Can anything be fairer?

Seek Him by prayer. Trust Him by faith. Test His Gospel for yourselves. It is an old-fashioned exhortationOh taste and see that the Lord is good! And, again, Prove Me now, says the Lord of Hosts. In fact, this is Christs own word to the first disciples, Come and see, and they used it when pleading with others, saying to them, Come and see. Moreover, this womans invitation throws the responsibility upon them. She says, Come and see. Thus would I say to youIf you do not come and see, I cannot help it and I cannot help you, either. I cannot stand sponsor for youuse your own judgments and clear your own consciences. Come and see on your own accounts. If you do not, then the blame must rest with you. If you do, then your personal investigation will be sure to end in a blessing.

O dear Hearers, I may preach the Gospel to you, but I cannot go to Christ in your place! It is mine to entreat and persuade and to use every kind of means by which I may get you to the Savior, but it is a personal matter with each of you! Oh that the Holy Spirit would lead you to come, yourselves, to Jesus, for it must be your own act and deed through His blessed working upon your nature! You must come, you must repent, you must believe, you must lay hold on eternal life for yourselves! Nothing but personal religion can possibly save you. The womans call was a good exhortation in that respect.

Then, is it not pleasantly put, so as to prove the sympathy of the speaker? She does not say, as she might have said, Go, see a Man. No Come, see a Man, as much as to say, Come along. I will go with you and lead the way. You shall not say I have seen enough of Him and do not care to go again, and now want to send you packing there alone because I am tired of Him. No, come! Come along! Come with mewe will all go together. The more I have seen of Him the more I want to see. Come, see the wondrous Man. Dear Friends, when you try to win a soul, do not try the, go, system, but use the, come, system! When man cries, I cannot go to Christ, or, I will not go to Christ, look at him through your tears and cry out, Friend, I am a sinner like yourself, and have no hope but in the precious blood of Jesus. Come, let me pray with you! Let us go to Jesus together!

Then, when you pray, do not say, Lord, I am one of your saints and come to you bringing this sinner. That may be true, but it is not a wise way of speaking. Cry, Lord, here are two sinners that deserve Your wrath and we come to ask You in Your pity to give the Savior to us and renew our hearts by Your Spirit. That is the way God helps soul-winners to draw otherswhen we say, Come, let us lead the way ourselves. What you wish another to do, it will be wise to do yourself, for example has more power than precept! How would you like the sinner to turn round upon you and say, You may well give away advice when you do not intend to use it, yourself. No, but, Come, see a Man that told me all things that ever I did. A Sisters heart spoke out in that word, Come.

Again, what a blessed vanishing of the speaker there is! I have heard of Brothers whose preaching is spoiled because they are so self-conscious. The man wishes you to feel that he is speaking in first-rate style and is an eminent divine. When he has finished, the common exclamation is, I never heard such a clever man. But he was not so wise as he might have been or should have been, for he who preaches rightly makes you forget himself! In fact, the observation about him, if it comes out at all, is in this fashionI did not detect any eloquence; anybody might have talked like that, but somehow I have felt as I never felt before.

The fish knows little about the angler, but he knows when he has swallowed the hook. When the Truth of God has gone right home to the hearers heart, the form of speech is of little consequence. This woman does not say anything to make the Samaritan men admire her, but she draws them to Jesus with the exhortation, Come, see a Man. What she does mention about herself is with the design of extolling the Savior. That is a grand sentence of John the Baptist, He must increase, but I must decrease. Less, less, less of John, that there may be all the more of Christ! There is but one great universe and Christ and you are in it. The more space you occupy, there must be so much the less for Jesus. When you get less and less there is more for Jesusand when you reach the vanishing point, then Jesus is All in Alland that is exactly what you should aim at!

This sensible womans invitation deserves to be copied by every worker. II. Now for THE ARGUMENT, with which I close. An argument lies concealed here and if you look at the text a minute or two, you will discover it. She conceals it because she is persuaded that they have already agreed to it. It is thisIf Jesus is the Christ, the Anointed, then it is fit that you should come with me and see Him. She does not argue that point be

cause every Samaritan agreed to it. If Jesus is the Christ, then we ought to go and listen to Him, look at Him and become His followers. Alas, my dear Hearers, I am obliged to urge that argument with many of you because you are not so practical as these Samaritans.

You believe that Jesus is the Christ. I suppose every man and woman of you does that. Why, then, do you not believe in Him as your Savior? You never had a doubt about His Godheadwhy is He not your God? If I tell you the truth, says Christ, why do you not believe Me? If this is the Anointed One whom God has sent to take away the sins of men, why have you not sought Him, that He may rid you of your sins? If this is the Propitiation which God has set forth, why have you not accepted this Propitiation? If this is the Fountain wherein sin can be washed away, why are you not washed? There is no reason in your course of actionit is illogical and irrational. If there is a Savior, the man who is taught right reason vows that he will have Him! If there is a fountain that can wash away sin, he resolves to be washed in itif he can get right with God by any process, he hastens to be rectified. I say this woman did not argue the point because it did not need arguing. It goes without saying and there let it stand.

But what she did argue was thisThis Man who was just now sitting on the well, is He not the Christ? How did she prove it? First, she did as good as say, He must be Christ because He has revealed me to myself He has told me all things that ever I did. The words are wide. Stop, dear woman, surely He has not revealed all your life, certainly not in words! He has revealed your unchastity, but nothing else. But she was right. Were you ever out in a black and murky night when a single lightning flash has come? It has only struck one oak in the field, but in so doing it has revealed all the landscape. It struck one object, but all around you was light as day for the moment! So, when the Lord Jesus Christ revealed this womans lustfulness, she saw clearly the whole of her life at a single view and the Lord had, indeed, told her all things that ever she did!

Do you wonder that she said, Is not this the Christ? Beloved, no one proves Himself to be truly anointed unless He begins by showing you your sins! If any teacher leads you to hope that, without repentance, or any sense of sin, you may be saved, he is not of Christ! I charge you, fling away any hope which is not consistent with your own entire hopelessness apart from Jesus! If you have not known yourself a sinner, you cannot know Christ as a Savior. Some are preaching, nowadays, a dry-eyed faith and men seem to jump into assurance as if there were no new birth, no conviction of sin and no repentance. But it is not soYou must be born again. That birth is not without pangs. Trust in Christ brings a hatred of sin and a mourning because of it. A man cannot hate what he does not know, but this woman was made to see her sin and that sight proved that the Messiah was dealing with her.

The non-repentance prophets cry, Peace, peace, where there is no peace! They film the sore, but Jesus puts the knife into it, lays it wide open and makes the patient see the gangrene of the woundand then He closes it up and, with His heavenly ointment makes a sure cure of it. There is no binding up the heart that was never broken! There is no comforting a man who has always been comfortable! There is no making a man righteous who always was righteousthere is no washing a man who has no filthiness. No, and this is what the Messiah doesHe lays bare the disease and this is a proof that He is sent of God because He does not adopt the flimsy, flattering mode of deceivers, but goes straight to the truth. Her argument isHe must be the Messiah, for He revealed me to myself!

Secondly, He must be the Messiah, for He has revealed Himself to me. No sooner did I see my filthiness than I saw at once that He was every way ready to cleanse me. A sinners eye is never ready to see the Savior till first it has seen the sin. When the man sees despair written across the face of human strength, then he turns and sees hope mildly beaming from the kind eyes of the Son of Manbut not till then. Jesus has revealed Himself and now she says, I see that He knows me and knows all about me. Wonderful it is how the Gospel robe exactly fits a manwhen he gets it and puts it on, he feels that He who made this garment knew His form. Perhaps you have some special weakness or singular deformity, but you soon perceive that Jesus knew all about it, for His salvation exactly meets the lack.

There is a bath. Ah, He knew I was filthy. There is a robe. Ah, He knew I was naked. There is eye salveHe knew that I was blind. Here is a ring for my fingerHe knew I wanted a forget-me-not to keep me in memory of mercy received. Here are shoes for my bare feet and a banquet for my griping hunger. Every need is taken care of and this proves the Omniscience of my Savior! Therefore, she said, He knows all about me. He must be infinitely wise; He must be the Christ. This is good arguing, is it not?

Then she seemed to say to them, too, This is a great deal more to me than it can be to you, for He has dealt personally with me and, therefore, I abide in my assurance that He is the Christ. But go and learn the same arguments for yourselves. Brothers and Sisters, if the Lord Jesus Christ had told this woman all that ever her third husband did, it would have had far less power over her than telling her all she had done, herself! When conviction comes personally home and the discovery is all about your own state and character, it has a special power over your heart and mind to make you say, This is the Christ. Also, my Brethren, at the remembrance of my Lords surgery when I was wounded and sorely broken, I am ready to cry, See how He handled me! Never was a hand so strong and yet so tender! Never a physician with such a lions heart and such a ladys hand. I can feel His strength as He holds me up and I can feel His tenderness as He embraces me. Surely He is the Anointed and sent of the Lord to bind up the brokenhearted, for He has bound up my broken heart! The case is proven to mecome and experience the same conviction within yourselves.

Moreover, and perhaps there is force in this which has not been noticed, she says, Come, see, as much as to say, You may come, I know, for when I came to the well, He did not look daggers at me. And when I did not give Him water, He did not grow hot with me and say, Disrespectful woman, I will not speak to you. No, but I was at home with Him in a moment! Come, see a Man who made Himself so at home with me that He told me all that ever I did. I am sure He must be the Messiah. The Messiah is to come to open the blind eyes and He must necessarily be among the blind to perform the miracle! He is to fetch prisoners out of prison and they are the lowest class that are in prisonand yet He goes to them! So, come along! I will go first and introduce you to Him.

That is the womans little speech and how good it is! I am going to add a bit to it which she did not know, but which we know. I wish I knew how to say something that would make you unconverted ones hurry to Christ, but if anything ought to do it, it is this. Suppose you never do come to Christ in this life and die without Him? God grant you may not die without having listened to Him and received Him, but if you do, you will be awakened at the Last Day from your grave with the blast of a terrible trumpet and with the cry of, Come to judgment! Come to judgment! Come away! Whether you will, or not, you will have to come and see a Man sitting upon the Great White Throne, judging the nations!

And do you know what He will do with you, then? He will tell you all things that ever you didand as the scenes pass before your minds eye and as your own words go ringing, again, through your ears, you will be sorely distressed! Perhaps this mornings scene will be revived before you and conscience will tell you, You were at the Tabernacle that morning. The Gospel was put plainly to you, by one who in his heart longed for you to be saved, but you did despite to all those entreaties and turned away. I tell you it will be your Hell for Jesus to tell you all things that ever you did! And you will

then see the argumentIs not this the Christ? But, alas, He will be no Savior to you, for you refused Him! He will, then, tell you, I called, but you refused. I stretched out My hands, but no man regarded.

Still shall proceed that awful tale of all things that ever you did, concluding with thisyou refused mercy, you rejected Jesus, you turned away from salvation, you would not have this Man to save you and, therefore, have you come to have your past made the fuel for your everlasting burning! God grant that no one, here, may ever come to that! No, if I had the task to select one man out of this congregation that would have to spend an eternity in having his life rehearsed to him, where should I find him? No, I cannot see one that I dare to pitch upon, not onenot one not even the worst man or woman here! I would not if I could!

O God, of Your mercy suffer no one here to know the terror of being driven away forever from Your Presence and the Glory of your power, for Jesus sake. Amen.

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Sermon #1901 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

MYSTERIOUS MEAT

NO. 1901

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, MAY 23, 1886, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**In the meantime His disciples urged Him, saying, Master, eat. But He said to them, I have meat to eat that you know not of. Therefore the disciples said to one another, Has anyone brought Him anything to eat? Jesus said to them, My meat is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to finish His work. Do you not say, There are yet four months, and   
then comes harvest? Behold, I say unto   
you, Lift up your eyes, and look at the fields, for they are already ripe for harvest! And he who reaps receives wages, and gathers fruit for eternal life, that both he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together. For in this the saying is true, One   
sows, and another reaps. I sent you to reap   
that for which you have not labored; others   
have labored, and you have entered into their labors. John 4:31-38.**

THE disciples had gone away into the city to buy meat and for this they cannot be censured. It was necessary that food should be provided and it naturally fell to their lot to perform that duty. Do not say that they were carnal or unspiritual because of this, for the most spiritual people must eat to live. When they came back from making their purchases, they found their Master sitting by the well, as they had left Him. They naturally expected that He would be as ready to partake of the provision as they were to offer it to Him, but He made no movement in that direction. His mind was evidently far away from the idea of food. He was absorbed in something else and, therefore, His disciples sought to call Him back to a sense of His need. I do not suppose that they had, themselves, eaten. It was hardly like them to do so while their Lord was not with them. They, therefore, wished to eat and they were all the more struck with the fact that He had no care for refreshment. Knowing how weary He had been when they left Himso weary that He bade them go alone into the city they were perplexed at His indifference to food and, perhaps, judged that He was over-fatigued and, therefore, they urged Him to eat. Importunately, one after another said, Good Master, it is long since You have eaten; the way has been weary, the day is hot, You seem very faint. We pray You, eat a little that You may be revived. The woman to whom You spoke has gone. Your good work, for a while, is over, let us eat together.

Again I confess that I do not agree with those who blame these disciples. If it is true that there is nothing very elevated in providing food, there is certainly nothing unworthy in the act. I admire their care for their Master. I praise them for so lovingly pressing upon Him the supply of His necessities. It is right for the spiritual man to forget his hunger, but it is equally right for his true friends to remind him that he ought to eat for his healths sake. It is commendable for the worker to forget his weakness and press forward in holy service, but it is proper for the humane and thoughtful to interpose with a word of caution and to remind the ardent spirit that his frame is but dust. I think the disciples did well to say, Master, eat. What is more, I will hold them up to your imitation! Jesus has gone from you, now, in actual Person, but His mystical body is still with you and, if you meet with any part of His body in need, make it your earnest care. Still pray to Him, saying, Master, eat. If you know any of His people in poverty, ask them to partake of your abundance, lest your Lord should say to you at the last, I was hungry and you gave Me no meat. I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink. Our Lords spirituality is not of that visionary sort which despises the feeding of hungry bodies! Look after His poor and needy ones. How can you be truly spiritual if you do not? Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world. There is much in the commonplace attentions of charityJesus commands our consideration of the weaknesses and needs of otherstherefore, I say again, I commend the disciples that they urged Him saying, Master, eat.

Having done this justice to the 12, let us do higher honor to the Divine One about whom they gathered. His mind was, at that time, absorbed in spiritual matters and, being so, He wished to lead them into that higher field wherein He was so much at home and, therefore, He transfigured their common words by giving them a higher meaning. You pray Me to eat, He said, but, I have meat to eat that you know not of. They did not comprehend what He meant. As the Samaritan woman did not understand Him, when He spoke of water, neither did His disciples when He spoke of meat. But you see, the Lord endeavored to use the lower expression as a ladder to something higher and more spiritual. This was the Masters way from the beginning to the endalways to be making similitudes of things seen to set forth the things unseenalways to take the thing which men had grasped and use it as the means of helping them to lay hold on some great Truth of God which, as yet, was out of their reach. Inasmuch as refreshments were spoken of and His disciples saw the need of those refreshments, the Master turns that thought into a deeper channel and tells them of other refreshments which He, Himself, enjoyed and wished them to share with Him. In effect our Lords reply to the request, Master, eat, is thisI have eaten, in the best sense, and I wish you, also, to eat with Me. He would have them enter into that service which had yielded so intense a satisfaction to HimselfHe would have them know His joy in it!

This morning the run of my subject will be just thisfirst, there are refreshments for our hearts which are but little knownI have meat to eat that you know not of. Secondly, these refreshments satisfied our Lordso satisfied Him that He forgot to eat! And thirdly, and a very practical thirdly, I hope it will be, let us seek these refreshments at once, that we, too, may forget our earthly needs in a heavenly enthusiasm. O blessed Spirit of all Grace, give us secret, sacred food this morning while meditating upon this theme!

I. First, THERE ARE REFRESHMENTS WHICH ARE LITTLE KNOWN. Generally men know enough about refreshments of the body. Those questionsWhat shall we eat, and what shall we drink?have been long and carefully studied. It seems obvious to all men that if we are to be restored and lifted above fatigue or weakness, it must be by corporeal food. Yet there is, in the Word of God, an intimation of another principle. As we read, Man shall not live by bread, alone, but by every Word that proceeds out of the mouth of God shall man live. The Lord has been pleased to make it generally necessary that the body should be sustained with food, but that is only because the body is to be destroyed, for it is written, Meats for the body, and the body for meats, but God shall destroy both it and them. That new body, which will never be destroyed, will probably need no meats. If God so willed it, this frame might be sustained without visible food. There is no absolute necessity that the order of Nature or of Providence should be just as it is. Even now we know that there are many ways by which waste can be suspended and the need of food greatly lessened. And there are conditions under which life has been sustained upon an almost incredibly small portion of food. If God willed it, He could secretly infuse strength into the system, keeping the lamp of life burning by means of a subtle, invisible oil. We are not so absolutely dependent upon the bread we eat as, at first sight, seemsfood is but the vehicle of sustenanceGod could sustain us without it.

Now, Brothers and Sisters, our Lord Jesus Christ found for Himself a sustenance other than that of fooda food superior to the ordinary meat of men. But these refreshments were not known to His disciples. The common throng of mankind have no idea of spiritual food, but the disciples were not of the common throngthey were chosen out of the world and they had been with their Lord for some little time! And yet they had not grasped the idea of a man being fed and strengthened by an influence upon his spiritual nature which could raise him above the dragging down of his bodily needs. They could not yet enter into their Lords secretHe had a meat to eat which even they knew not of.

The reason for His knowing what they knew not was, in part, the fact that this nourishment was enjoyed upon a higher plane than these servants of Christ had yet reached. They were spiritual men in some degree, but they were not highly spiritualthey were mere babes in Grace, though men in physical development. They had not yet reached to the height of letting their spirits rule the rest of their nature, nor had they yet learned the proper occupation of their spirits. They could not yet enjoy spiritual meat to the fullest because they were so little spiritual. Our Savior was full of the Holy Spirit and, in His inmost Nature, He was deeply and intensely spiritual. He lived in constant communion with invisible things and, therefore, it was that He perceived that meat to eat which they knew not of. Oh, that we may not miss the delicacies of Heaven from lack of a purified taste! It is a sad ignorance which comes of lack of spirituality. The Lord lift us out of it!

Further, these refreshments were unknown to the Apostles, as yet, because they implied a greater sinking of self than they as yet knew. My meat, said Jesus, is to do the will of Him that sent Me. How condescendingly does our Lord sink Himself in this expression! He does not even say, My meat is to do My Fathers will. He takes a lower position than that of sonship and dwells chiefly upon His mission, its service and the absorption in the will of God which it involved. He finds His refreshment in being the commissioned officer of God and in carrying out that commission. In being a Servant obeying the will and doing the work of Another, He feels Himself so much at home that it revives Him to think of it! Others have been refreshed by gaining honor for themselvesour Lord is refreshed by laying that honor aside! The carnal mind finds its meat and drink in self-will, but Christ, in doing the will of God! Doing his own work and carrying out his own purpose is the meat and drink of the natural manthe very opposite was the joy of our Lord Jesus!

Is it so with you, my Hearer, that you will have your own way and be your own lord and master? You feed upon wind! You seek after emptiness and, in the end, your hunger shall devour you! But oh, Believer, have you ever tried your Lords plan? Have you taken your Lords yoke upon you and learned of Him? Thus it is that you shall find rest unto your soul! Not in self, but in selfsurrender, is there fullness for the heart! You are no longer to live unto yourself, for you are not your own, but you are the servant of Him who has bought you with a priceyou will find peace in taking up your proper place. Your lifework is, from this day on, not to be one of your own selecting, but the work which your great Lord and Master has chosen for you. Servants lay their wills aside and do what they are bid. When a man gets fully into this condition, I bear witness that he will be refreshed by it! If I felt that my calling were of my own choosing and that my message were of my own inventing, I should have no restthe responsibility would crush me! But now that I feel that I am doing the will of Him who sent me and know that I am committed wholly to the work of the Lord, I pluck up courage and put my shoulder to the wheel without misgiving!

In the name of Him who has sent me to do this work, I find a fountain of fresh strength! But, Brothers, we must get low down. We must come right away from the idea of being original and inventing something and carrying out a novel purpose of our ownwe must act only upon commissionwe must say only our Lords Words and do only His work! And then we shall eat of that same loaf on which Jesus fed when He had food to eat which even the 12 knew not of. When we get to know that we are sent of the Most High, there is nourishment in that very fact! We need to feel that as the Father has sent Christ into the work, even so has Christ sent us into the worldand if we do not so feel, we shall miss a choice form of spiritual meat.

Further, our Lord not only lived on a higher plane and felt a greater sinking of Self, but He was in fuller harmony with God than His disciples. He says. My meat is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to finish His work. Gods will was His will, not only passively, but actively, so that He wished to do it. Gods work was His work completely, so that He wished to finish it. He longed to go all the length of Gods eternal purpose and carry it out as far as that purpose concerned Himself. Now, when a man feels, My one desire is that I may do Gods will. I have no other will but His will. My own will has fallen into Gods will as a brook falls into a riverthen he is at peace! It is a blessed thing to rejoice in being crossed in our own purpose in order that the purpose of the Lord may be more completely fulfilled. When a man wants to do Gods work and to get through with it, whatever it may cost, he is sure to feel strength in his heart. He who will glorify God, whatever it may cost him, is a happy man! He that serves God in body, soul and spirit to the utmost of his power, finds new power given to him hour by hour, for God opens to him fresh springs!

Perhaps you do not see this truth, but if you have ever experienced what it is to lay your whole soul on the altar and feel that for Christ you live and for Christ you would die, why then you will know, by experience, that I speak the truth! If your hearts desires were as ravenous as that of the young lions when they howl for their prey, they would be abundantly satisfied by your souls being tamed into complete submission to the will of God! When your will is Gods will, you will have your will! When your will rings out in harmony with the will of God, there must be sweet music all around your steps! Our chief sorrows spring from the roots of our selfishness. Hang up self before the face of the sun, as Joshua hung up the Canaanite kings, and your soul will no longer be consumed with the hunger and thirst of discontent. When you are tuned to perfect harmony with God, you begin your Heaven upon earth, even though your lot is cast in the hut of poverty, or on the bed of sickness. I know by experience that the way to renew your strength for suffering or for service is to become more and more at one with the will and the purpose of the Most High. As Gods Glory becomes the one objective of life, we find in Him our All in All!

Once moreour dear Savior was sustained by these secret refreshments because He understood the art of seeing much in little. Our Master had been feasting. He had partaken of a more than royal banquet. How? He had been made a blessing to a womanan ill-famed, very sinful woman. He had led her up to the point at which she could perceive that He was the Messiahthis was, to Him, a festival! Some would have thought it a trifle, but, as a wise man sees a forest in an acorn, so did Jesus see grand results in this little incident. Many a man would say, I could easily forget hunger and a thousand other inconveniences if called to preach to a vast congregation like that which assembles in the Tabernacle. It ought to inspirit a man to see so many faces. But note well that it inspirited your Master to see only one face and that the common face of a villager of mournful character who had come forth from Sychar with her water pot upon her head. It was not an oration that He deliveredHe had not even preached a sermon which would command admiration as a masterpiece of eloquenceHis whole soul was absorbed in what He had done! It was only a talk such as a city missionary would have at any door, or such as would naturally fall from a Bible-woman in her calls from room to room. Yet our Divine Exemplar saw so much in one soul and so much valued one opportunity of enlightening it, that He felt a sacred satisfaction in His simple conversation! He saw in the woman the seed-corn of a harvest and, therefore, drew a large refreshment from her conversion.

We do not usually measure things rightly. I am persuaded that our weights and scales are out of order. We think we are doing a great deal when we get into a big controversy, or write an article that is read all over the nation, or create a sensation which startles thousands. But, indeed, it is not so! The Lord is not in the wind, nor in the tempestwe must go on with the still small voice of loving instruction and persuasion. You must go on talking with your little children in your classes; you must go on speaking to the few sick persons you are able to visit; you must try and preach Jesus Christ in little rooms, or to dozens and scores in the street corner or on the village green. It is the old-fashioned, quiet personal work which is effective! If we get to think that everything must be big to be good, we shall get into a sorry state of mind. In the little bit of work thoroughly done, God is glorified much more than in the great scheme that is superficial. That word, superficial, gives a true description of very much Christian work nowadays. A huge piece of moral architecture is carried out by jerry-builders to whom appearance is everything and reality is nothing! It tumbles down before long and then its authors begin, again, in the same wretched manner, with the same flourish of trumpets and bragging of what is going to be done!

It is worthwhile to spend a year upon the conversion of a single woman, yes, worthwhile to spend a lifetime on the conversion of a single child, if it is soundly done. And there might more come of the true conversion of that woman or child than of all your noise and shouting over a hundred supposed conversions, forced by excitement like mushrooms in a hotbed! We need real work, not noisy workwork done in the center of the soul of man, such as Jesus did upon the well! This sort of work will bring refreshment to our spirit, but any other will end in bitter disappointment. I am sure if we are content to do little things in the power of the great God, we shall find our meat in it. Someone here gets up and says, I see, I see! I always thought that ministers and other workers who are always before the public would have most joy, but now I see that there is a reward for the obscure and hidden worker. The Lord Jesus Christ was satisfied to sit by a well and talk to onebe you satisfied, from this day on, to keep on with your mothers meeting, or your tract district, or your Bible class, or your family of little ones. Plod away, for infinite possibilities lie concealed within the least work done for Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit by a sincere heart! Perfume which may fill the halls of princes lies asleep within a tiny rosebuddespise no little servicebut be grateful for permission to render it.

Thus the Master found satisfying meatmeat little known, even by His disciples and, therefore, He said, I have meat to eat that you know not of.

II. Advance with me, dear Friends, to our second themeTHESE SECRET REFRESHMENTS SATISFIED OUR LORD. I bring this forward to remind you that where He found refreshment, we, also, should find it. Why did it satisfy our Lord to be doing the will of Him that sent Him and to be finishing His work?

Well, first, because He had so long hungered to be at it. For thousands of years the Christ had longed to be here among men. He said, My delights were with the sons of men. Before He actually appeared in human flesh and blood, our Lord made many appearances in different forms because He was eager to be at His work. And when He was born, while He was yet a Boy, He said, Know you not that I must be about My Fathers business? This was the spirit of Him all His life. I have a baptism to be baptized with and how am I straitened until it is accomplished! He longed to be at work saving men. He hungered to perform His chosen deeds of mercy. Read in the second chapter of John at the 17th verse. He went into the Temple and He purged it and, then we read, His disciples remembered that it was written of Him, the zeal of Your house has eaten Me up. That was before He had told them that it was His meat to do the will of Him that sent Him. Our Lord was so full of such zeal to be serving God and blessing men that when He did get at it, He was so joyful that everything else fell into the background as if it were not worth a thought! If you and I felt our Lords anxiety to be serving God and winning souls, we should find refreshment in the service, itself, even as He did.

When our Lord did get at His work, He gave Himself wholly up to it He went in for soul-winning, heart and soul. There was a wonderful concentration of purpose about our Savior. His face was always steadfastly set to His work. He was instant and constant in itHe was all there and always there. Time wasand I hope the time has gone foreverwhen there were professed ministers of Jesus Christ whose hearts were in the hunting field. Do you wonder that their ministry was a scandal? Others have been naturalists, first, and divines afterwards! Do you wonder that their ministry proved to be a failure? Time was and time is, I am sorry to say, when many professed ministers of Christ have their hearts more set upon criticizing the Gospel than preaching it! They are more at home in scattering doubts than in promoting faith! They preach what they are not sure of and what they have no interest in. It is not their meat to do the Lords will, for He never sent them! They get their meat by preaching, but it is not their meat to preach. Surely it must be misery to them to have to tell out an old tale which, in their souls, they despise. Wretches that they are! I cannot call them better than that. It seems an awful thing, to me, that a man should profess to be a servant of Christ and not put his heart into the Redeemers service. You may go and sell your calicoes and your teas and your sugars, if you like, half-heartedlyit will not spoil your calicoes or your teas! But if you preach the Gospel half-heartedly, that is another matter! You will spoil every bit of what you preach. What good can come of half-hearted preaching?

And you, good Friends, who teach in the school or do any work for Jesus, remember you spoil with that touch of yours all the work you do if your hand is numbed with a cold indifference. If your soul is not in what you do, you had better leave it undoneyou will do mischief rather than service unless your heart is in it! When Jesus talks with that woman, He is, every bit of Him, there. He avails Himself of every opportunity and catches up every chance. He converses like a master of the art of teaching because teaching is the master passion of His soul! Now, Brothers, when we get to work like that, we, too, shall be refreshed by it. If you do what you do not like to do, it will be weariness to you. But if your work is the joy of your heart, you will find in the doing of it that you have meat to eat that idlers know nothing of!

Our Lord found great joy in the work itself . I believe it was an intense delight to Him to be telling about that Living Water to a thirsty soul. It was a high pleasure to Him to be liberating a spirit which had so long been shut up in prisonto be creating new thoughts in a mind which had long groveled in the mire of sin. How pleased He was to hear the woman say to Him, Why, then, have You that Living Water? What a host of thoughts it stirred up in His own soul! The woman had given Him to drink, though she had not let her water pot down into the well. It was such glad, such happy work to Him to be doing good that it was its own reward!

I think the Lord forgot to eat bread that day partly because of the enthusiasm which filled Him in the pursuit of that soul. The chamois hunter quits his couch long before the sun is up and climbs the mountains. He watches from the first gray light for the creature which is the object of his pursuit. Ask him how it is when he returns late in the evening that he has had nothing to eat all day long. He answers, I never thought of it. I saw a chamois on a distant crag and I hastened after it. I leaped the ravines, I climbed the steep faces of the rocks, I sprang down again. I was almost on my prey, but it was gone. I crept up within range again, holding my breath lest my scent should alarm the watchful chamois. I thought of nothing but my sport and I never knew what hunger meant until my bullet found its mark in the heart of my prey and I had drawn out my hunting knife. It was not until I began to lift the game to my shoulder that I thought that I had neither eaten nor drunk that day.

You understand what this enthusiasm means and how it refreshes the hunter. Some of you have been salmon fishing in the Scot rivers. You have fished on and on until you have hooked a huge fish and, by the time you have landed him, on taking out your watch, you discover that it is long past your dinner hour and you are surprised that you had not noticed that you were almost faint! Your excitement kept you goingonly when it was over did you begin to hunger. Thus the Master was so taken up with soul-saving that He had meat to eat that others knew not of. I hope we sometimes get into this state of entire absorption under the influence of a burning desire to bring sinners away from sin to their Savior and lead them to put their trust in Him who is able to save to the uttermost them that come unto God by Him. I see the riddle all solved. They said, Master, eat, but I see that He had meat to eat that they knew not of, for the enthusiasm of soul-winning was strong upon Him!

Moreover, the Master had not only felt the enthusiasm of pursuit but He was moved greatly by the sympathy of pity. The man that hunts the chamois has no sympathy with his prey. The man who would take his salmon has no pity for the creature. But he that labors to bless souls is full of tenderness. Many noble women love nursing the sick. Their hearts are at home at the bedside of the suffering. They do not sleep at night while pain needs relief and cold sweat needs to be wiped away. Their tender pity gives them a more than ordinary power of endurance. They watch and wait hour after hour. Exhaustion comes, at last, to them and then they begin to enquire of themselves, How was it I held out so long? Generous sympathy conquered fatigue! How mothers can and do endure with sick children! They feel that they cannot sleep while the dear one tosses to and fro in fever, or moans in pain. They have lost all care for eating while they guard the brittle thread which threatens so soon to snap. Real sympathy seems as if it swallowed up everything else, as Aarons rod swallowed up all the other rods! Sometimes you have seen suffering which you could not help and you have come away forgetful of all else but the dreadful scene. You loathed the sight of food. You were sick at heart. The sorrow had become your own! You started in your sleep weeks afterwards for the person wounded in the accident had come before you. Thus was our Savior carried away with pity for lost soulsHe knew the danger of that Samaritan cityand that thought caused Him to forget to eat.

More than thatit was not only sympathy He felt great joy in present success. He delighted to see that He had led a soul into life and light. He had the bliss of seeing a sinful woman believe in the Messiah and of knowing that her heart and life would thus be purified. I do not know anything that can make a man forget his pain and weariness like grasping the hand of a sinner saved. Oh, says the saved one, God Almighty bless you! You have brought me to Jesus. This nerves us to new effort! I speak, here, from experience, for yesterday evening, when I was thinking of this subject, I was myself somewhat dull through pain and weakness and, as God would have it, I took up the Report of the Baptist Missionary Society which will be issued to you on the 1st of June. And as I glanced over it, I saw my own name. It seems that our missionary in San Domingo has had a discouraging year, but it was lighted up with one most pleasing incident. A man had come down from the interior of Haiti to ask for Baptism. Finding him to be a most intelligent Christian, well instructed in the Gospel, the missionary asked how he came to know anything about it. In reply he told him that he had fallen in with a sermon translated into the French language which was preached by Mr. Spurgeon.

Oh Friends, I was dull no longer! I had meat to eat! Had an angel stood in the study, I could not have felt more delighted with his visit than I did when I read of a sinner saved! Here was a sermon translated into French, which was carried far away to Haiti, I do not know how, and there was read by a Romanist who found salvation by it! God bless him! You cannot faint after such a success, can you? As for myself, despite my sickness I resolve to go on again, preach with all my might and print more sermons! And send them out to the ends of the earth! Brethren, never say die! Never dream of giving up! Let Gods blessing on your work refresh you!

To complete the list, the blessed Master had something else which made Him forget hungerit was that He saw the prospect of better things. Enquirers were coming out of the citythat one female missionary had gone back and told her story and the men were coming to hear what Jesus had to say! Our Lord, also, with prescient eyes, beheld the day when Philip the Evangelist would go down to Samaria and when many Samaritans would be brought to the knowledge of the Truth of God. O Friends, let us open our eyes and find refreshment in what God is about to do! Let us have bright views of the future! The Gospel which has saved 20 can save twenty thousand! The same kind of preaching which has blessed this one congregation can bless all congregations! We have only to exercise more faith in it and proclaim it with greater confidenceand make it more our lifework to proclaim itand the world shall yet come to Jesus feet and the old, old Gospel now despised shall yet again be had in honor! Let us be of good cheer. If we do but serve God as Jesus served Him, we shall have meat to eat that will fully satisfy us as it did our Lord!

III. Thirdly, LET US AT ONCE SEEK THIS REFRESHMENT. That is our practical business. If there is meat to eat that we know not of, let us try to know of it at once. I am speaking, of course, only to you who are converted and are thus saved by faith in Jesus Christ. You who are not yet Believers cannot eat of this secret meat, for you are not alive unto God you need to be quickened by the Spirit of our Godyou must be born again before you can eat the Bread of Heaven. May the Lord lead you to saving faith in Jesus Christ at once! But I speak to you that know the Lord, you who labor for Him and need to be refreshed this day. Look you to the right place for nourishment. Are we weary? Then let us seek refreshment by following out the directions of our Lord in the text before us.

First, let us remember that we are sent of God. Do not forget that. Say with your Lord, My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me. Each redeemed one is sent forth by his Redeemer. I do not know what the Lord has sent you to do. I hope you know that, each man for himself, but when you know what work you are called to do, do not be held back by anyone! Wait for no mans consent, patronage, or help. Strengthen your soul upon the persuasion that God has sent you and then go forward. If God has sent you, who can stand against you? A Queens messenger insists that we clear the road for him. An officer who bears the Queens authority is authorized to lay all persons under orders to help him. He who rides on royal business has precedence over all others. Get to feel, Christian Friend, that Jesus has sent you and herein will lie food for your courage! Know that you have a mission and go for itand let it be unsafe for anyone to stand in your way! Let opposers know that somebody will have to clear out, for if God sent you, in that sending there is a force and an energy which nothing can safely resist! Do not make a noise. Forbear all blustering, but quietly set yourself to work. If God has sent you, you will be like the greater Sent One, of whom we read, He shall not strive, nor cry, nor cause His voice to be heard in the streets, but at the same time, He shall not fail, nor be discouraged.

Next, if we desire to be refreshed, let us find joy at once in Gods work and will. You have been trying to find joy and refreshment in your own work and your own willand you have failed. Come, then, and sail in another direction. But upon this I have already spoken. If all the work you and I have to do can be made to be Gods work. If we will do all things for His Glory, whether it be mending of shoes, or making garments, or preaching sermons, or plowing of fields, then shall we be happy in God and our souls shall be fed upon the finest of the wheat! No drudgery remains when the lowliest labor is seen to be part of a priestly service. When the meanest work glows with the Glory of a Divine call, there is refreshment in it! I am sure I am directing you in the right way to find sweet morsels for your heart when I urge you to have joy in Gods work rather than in your own.

Next, let us get to work. The Master says to His Apostles, Do you not say, There are yet four months and then comes harvest? This was a common saying among the lazy. The time for work was never comethey always found reason for delaythe harvest was always four months off. Many are going to do a lot of work one of these days. Just now they take things easy, but in four months they will let you see how they can labor! We have too many Christian people around us who find no joyful satisfaction in Divine things because they do not, at once, spend themselves for Christ. One enquires, What is the best way to do good? Our answer is, do it! I cannot give you any better recommendation. The best way to serve Christ is to serve Him! A man who was hungry, when he was asked what was the best way to dine, said, Give me a knife and fork. Give me a chance and I will soon show you. When asked how you can serve God, reply by seizing the first opportunity and doing it! For our joy and comfort, be it remembered that opportunities are many and present. Do you not say, There are yet four months and then comes harvest? Lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already ripe for harvest!

Further, if we want to have joy and refreshment in our own Christian life, let us leap into our place at once. These disciples were not to be sowers, but reapers. Many others are not to be reapers, but sowers. You must get to work in the place into which the Lord puts youthere must be no picking of positionsyou must jump into the saddle and be off! It may be that you say, I should like to begin an altogether new work, but if the Lord appoints you to go on with the work that someone else has carried on for years, do not hesitate. Perhaps you say, I would like to labor where the first rough work is done, but if your Lord directs you to commence on the uncleared forest, do not raise an objection. It may be you wish to carry up the last load of bricks to put on the chimney, but if the house has not reached that condition yet, be quite as willing to dig out the cellar. We must be willing to hook on anywhere. Be leader or shaft-horse! Be first or last. Be sower or reaper, as the Lord ordains! Dear Friends, you will never get refreshment in Christs service if you bring a dainty self-will into the field and set it to make a selection, for this is contrary to the true spirit of service. Have no choice and then you will find satisfaction.

If we are to get refreshment for our souls we may also anticipate the wages. There is to be a time when workers together with Christ are to receive wages. The text says, He that reaps, receives wages. In our own country agricultural laborers have been paid so little that we could hardly call it receiving wages. But when harvest time comes, then the reaper is paid and truly receives wages. The hardest-fisted churl must pay for reaping, must he not? Even the most grudging miser must pay his reapers. There must be special money for mower and reaper. Let us work on, for our Master speaks to us of wages and He always pays liberally. Your reward is not what you get at presentit lies in the glorious future! When the Lord Jesus comes, He will reward all His stewards and servants. No Truth of God is more plain in the four Gospels than this fact, that when Jesus returns to this earth, He will distribute recompense in proportion to work done. Herein is meat for us to eat which may well sustain us under the burden and heat of the day.

Then comes the end . If any of you wish to be refreshed, remember the end. What is the end of sowing and the end of reaping? Is it not the completed harvest? See you not the last wagon loaded with grain? See the children on the top there! Listen how the servants shout their joy as they bring in the precious fruits of the earth! And there is a supper at night. The master has been killing his fatlings and he invites all his laborers to supper. How they feast with him! Sow on! Work on! Reap on, for there will come a day when Heaven and earth shall be moved with joyous acclamations because the Lords purpose is accomplished and His work is finished! Then shall we sit down at the supper of the Lamb and rejoice together, as many of us as have had a hand in the blessed work and service in which our Master laid down His life! Therefore gird up the loins of your mind. Be sober and hope to the end. Be encouraged and refreshed this morning. Feed upon the eternal dainties which are provided for you by your Lord and be glad in His name!

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Sermon #302 The New Park Street Pulpit 1

JESUS ABOUT HIS FATHERS BUSINESS   
NO. 302

**DELIVERED ON SABBATH MORNING, MARCH 4, 1860, BY THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT EXETER HALL, STRAND.

**Jesus said to them, My food is to do the will of Him that sent Me and to finish His work.   
John 4:34.**

IT is peculiarly pleasing to the Christian to observe the interest which God the Father takes in the work of salvation. In our earlier days of childhood in grace, we conceived the idea that God the Father was only made propitious to us through the atonement of Christthat Jesus was the Savior and that the Father was rather an austere Judge than a tender Friend. But since then, we have learned the Father through the Sonfor it was not possible we could come unto the Father except through Jesus Christ. But, now, having seen Christ, we have seen the Father also and from henceforth, we both know the Father and have seen Him, since we know the love of Christ and have felt it shed abroad in our hearts.

It is always refreshing then, to the enlightened Christian, to call to mind the intense interest which the Father takes in the work of salvation. Here you find in this verse it is three times hinted at. Salvation-work is called the Fathers will. It is not the will of your Father which is in Heaven, that one of these little ones should perish. But more, it is His will that His chosen, the blood-bought ones of Christ, should every one of them be redeemed from the ruins of the Fall and brought safely home to their Fathers house. Note, again, we are told that Jesus was sent of the Father.

Here, again, you see the Fathers interest. It is true that Jesus rent Himself away from the glories of Heaven, from the felicities of blessedness and voluntarily descended to the scorn, the shame and spitting of this lower world. Yet His Father had a part therein. He gave up His only begotten Son. He withheld not the darling of His bosom, but sent away His well-Beloved and sent Him down with messages of love to man. Jesus Christ comes willingly, but still He comes by His Fathers appointment and sending.

A third hint is also given us. Salvation is here called Gods workIt is My food to do the will of Him that sent Me and to finish His work. We know that when this world was made, the Father did not make it without reference to the Spirit, for the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters, brooded over chaos and brought order out of confusion. Nor did He make it without the Son. For we are told by John the Apostle, Without Him was not anything made that was made.

Yet, at the same time, creation was the Fathers work. So also is it in salvation. The Father does not save without the Spirit, for the Spirit quickens whom He will. He does not save without the Son, for it is through the merit of the Redeemers death that we are delivered from the demerit of our iniquity. But, notwithstanding this, God the Father is the Worker of salvation as much as He is the Worker of creation. Let us look up then, with eyes of delight, to our reconciled God and Father. O Lord our GOD, You are not an angry one! You are not an austere ruler! You are not merely the Judge but You are the grand Patriarch of Your people! You are their great friend! You love them better than You did Your Son! For You did not spare HimYou did send Him down to suffer and to die, that You might bring Your children home. Glory be unto the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end.

The particular contemplation of this morning will be however, to describe Christ Jesus as He manifests Himself as doing His Fathers will and finishing His Fathers work. Our Lord and Master had but one thought, but one wish, but one aim. He concentrated His whole soul, gathered up the vast floods of His mighty powers and sent them in one channel, rushing towards one great endMy food is to do the will of Him that sent me and to finish His work.

1. In bringing out the great truth of Christs entire devotedness to the work of salvationa devotedness so great that He could say, The zeal of Your house has eaten Me upI shall want to call your attention first of all to the fact, verified by the gospels, that His soul was in all that He did. Mark our Master when He goes about doing good. The task is not irksome to Him. There are some men who if they distribute to the poor, or if they comfort the fatherless, do it with such reserve, with such coldness of spirit, that you can perceive that it is but the shell of the man that acts and not the mans whole soul.

But see our Divine Lord. Wherever He walks, you see His whole self in flame, His whole being at work. Not a single power slumbers, but the whole man is engaged. How much at ease he seems among His poor fishermen! You do not discover that His thoughts are away in the halls of kings. But He is a fellow with them, bone of their bone and flesh of their flesh. He walks in the midst of publicans and harlots and He is not ill at ease. Not as one who is condescending to do a work which he feels to be beneath him. Jesus is pleased with it, His whole soul is in it.

Mark how He takes the little children on His knee and though His disciples would put them away, yet His whole spirit is set truly with the poor, with the sinful, whom He came to save. He says, Suffer the little children to come unto Me, for of such is the kingdom of Heaven.

Look up into that face and there is a whole man there. Not as one whose thoughts are set on dignity and power and who is schooling himself down, toning down his mind to the circle in which he moves, as a matter of constraint and duty. No, Jesus vocation becomes His delight. His Fathers service is His element. He is never happy when He is out of it. He casts His whole being, His whole spirit into the work of mans redemption.

2. As a further proof of mans devotedness, you will observe that whatever he takes anything to heart as being the object of his life, it always makes him glad when he sees it succeeding. How you notice in our Saviors life that when He goes into a Pharisees house to eat bread He always seems under constraint. In any chapter which records what Jesus said in the house of a Pharisee there is a want of vivacity. He speaks solemnly, but evidently His spirit is spell-bound, He is unhappy. He knows that He is watched by cavilers who resist His good work and He there says but little, or else His discourse has but little joy and brilliance to it.

But see Him among publicans! When He is sitting down with Zaccheus. or when He is come into some poor mans house and is sitting down to His ordinary mealthere is Jesus Christ with His eyes flashing, His lips pouring forth eloquence and His whole soul at ease. Now, says He, I am at home. Here is My workhere are the people among whom I shall succeed. How the common man snaps Jesus chain! You see the Lord Jesus Christ as the child-man, no more restraining Himself before the watchers, but speaking out of His full soul all that His heart thinks and feels.

Now you generally know when a mans heart is in his work, by the joy he feels in it. You see some preachers go up into their pulpits as though they were going to be roasted at the stake. And they read their sermons through as if they were making their last dying speech and confession. What do you think they call it?why, doing their duty. True ministers call preaching pleasure, not duty. It is a delight to stand up to tell others the way of salvation and to magnify Christ. But mere hirelings cannot go higher than the idea of doing their duty when they are telling out this glorious tale.

Jesus Christ was none of these. My food is He said, to do the will of Him that sent Me. The only times that Jesus ever smiled and rejoiced are the times when He was in the midst of poor sinners. At that time, Jesus rejoiced in Spirit and said, I thank You, O Father, Lord of Heaven and earth, that You have hid these things from the wise and prudent and have revealed them unto babes. Let Him see a penitent, let Him hear the groan of a sinner mourning over his evil way, let Him discern a tear trickling down the cheek of one of His hearers, and Jesus Christ begins to be glad, and the Man of Sorrows wears a smile for a moment upon that pale and sorrowful face. At all times there is a travailing in birth for soulsHe is only happy when He sees the family of God enlarged.

3. There is another test by which you may know when a mans spirit is in his work. When a right noble lord, some little time ago, stood up in the House of Lords to speak against the infamous productions and prints of Holywell Street, I felt quite sure that His Lordship was thoroughly in earnest, because he grew angry. After some person had ventured to defend the filth that comes forth from that street, as if it had some connection with the glories of art, His Lordship replied in a very tart speech, which at once let you see that he meant what he said and that he felt the work

upon which he had entered to be an important one.

Now, our Lord Jesus Christ sometimes grew warm in speech, but He was never angry except with men who opposed the good work with which He cameand not even with them if He saw that they opposed it through ignorancebut only with those who stood up against Him on account of pride and vain glory. Did you ever read such a mighty tirade of threats as that which roars from Christ when He is speaking against the Pharisees? But woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for you shut up the kingdom of Heaven against menfor you neither go in yourselves neither suffer you them that are entering to go in. Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for you devour widows houses and for a pretense make long prayertherefore you shall receive the greater damnation. Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for you compass sea and land to make one proselyte and when he is made, you make him two-fold more the child of Hell than yourselves. You blind guides, which strain at a gnat and swallow a camel. You serpents, you generation of vipers, how can you escape the damnation of Hell?

Methinks I see His holy cheeks glowing with a Divine furor, when He hurls His thunderbolts about Him and denounces the men who shut up the gates of Heaven and will not enter in themselves and they that would enter in they hinder. Now, you can see that His soul is in it, because the Man grows warm. The loving spirit of Jesus, who was trod on like a worm, who would never defend Himself, who had not a spark of resentment towards His persecutors, but when He was reviled, reviled not again, who gave blessings for cursesoh, how He kindles into a flame when He sees enemies in the way of His poor people whom He has come to save! Then, indeed, He spares no words. Then can He ply the lash with a mighty hand and let them see that the voices of Jesus can be as terrible as thunder, while, at other times, it can be sweet as harpers harping with their harps.

4. A sure evidence that a man has espoused some mighty purpose and that his purpose has saturated his whole soul and steeped him in its floods, is that if he is unsuccessful, he will weep. Now, see our Lord. Were there ever such tears shed as those which He poured forth over Jerusalem? Standing on the hilltops, He saw its towers and its glittering temple and He discerned in the dim future the day when it should be burned with fire and the plowshare of destruction should be driven over its once fair, but then desolate, foundations and He cries, O Jerusalem! Jerusalem! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings and you would not!

Oh that wail of hisO Jerusalem! Jerusalem! Does it not remind you of those words of God in one of the old Prophets, where weeping over Ephraim, He says How shall I give you up, Ephraim? How shall I deliver you, Israel? How shall I make you as Admah? How shall I set you as Zeboim? My heart is turned within Me, My repentings are kindled together. Jehovahs heart yearned to clasp His Ephraim to His breast.

And so with Jesus. They may spit in His face and He weeps not. They may drag Him out of the synagogue and seek to cast Him headlong down the brow of the hill, but I find not that He sighs. They may nail Him to the Cross and yet there shall be never a tear. The only thing that can make Him weep is to see that they reject their own mercy, that they put away from them their only hope and refuse to walk in that only way of peace. This alone might serve as a proof of the intensity of Jesus soul in His great purpose. He must save others. And if they are not saved, He will weep.

If others oppose their salvation He will grow angrynot for Himself but for them. Careless of what happens to Himself, He has no fear, no anger for injuries that are poured on Him, but His whole spirit is given up to the one great work of rescuing souls from sin and sinners from going down into the pit.

5. It often happens, however, that when we are really earnest about some purpose, some enemy will rise up. Unconscious, perhaps, of the nobility of our purpose, he will misconstrue our motives, vilify our character and tread our fair name in the dust. There is a strong temptation at such seasons to defend ones self. We want to say just a word about ones own sincerity and heartiness of purpose. The temptation comes very strongly on us, because we think that we ourselves are so wrapped up, so intimately connected with the work, that perhaps if our name is injured the work may suffer also.

How many good and great men have fallen into this snare, so that they have left their work in order to take care of themselves. They have at least diminished some little of their ardor, or commingled the ardor which they feel for those objects with another fervency of spiritthe fervency of selfdefense. Now, in our Lord Jesus Christ you see nothing of this. He is so set upon His purpose that when they call Him a drunkard He does not deny it. When they say He is a Samaritan and is mad, He takes it silently and seems to say, Be it so. Think so, if you will. Now and then there is a word of complaint, but not of accusation. When it is really for their good He will rebuke them and say, How can Beelzebub cast out Beelzebub? But there is no elaborate defense of His character.

Christ has left on record, in His sermons, no apology for anything He said. He just went about His work and did it and left men to think what they pleased about Him. He knew right well that contempt and shame from some men are but another phase of glory and that to suffer the despite of a depraved race was to be glorified in the presence of His Father and in the midst of His holy angels. Yet we might wonder (if we did not know who He was) that some little personal animosity did not sometimes creep in. But you never detect a shade of it. Many there were, I dare say, whom He knew to be His dire enemies. He has not a word to say against them. Some would come up in the street to insult Him. I do not find that He took the slightest notice of them.

Many there were, too, that spread all manner of ill reports, but He never told His disciples to try and stop the ill tale that was abroad. He treated with silent pity the calumnies of men and walked on in the maj

esty of His goodness, defying all men to say what they pleased, for all their devices could no more make Him turn aside from His course than the baying of the dog can make the moon stand still in her orbit. And so, too good to be selfish, too glorious to care for anyones esteem, He could not and would not turn aside, but, as an arrow from the bow of some mighty archer, He sped on His way towards His destined target.

6. Then, mark againanother proof of the full devotedness of Christ to His ministry namely, that you always see Him laboring. The three years of Christs ministry were three years of ceaseless toil. He never restedone wonders how He lived at all. It is but little marvel that His poor body was emaciated and that His visage was more marred than that of any man. Think of the stern conflicts with Satan in the desertconflicts so severe, that if you and I were to undergo them, they might make our hairs turn gray in a single night.

Think of the conflicts with the crowd of men who all seemed to rise up at once against Him, like warriors armed to the teeth, while He stood like a defenseless lamb in the midst of cruel wolves. Think of the preaching, the more private teaching, the healing the sick and the lepers, restoring the maimed, the deaf, the blind. Think of His going about everywhere doing good and never ceasing in His journeys, walking every inch of the way on foot, save when He was tossed on the stormy bosom of the lake, in some small boat which belonged to His disciplesnever having a home wherein to dwell, crying, the foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has not where to lay His headsurely never man labored like this Man!

That three years of our Saviors ministry reads like the history of three centuries. It is the life of a Man who is living at a matchless rate. His minutes are all hours. His hours all months. His months all years. Or longer still than that. He does enough in one day to give a man eternal fame and yet, thinking nothing of it, He goes to something yet more arduous. And on and on and on, He toils His whole life through. The most hard working man among us has his hours of sleep. Give us but sleep and we can do anything, we rise up from our beds like giants refreshed with new wine, to run our course anew. But Jesus sleeps not

*Cold mountains and the midnight air, Witness the fervor of His prayer.*

He has stood up to preach all day long. He has fed thousands. And at last He faints. His disciples take Him even as He is, for He cannot walk, His strength is gone. And they carry Him down to the boat and lay Him there. He shuts His eyes, He is about to have some little repose but they come to Him and cry, Master, why do You sleep? Awake! We perish. And He arises to rebuke the waves and finds Himself on another shore and in another field of labor, upon which He enters at once without delay. He seems to have known no moment of repose. He preaches day by day, He prays by night. He seemed to be a sun that never had a setting, always shining always progressing in His mighty course. Oh, there never was such a worker never such a toiler as this Lord Jesus, who toiled not for Himself but for others.

7. And here let me remark, again, that I may give you another proof that His food was to do the will of Him that sent Him, namely, that at many times when He was in full labor He does not seem to have felt fatigue at all. He had been walking one hot day along the dusty road, under the burning sun. He comes at last to the well of Sychar. Being very weary, He sat down on the well. He was hungry, too, for His disciples had gone away to buy food. That little wallet which Judas carried was not often full enough to afford food for luxury. They could only buy for mere necessity. They doubtless had enough in that little bag, which was filled by the voluntary gifts of those among whom He labored, to keep those twelve men with daily bread, but they had none to spare.

I conclude, then, that our Savior needed food, or they would not have gone away to buy it. They come back after they have bought their food and they find their Master sitting on the well preaching to a woman. She goes away and they wonder how it is He does not eat. He tells them he needs no food, He has been refreshed, He had seen that woman converted. A woman who had had five husbands and was then living with one who was not her husband, had listened to His voice and she had been saved and He saw her go away to bring the men to hear. He expected a harvest. He saw the fields white and ready for it. And this so refreshed His spirit that He did not need to eat.

And we read at another time He forgot to eat bread and at another season we read they thronged Him in, insomuch that He was not able to eat. Yet he could say, I have food to eat that you know not of. He seemed to get refreshed in His work to grow stronger amid His toils. Instead of growing tired, He renewed His strength as He went on with His sacred labors. Now, this could not have happened to Christ, unless His whole soul was in it. Those of you who have ever undertaken an enterprise with all your might, know that as you have been going on you have been so absorbed that you did hot know when it was time for you to eat and when at last you have seen success dawning upon you, if anyone had hinted that you needed bread, you would put him by and say, Dont disturb me. Let me watch. Let me see this light come to its full blaze of noon day. You have needed no other refreshment than that which success, has given you.

I could myself give an illustration of this, which occurred to me a little while ago, to prove that fact. Coming from home early in the morning, I went to the Chapel, sat there all day long seeing those who had been brought to Christ through the preaching of the Word. Their stories were so interesting to me that the day went on. I may have seen some thirty or more during the day, one after the other, as they came up to me. I was so delighted with the tales they told me and the wonders of grace that God had worked in them, that I did not know anything about how the day went. Seven oclock came for Prayer Meeting. I went in and prayed with the Brethren.

After that came the Church meeting. A little before ten oclock I felt faint and I began to think at what hour I had had my dinner and I found that I had had none. I never thought of it, I never felt hungry, because God had made me so glad with success. I think we could live right on, almost without food, if God would sustain us daily with this Divine mannathis heavenly food of successin winning souls. This showed that our Masters heart was in itfor the toil needed no refreshment.

8. Then, again, if I have not said enough to convince you that He gave His whole spirit to the worklet me remark that many a man has espoused a purpose and, as he imagined, has betrothed himself to it by eternal nuptials, yet at last he has been divorced from the darling object. He has seen some path of brightness opening to him with some glittering honor at the end and he has turned aside to self-aggrandisement and glory. But our Lord had a prospect before Him, such as no man ever had. Satan took Him to the brow of a hill and offered Him all the kingdoms of this worlda mightier dominion even than Caesar hadif he would bow down and worship Him.

That temptation was substantially repeated in Christs life a thousand times. You remember one practical instance as a specimen of the whole. They would have taken Him by force and would have made Him a king. And if He had but pleased to accept that offer, on the day when He rode into Jerusalem upon a colt, the foal of an ass when all cried, Hosanna! when the palm branches were waving, He had needed to have done nothing but just to have gone into the temple, to have commanded with authority the priest to pour the sacred chrism publicly upon His head and He would have been king of the Jews. Not with the mock title which He wore upon the Cross, but with a real dignity He might have been monarch of nations.

As for the Romans, His omnipotence could have swept away the intruders. He could have lifted up Judea into a glory as great as the golden days of SolomonHe might have built Palmyras and Tadmors in the desert He might have stormed Egypt and have taken Rome. There was no empire that could have resisted Him. With a band of zealots such as that nation could have furnished and with such a leader capable of working miracles walking in the van, the star of Judea might have risen with resplendent light and a visible kingdom might have come and His will might have been done on earth, from the river unto the ends of the earth.

But He came not to establish a carnal kingdom upon earth, else would His followers fightHe came to wear the crown of thorns, to bear our griefs and to carry our sorrows. And from that single object the most splendid temptation could not make Him diverge. You may heap together the glittering pomps and the gaudy jewels, but He treads them all beneath His feet. The Cross to Him is brighter than a crown, the suffering more dear than wealth and honor. So then, in this, too, we may see how full was His purpose and how firmly He was set on the salvation of man.

9. One other thought here. If we knew that some purpose which we had undertaken could never be achieved unless by our death, suppose that we could bring our mind to give up our blood as the price of success? If we knew that after the most toilsome effort, though the walls of the structure might rise, yet our own tomb must furnish the topstoneif we resolve to die for it, yet I can well conceive that firmly as our purpose might be set, we should dread the hour. Let it be at a distance, we should say. And if we were told it was drawing near, we should sigh and our spirit would sink.

But not so, Christ. Do you observe throughout His life in what a hurry He is? Read the Gospel according to Mark. The Gospel of Mark is the Gospel of the Servant. The chosen emblem in the old Church windows represents St. Mark as the ox, the laborious ox. Each of the Evangelists had his own particular idiom and the idiomatic expression of St. Mark is the word, Eutheos, which we translate straightway, immediately. You will see, if you read the Evangelist through, that the word straightway, immediately, occurs more frequently in that book than in any other, perhaps more times than in all the rest of the Word of God besides, to teach us this lessonthat Christ as a Servant was in haste to fulfill His mission never loitering, but always doing it straightway.

He seems to me to be always stretching out his hands after the Cross. Not standing back from it, as if he knew it must come to him by necessity. No, he said, I have a baptism to be baptized with and how am I straitened till it be accomplished. His soul was speeding towards the Cross and his body seemed to be straitened, encaged, imprisoned, that it could not get to the end of this three years of labor. His soul was panting after sufferinggroaning, crying out to be permitted to drink of the cup of our redemption   
even to the dregs.

Now, this majesty of purpose, not merely to die, but to pant for death not simply to climb the wall, to lead the forlorn hope and to long to do it, to be panting for the battle, desiring the fight, longing for the suffering this is heroic ardor, self devotion entirely unexampled! I could imagine a man panting for the fight an hour before it begins, but all His life to be desiring to enter upon it, to be panting for that bloody sweat, to be sighing for those nails, that shame, that spittingthis showed how strongly our Lord Jesus Christ had bent all His thoughts to the Divine purpose of doing his Fathers will and finishing His Fathers work. Now, I shall say no more upon this subject by way of proof. I come very briefly to make the practical application thereof.

The first practical inference is addressed to the timid, agonized soul who desires salvation, but who thinks that Christ is unwilling to give it to him. Timid Spirit, timid spirit, put away the thought that He is unwilling to save. It is a lie against your own soul. It is a libel against His character. What? He unwilling to distribute that which He so freely bought at so immense a price! Do you see in any one period of His life an unwillingness to save? There might be once a shrinking of the flesh, but that is over now. No more the crown of thorns. The Cross and nails no more. The flesh has nothing more to shrink at. It is done. Redemption is accomplished and do you think He was so earnest and so intent on the work of redemption

and now is unwilling to reap the fruits of it?

Why, do you not know, poor Penitent, that He died to save you and do you think that it needs much argument to move the heart that once was pierced to pity and compassion? Scout the thought once and for all. He is able to forgive. That you know. He is as willing as He is able. Infinite is His ability and as infinite His willingness. I beseech you, distrust Him not. Come as you are, with all your sins about you. Come, now and put your trust in Him. You shall find the door of Heavens gate not creaking on its hinges, but standing ajar and opening easily.

John Bunyan says the posts of the gates of the temple were made of olive trees. And he allegorized it thusThey were made of that fat and oily tree, that so the hinges might move readily and smoothly, that there might be no difficulty in opening the temple gates when timid souls came flying in. When mothers are unwilling to receive their children, when fathers are unwilling to give food to their own offspring, thenno, not even then, will Jesus be unwilling to forgive. When the hard working man is unwilling to take his wage, when the toiling politician is unwilling to grasp the honor which he has achieved, thenno, not even then, may Christ be unwilling to lay hold upon the sheep which are His own, purchased with His own blood and to pluck that jewel from a dunghill which He has redeemed with His own suffering.

He is not unwilling. You are unwilling. If there is any hardness of heart, it lies with you and not with Him. If there are difficulties in the way of your salvations they are difficulties in yourself, not in Him. Come, and welcome. This is the invitation which reaches you today from Heavens festal board. Come, and welcome. Come, and welcome. Come, and welcome, Sinner, come! Let nothing make you linger. He thirsts to save. He pants to bless. He longs to redeem and ransom. Only trust Himand if you are made glad when you trust, He will be glad, too. If the prodigal is glad when he returns, the fathers joy is not an atom less. If there is mirth in the heart of the returning one, there is as much mirth in the heart of the parent to whom he returns. So come, and make your Savior glad. Come, and make Him see of the travail of His soul that He may be abundantly satisfied. This is my first practical inference.

There is yet another. Christian Brothers and Sisters, it is but fair that we should give you one lesson from such a subject as this. Let this mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus. I would not be censorious, but solemnly and seriously I fear there are not very many whose whole heart is set on Christs glory. We have Church members, men of wealth. Do they not spend more upon themselves than upon Christ? And may I not infer from this that they love themselves better than Christ? We have other members of our Churches, men who are but comparatively well-to-do. These spend more on their mere pleasures than on Christ. What am I to suppose, but that they find more pleasure in the enjoyments of the flesh than they do in serving Christ?

Oh, have we not tens of thousands in the army of the Lord that strike for themselves in their own battles with an arm as strong as that of king Arthur of our table, but when they come to fight for Christ their arm drops nerveless at their side? We have men who are all eye, all ear, all hand in business, but they are blind and deaf and impotent when they come into Christs Church. The fact is, we have in too many of our Churches the chrysalis of men, but not the real body. They give us their names, but they keep their whole influence for the world.

Ah, and is this what Christ deserves of you? Is this the reward of His self-devotion? Do you thus repay Him who saved others but could not save Himself? And you profess to be a follower of the Lamb, is this your following? An imitator of Jesus and is this the imitation? Oh, Sirs, the likeness is marred and blotted. You are poor sculptors, indeed, if you imagine yourselves to be sculptured in the image of Christ. Brothers and Sisters, this matter may not seem to be of interest to you, but I feel it to be a subject of the most intense importance to the world that lies in the wicked one.

If we were more like Jesus it would be a happy day for the poor dying sons of men. Oh, if our divided aims could but be exchanged for singleness of heart. If our littleness of zeal could be consumed in the intensity of love to Christ, what better men should we be and what a happier world would this be. Do you imagine that you are pleasing to God when you are living for fifty aims instead of one? When you bring to Christ your lukewarm love, your lukewarm zeal, do you think He is pleased with you and that he accepts your offer? Oh, Church of Laodicea, you have moved from Asia, you have come to England and taken up your abode in London!

Truly might the Lord say to many of our London Churches, You are neither cold nor hot, you are lukewarm and I will spew you out of My mouth. There is nothing God abhors more than our cold Christianity, such as we have in these modern timesa religion which professes to live, but which lives like a gasping, fainting, trembling creature, that is on the verge of death. And you think to shake the world while you are shaking yourself with the chill of your cold indifference! You cry to God, Arise! And yet you rise not yourself! You ask a blessing and yet you will not win it! You crave for victory and yet your swords rust in their scabbards!

Out with you, Sirs, be rid of this hypocrisy. Begin first to ask for singleness of soul and devotedness of purpose. And when this is given you, then shall there come days of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. Then shall sinners be converted and Christ shall see of the travail of His soul. But for all this we want the influence of the Holy Spirit, for without that we shall never give our whole hearts up to the sacred mission of winning souls for Christ.

Spirit of the living God! Descend upon us now. Rest on Your saints and fill them with love for perishing souls and rest on the sinner, to bring him to this willing Savior and make him willing in the day of Your power.

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A GOLDEN SENTENCE   
NO. 3135

A SERMON   
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, MARCH 11, 1909. DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

*Jesus said unto them, My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work.   
John 4:34.*

[Another Sermon by Mr. Spurgeon, upon the same text, is Sermon #302, Volume 6 JESUS ABOUT HIS FATHERS BUSINESS and another, upon verses 31 to 38, is #1902, Volume 32MYSTERIOUS MEAT   
Read/download the entire sermons, free of charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.]

THIS text contains in it much consolation for those who are desirous of salvation, more of example to those who are saved and most of all of matter for praise concerning our Lord Himself, who is its Spokesman.

I. Let us begin by noticing that THE TEXT CONTAINS MUCH CONSOLATION FOR THOSE ANXIOUS ONES WHO WOULD FIND MERCY THROUGH JESUS CHRIST.

You who are trembling under a sense of sin will perceive that the work of saving souls is called by Christ, His Fathers will. I know you are very prone to imagine that Christ is full of pity, but that the Father is austere, severe, an avenging Judge. You slander your God by such a supposition! The work of mercy is the will of Him that sent Me, says Christ. All that I am doing, when I am seeking the souls good of a poor sinful Samaritan woman at the place of this well is according to My Fathers mind. Christ was not, as it were, introducing men to a mercy from which God would keep them, but He was bringing to reconciliation with God those concerning whom the benevolent will of God was that they should be saved and moreconcerning whom the effectual will of God was that they should also be brought into Covenant relation with Himself and should enjoy eternal life!

Sinner, if you get into the garden of the Lords Grace, you have not come there as an intruder. The gate is open. It is Gods will that you should come in. If you receive Christ into your heart, you will not have stolen the treasureit was Gods will that you should receive Christ! If with broken heart you shall come and rest upon the finished Sacrifice of Jesus, you need not fear that you will violate the eternal purpose, or come into collision with the Divine DecreeGods will has brought you into a state of salvation! One of the most vain fears that a man can entertain is the dread that the Father will be unwilling to forgive or the equally absurd fear that he may possibly find a decree of God shutting him out when he is anxious to be reconciled. Where God gives the will to come to Jesus, we may be sure that the eternal purpose has gone before! O awakened Sinner, your anxious desire, your prayerfulness, your longing for God are but the shadows of the Divine Will upon your own will! Imagine not that you can get the best of God in the race of mercy

*No sinner can be beforehand with Thee*

*Your Grace is almighty, preventing and free.* If you desire, God has long ago desired. If you purpose in your heart, God has long ago purposed. You need never be troubled about Divine Predestination. The Gospel which we preach is that to which you should give your attention. Rest assured that God has never spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earth and said, Seek you My face in vain. He has never passed a secret decree in the council chamber who shall contravene the open promise of His mercy. He that believes on the Son has everlasting life. If you come to Christ and cast yourself upon Him, you need entertain no suspicion that you are violating the will of God, for salvation is the will of God which Jesus Christ has come to fulfill!

Another consolation is here given to every seeking soul, namely, that Jesus Christ is sent into the world on purpose to save. If I know that I am sick and that a physician has come into the street on purpose to heal, I feel no difficulty about inviting him into my house. If I know that I am poor and that a princely social worker has come with plentiful liberalities to distribute to the poor, I have no difficulty in asking of him! Why should I, if I know that he has come with the very objective and intent to do that which I need him to do? Now, wherever there is an empty sinner, a full Christ has come on purpose to fill that empty sinner! Wherever there is a thirsty spirit, the river of the Water of Life is poured out on purpose for that thirsty soul to drink! If you hunger after Christ, rest assured that Christ has met with you and discerns in you one of those whom He came to call. He would not have made you hunger, nor made you thirst, nor made you feel your emptiness if it had not been His intention to remove your hunger, slake your thirst and fill your emptiness to the full! Look upon the Savior as being commissioned by His Father to save sinners. Never indulge the thought that He came to save better ones than you are and that you are just beyond the pale of His mercy! Instead thereof, let your sinfulness, your nothingness, your conscious weakness, your utter ruin and Hell-deserving inspire you with a surer hope that you are such a sinner as Jesus Christ came to deliver! He came to seek and to save that which was lost. Who is more lost than you are? Believe, then, that He came to seek and to save youand cast yourself upon Himand you shall find it so!

Perhaps the greatest consolation to a despairing sinner which this text affords is the delight which Jesus Christ experiences in the work of saving souls. It was His one objective. From of old He looked forward to the day when a body would be prepared for Him that He might come into the world to redeem His people. When the fullness of time was come, He was no unwilling servitor to our souls. In the volume of the Book it is written of Me, I delight to do Your will, O My God! Down from the portals of the skies the Savior came with glad alacritywilling, panting to save! When He was on earth, He was not loath to seek out the guiltyno, it was alleged against Him, This Man receives sinners, and eats with them. He could have healed the leper, if He had pleased, while He stood at a distance, but He chose to touch Him when He healed Him, to show how near He had come to humanity, that He did not shrink from it, but that it was His delight to come into contact with all the woe and suffering of our fallen race! He did not retire from sinners to guard His holiness in solitude. He did not surround Himself with a bodyguard to keep off the throng, but there He was among them, surrounded by a press of common folks. Many thronged Him and some touched Him who received healing virtue through their believing touch. He was at the beck and call of everybody! He had not time so much as to eat. And when He did, through weariness, seek a little rest, they followed Him on foot and hounded Him with their entreaties. Yet He was never angry, but always full of compassion towards them.

He was a willing Savior and found His souls delight in winning souls. That great crowning work of suffering and death, by which souls were effectually redeemed, was no unwilling service. He said He had a baptism to be baptized with and that He was straitened until it was accomplished. The cup was bitter as Hell, but He longed to drink it. His death was to be at once the most ignominious and the most painful that could be devised, and yet He thirsted for it. With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer, said Christ to His disciples. He did not hide Himself away when He was hunted, but He went to the Garden of Gethsemaneand Judas knew the placeand when they found Him, He was willing to yield Himself up. No bonds could have bound Him, yet He bound Himself. They could not have dragged Him to the Cross, nor could myriads like thembut He went like a lamb to the slaughterand like a sheep before her shearer He was dumb and opened not His mouth. All that wondrous passion upon Calvary was a free-will offering for us! It was a voluntary Sacrifice to the fullest possible extent. What if I say that even in His deepest agony, Christ had an unknown joy? I think we have too much forgotten the wonderful joy which must have filled the Saviors heart even when going to the Cross. Beloved, you cannot suffer for others if you have a benevolent nature, without feeling joy that you are taking the suffering from them! And we know that it was because of the joy that was set before Him that He endured the Cross, despising the shame. As He dived into the black waves of grief, He could see the precious pearl which He counted to be of greater price than alland that sight sustained Him with a latent joy, if I may so call it, which did not sparkle at the time, but which lay there slumbering within even when His soul was exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death. And now that Christ has gone up on high, poor trembling Sinner, He has no greater joy than thisin seeing of the travail of His soul in souls redeemed by Him, both by price and by power, from death and sin! Jesus wept over Jerusalem because it would not be saved, but Jesus rejoices greatly over sinners who repent! This is His joy and His crown of rejoicingeven you poor tremblers who come and look to Him upon the Cross and find life in His death and healing in His wounds!

I cannot bring out the comfort of this text to you as I could wish. Words fail me, but I would urge those of you who want to find peace and faith, to make a point of thinking very much about Christ. We not only lay hold on the Cross by faith, but it is the Cross which works faith in us. If you would think more often of the mercy of God and the will of God, and the mission of Christ, and the loving kindness of Christ, your soul would probably be led by the Spirit, by that course of thought, to believe in Jesus! Your constant dwelling upon your sin and your hardness of heart has a great tendency to drive you to despair. It is well to know your heart to be hard and your sin to be great, but as a man is not healed by simply knowing that he is sick and is not likely to get his spirits comforted by merely studying his disease, so you are not likely to find faith by raking amongst the filth of your fallen nature, or trying to find something good in yourselves which is not there and will never be there! Your wisest course is to think much of Jesus and look to Him. You will soon find hope in Him if you look for it there. You will soon discover grounds for comfort if you look to God in the Person of His Son. If you regard the will of God as it is revealed on Calvary, and read it in the crimson lines written upon the Saviors pierced body, you will soon perceive that His will is love. Turn away from the wounds which the old serpent has given you and look to the bronze serpent! Look away from your own death to the death of Jesus and recollect that your repentance, apart from Christ, will only be a legal repentance, full of bondage, and will be of no use to you. As old Wilcocks says, Away with that repentance which does not weep at the foot of the Cross! If you do not look to Jesus Christ when you repent, your repentance is not an evangelical repentance, but a repentance which needs to be repented of. Do, I pray you, receive the Truth which I have put before you, or rather, which the text so plainly presents to you. The salvation of sinners is the will of God, the work of Christ and the joy of Christ! Is not this good news?

II. But I said that the text was MUCH MORE AN EXAMPLE TO BELIEVERS, and so it is.   
Note in the text, first of all, Christs subservience. He says, My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me. He says nothing about His own will. Thus early did He say, Not My will, but Yours be done. The man of the world thinks that if he could have his own way, he would be perfectly happyand his dream of happiness in this state or in the next is comprised in thisthat his own wishes will be gratified, his own longings fulfilled, his own desires granted to him. This is all a mistake! A man will never be happy in this way. It is not by setting up his own will and crying, Great is Diana of the Ephesians, but perfect happiness is to be found in exactly the opposite direction, namely, in the casting down of our own will entirely and asking that the will of God may be fulfilled in us! This is my meat, says the sinner, to do my own will. Jesus Christ points to another table and says, This is My meat, to do the will of Him that sent Me. My greatest comfort and the most substantial nourishment of My spirit are not found in carrying out My own desires, but in submitting all My desires to the will of God. Beloved, our sorrows grow at the roots of our self-will. Could a man have any sorrow if his will were utterly subdued to the will of God? In such a case, would not everything please him? Pain, if we did not kick against it, would have a wondrous sweetness. Losses would positively become things to rejoice in as affording opportunities for patience! We would even take joyfully the spoiling of our goods. When we have conquered ourselves, we have conquered all. When we have won the victory over our own desires and aversions, and have subdued ourselves, through Sovereign Grace, to the will of God, then must we be perfectly happy!   
Notice in the text, however, in the next place, not only subservience, but also a recognized commission. O Christian, cultivate full subservience to the Divine Will and let it also be your desire to see clearly your commission from on high! It is the will of God, yes, but it is well for us to add, the will of Him that sent me. If I am a soldier, when I am sent upon an errand, I have not to consider what I shall do, but having received my commanders ordersI am bound to obey them. Do not many Christians fail to see their commission? It has come to be a dreadfully common belief in the Christian Church that the only man who has a call is the man who devotes all his time to what is called the ministry, whereas all Christian service is ministry and every Christian has a call to some kind of ministry or another! It is not every man who will become a father in Israel, for you have not many fathers. It is not every man who can become even an instructor, or an exhorter, but each man must minister according to the gift he has received. You are a nation of priests! Instead of having some one man selected who becomes a priest and so maintains the old priestcraft in the Christian Church, Jesus our Lord and Head has abolished that monopoly forever! He remains the one great Apostle and High Priest of our profession and we in Him are made, through His Grace, kings and priests unto God. You are, each of you, as Believers, sent into this world with a distinct commissionand that commission is very like the commission given to your Master! In your measure, the Spirit of the Lord is upon you and He has sent you to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and to preach the acceptable year of the Lord! Into the Atonement you cannot intrude. Christ has trod the winepress alone and of the people there was none with Him. But in the place of service you will be no intruder, it is your dwelling place. You are called to follow Christ your Lord in all holy labor for souls. As the Father has sent Me, even so send I you. Is not this a part of His dying commission, not to the Apostles, only, but unto all the saints? Let us endeavor to recognize this. When Christ was sent of God, He did not forget that He was sent. He did not come into this world to do His own business after He had been sent to do His Fathers will. So you and I must not act as though we were living here to make money, or to bring up our families and make matters comfortable for ourselves. We are, if we are Christians, sent into the world upon a Divine errand and oh, for Grace to recognize the errand and to perform it!   
Further, notice the practical character of our Lords observations on these two points. He says, My meat iswhat? To consider? To resolve? To calculate? To study prophecy as to when the world will end? To meditate upon plans by which we may be able, one of these days, to do something great? Not at all. My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me. The meat of some people is to find fault with others who do Christs willthey never seem to have their mouths so well filled as when remarking upon the imperfections of those who are vastly better than themselves! This is like glutting ones self with carrion and is unworthy of a man of God! Did you ever know a man whom God blessed who had not some oddity or singularity? I think I never knew such a man or woman either! Whenever God blesses us, there is sure to be something or other to remind men that the vessel containing the treasure is an earthen vessel! Foolish people are so fond of crying, Look at the meanness of the vessel, as though no treasure were contained within. Were they wise, they would understand that this is a part of the Divine appointment, that we should have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. Do you think you could do Gods work better? I wish you would try! It is generally true that those who quibble at others find it inconvenient to walk in any path of usefulness at all.   
There are others, of a somewhat better disposition, who find it their meat to project new methods. They invent grand schemes! There is a house to be built for Gods people to worship inthey always know how to build it! They say so many people are to give so much, and so many so muchthe practical part of the business being how much they will give, themselves! But upon that point they have remarkably little to say. They are always talking of some grand scheme or other for impossible Christian union, or some magnificent but impracticable Christian effort. Our Lord was practical. You are struck, in the whole of His life, with the practical character of it. He was no visionary and no fanatic. Though His holy soul was on fire as much as the most fanatical zealot who ever lived, all His plans and methods were the wisest that could possibly be arranged, so that if men had sat down in their coolest prudence to devise schemes, had they been rightly led, they would have devised the very schemes which this warm-hearted, passionate Savior carried out! He did not theorize, but acted! My dear Brothers and Sisters, I hope we shall earn the same commendation!   
Many Christians are too fond of mysticisms, quibbling, oddities and strange questions which minister not unto profit. I heartily wish they would try to win souls for Jesus in the old-fashioned, Biblical way. Every now and then some particular phase of Truth crops up and certain Christians go perfectly mad about it, wanting to pry between leaves that are folded, or to find out secrets which are not revealed, or to reach some fancied eminence of self-conceited perfection in the flesh. While there are so many sinners to be lost or to be saved, I think we had better stick to preaching the Gospel! As long as this world contains millions of those who do not know even the elementary Truths of Christianity, would it not be as well for us, first of all, to go into the highways and hedges and tell men of our dying Savior, and point them to the Cross? Let us discuss the millennium, the secret rapture and all those other intricate questions, by-and-by, when we have got through more pressing needs! Just now the vessel is going to pieceswho will man the lifeboat? The house is on a blaze, and who is he that will run the fire-escape up to the window? Here are men perishing for lack of knowledge and who will tell them that there is life in a look at the Crucified One? He is the man who shall give men meat to eat! But all others, though they may carry a dish of most exquisite china, will probably give them no meat, but only make them angry at being tantalized with empty wind. Christs satisfaction of heart was of a most practical kindHe was subservient to God as a commissioned Servant, and busy with actually

doing the will of God!   
But the gist of the text lies here. Our Lord Jesus Christ found both sustenance and delight in thus doing the will of God in winning souls. Believe me, Brothers and Sisters, if you have never known what it is to pluck a brand from the burning, you have never known that spiritual meat which, next to Christs own Self, is the sweetest food a soul can feed upon! To do good to others is one of the most rapid methods of getting good to yourselves. Read the diaries of Whitefield and Wesley and you will be struck with the fact that you do not find them perpetually doubting their calling, mistrusting their election, or questioning whether they love the Lord or not. See the men preaching to their thousands in the open air and hearing around them the cries of, What must we do to be saved? My Brothers and Sisters, they had no time for doubts and fears. Their full hearts had no room for such lumber. They felt that God had sent them into this world to win souls for Christ and they could not afford to live desponding, mistrustful lives. They lived unto God and the Holy Spirit so mightily lived in them that they were fully assured that they partook of His marvelous power! Some of you good people who do nothing except read little Plymouth books, go to public meetings, Biblereadings, prophetic Conferences, and other forms of spiritual dissipation, would be a good deal better Christians if you would look after the poor and needy around you! If you would just tuck up your sleeves for work and go and tell the Gospel to dying men, you would find your spiritual health mightily restored, for very much of the sickness of Christians comes through their having nothing to do! All feeding and no working makes men spiritual dyspeptics. Be idle, careless, with nothing to live for, nothing to care for, no sinner to pray for, no backslider to lead back to the Cross, no trembler to encourage, no little child to tell of a Savior, no gray-headed man to enlighten in the things of God, no objective, in fact, to live for, and who wonders if you begin to groan, to murmur and to look within until you are ready to die of despair? But if the Master shall come to you and put His hand upon you, and say, I have sent you just as My Father sent Menow go and do My will, you will find that in keeping His commandments there is great reward. You would find meat to eat that you know nothing of now.   
Let us have practical Christianity, my Brothers and Sisters! Let us never neglect doctrinal Christianity, nor experimental Christianity, but if we do not have the practice of it in being to others what Christ was to us, we shall soon find the Doctrines to be without savor and the experience to be flavored with bitterness! Christ found joy in seeking the good of the Samaritan woman. Her heart, up to now unrenewed, satisfied Him when He had won it to Himself. Oh, the joy of winning a soul! Get a grip from the hand of one whom you were the means of bringing to Christwhy, after that, all the devils in Hell may attack you, but you will not care and all the men in the world may rage against you and say you do not serve God from proper motives, or do not serve Him in a discreet way but since God has set His seal upon your work, you can afford to laugh at them! Do but win souls, Beloved, through the power of the Holy Spirit, and you shall find it to be a perennial spring of joy in your own souls!   
But, notice also that our Lord says, in addition to His finding it His meat to do Gods will, that He also desired to finish His work. And this is our satisfactionto persevere till our work is finished. You do not know how near you may be to the completion of your work. You may not have to toil many more days. The chariot wheels of eternity are sounding behind you. Hurry, Christian! Use the moments zealously for they are very precious. You are like the work-girl with her last inch of candle. Work hard! The night comes wherein no man can work. I paint for eternity, said the painter, so let us dolet us work for God as those whose work will endure when selfish labors shall burn as wood, hay and stubble till the last tremendous fire. To finish His work! To finish His work! Be this our aim. When the great missionary to the Indians was dying, the last thing that he did was to teach a little child its letters. And when someone marvelled to see so great a man at such a work, he said he thanked God that when he could no longer preach, he had at least strength enough left to teach that poor little child. So would he finish his lifes work and put in the last little stroke to complete the picture. It should be our meat and our drink to push on, never finding our meat in what we have done, but in what we are doing and still have to dofinding constantly our refreshment in the present work of the present hour as God enables us to perform itspending and still being spent for Him. Never let us say, I have had my day. Let the young people take their turn. Suppose the sun said, I have shone so long, I shall not rise tomorrow? Imagine the stars in their beauty saying, We have for so long a time shot our golden arrows through the darkness, we will now retire forever. What if the air should refuse to give us breath, or the water should no longer ripple in its channels, or if all Nature should stand still because of what it once didwhat death and ruin would there be! No, Christian, there must be no loitering for youeach day be this your meatto do the will of Him that sent you and to finish His work!   
III. And now, lastly, I have not strength, neither have you the time to consider THE GLORY WHICH JESUS CHRIST SHOULD HAVE FROM us, when we know that He could truly say, It is My meat to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work.   
How could He ever have loved us? It is strange that the Son of God should have set His affections upon such unworthy beings. I should not have wondered, my Brother, at His loving you, but it is a daily marvel to me that Jesus should have loved me. It is a wonder of wonders that He should come to save usthat when we were so lost and ruined that we did not even care about His love, but rejected it when we heard of it, and despised it even when it came with some degree of power to our hearts that He should still have loved us notwithstanding all. Tis strange! Tis passing strange, tis wonderful! Yet so it is. He has no greater delight than in saving us and in bringing us to Glory. Shall we not praise Him? Do not our hearts say within themselves, What shall I do, My Savior to praise You? How shall I crown His head? How shall I show forth my gratitude to Him who found such delight in serving me? Beloved, may the love of God be shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given to us! From this day forth may it be our meat and our drink to do the will of Him that sent usand to finish His work!

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON:  
**JOHN 4:1-39.**

Verses 1-3. When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, (though Jesus Himself baptized not, but His disciples), He left Judea, and departed again into Galilee. Our Savior was not a Man of strife. He was quite ready to contend with the Pharisees on fit occasions, but just then He avoided an encounter with them. Besides, one woman of Samaria, whom He was going to save, was worth more to Him than ten thousand Pharisees who would not be saved by Him! Most of the learning and culture of Palestine was possessed by the Pharisees, but Christ thought nothing of it in comparison with the soul of the one poor woman of Samaria whom He was going to save.

4-7. And He must go through Samaria. There came He to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son, Joseph. Now Jacobs well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with His journey, sat thus on the well, and it was about the sixth hour. There came a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus said unto

her, give Me a drink. [See Sermons #2570, Volume 44JESUS SITTING ON THE WELL and #2423, Volume 41THE MODEL SOUL-WINNERRead/download the entire sermons, free of charge,

at http://www.spurgeongems.org.] The sixth hour means noonday, and that was a very unusual time for a Samaritan woman to draw water. But the reason why she went at that unusual hour was because she was one whom other women shunned so that if she went to the well at all, she must go alone, for they would not be seen in her company. What a wonderful thing it is that this woman who was not thought to be fit company for her fellow creatures was, nevertheless, thought by Christ to be worth looking after and saving! But those who are the castaways of men are often among those who are the sought-out and chosen ones of Christ.

8. (For His disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat). This was quite a right thing for the disciples to do, for meat must be bought for men to eat. No doubt it is better to pray than to eat, but if one never ate, he would not long be able to pray. I have heard these disciples condemned for their worldliness and carnality, but I fail to see anything of the kindit seems to me necessary that somebody should go into the city to buy meatand although it is not the noblest kind of work, yet, being necessary, it may be the steppingstone to higher service.

9, 10. Then said the woman of Samaria unto Him, How is it that You, being a Jew, ask drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? For the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans. Jesus answered and said unto her, If You knew the gift of God. [See Sermons #782, Volume 13SAVING KNOW

LEDGE and #2277, Volume 38SYCHARS SINNER SAVEDRead/download the entire sermons, free

of charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.] How much we lose through ignorance! Ignorance is often like a great stone laid upon the well so that the flocks cannot be wateredblessed is everyone who helps to roll away that stone! It is a great thing to know the gift of GodIf you knew the gift of God.

10. And who it is that says to you, give Me a drink; you would have asked of Him, and He would have given you living water. There are two things worth knowingwhat Grace is and Who it is that gives it. Lack of this knowledge often leads to lack of prayerand lack of prayer leads to lack of receiving. Perhaps someone asks, Why does not God give without prayer? Because it is not His will to do so! His will is that we should pray about everything. Did you ever notice that even when the harvest is ripe, it cannot be gathered in without prayer? Jesus said to His disciples, The harvest is truly plenteous, but the laborers are few. Pray you, therefore, the Lord of the Harvest, that He will send forth laborers into His harvest. Prayer seems indispensable! It is part of Gods necessary machinery. He has pleased to make it so. But what condescension of love it is that the prayer of man should be necessary to effect the purposes of God! God even said to Christ, Himself, Ask of Me and I shall give You the heathen for Your inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Your possession. So that, from the woman at the well up to the Lord Jesus, Himself, prayer seems to be the indispensable requisite of blessing!

11. The woman said unto Him, Sir, You have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from where, then, have You that living water? [See Sermon  
#2897, Volume 50THE SOURCERead/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at

http://www.spurgeongems.org.] You who reverence the majesty of Christs Deity, the perfection of His Humanity, the glory of His atoning Sacrifice, the splendor of His Resurrection poweryou who know from where He has this Living Water, the power to save and to blessworship and adore Him with all your heart and soul!

12-14. Are You greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle? Jesus answered and said unto her, Whoever drinks of this water shall thirst again: but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst. You know that there are some who preach of a salvation that does not savethey teach that one may be a child of God today and a child of the devil tomorrow! That is like the water in Jacobs wellWhoever drinks of this water shall thirst again. But Christs salvation is of a very different kindWhoever drinks of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst.

14. But the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water

springing up into everlasting life. [See Sermons #770, Volume 13THE WATER OF LIFE; #865, Volume 15LIFES EVER-SPRINGING WELL and #1202, Volume 20HOLY WATER Read/download the entire sermons, free of charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.] The Grace

of God is a living thing, a springing and abiding thing, an everlasting thingand he that has it in his heart has that which has saved him forever!

15. The woman said unto Him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come here to draw. Christs words were coming true. He said that if she had known, she would have asked. And then, in her poor groping way, she began to pray, hardly knowing what she was asking for! I advise you, also, to pray even before you quite understand your own prayers, before you are sufficiently instructed to know what you really need! Ask God to give you what you need. Very often we make a discovery of our needs through having them supplied.

16-19. Jesus said unto her, Go, call your husband, and come here. The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, You have well said, I have no husband: for you have had five husbands; and he whom you now have is not your husband: in that said you truly. The woman said unto Him, Sir, I perceive that You are a Prophet. She perceived that there was something about Him which marked Him out as a Prophet, so she seemed to say to Him, As You are a Prophet, solve me this riddle.

20-24. Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and You say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship. Jesus said unto her, Woman, believe Me, the hour comes when you shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. You worship you know not what: We know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour comes and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeks such to worship Him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth. Let us never forget this. Even if we all believe it, we do not always act according to that belief. For instance, we sing through a hymn, but it might almost as well be an old song, for our hearts do not go with the words. Or while our heads are bowed in prayer, perhaps our thoughts are back with our children, or our shops, or far away in some foreign land. Yet there is no benefit in coming up to a place of worship, or in listening to sermons and prayers, or joining in the singing of sacred songs unless our heart is there! Let us always remember this, and sigh and cry rather than rejoice if we have been up to the holy assembly and yet have not worshipped God in spirit and in truth.

25, 26. The woman said unto Him, I know that Messiah comes, which is called Christ: when He is come, He will tell us all things. Jesus said unto her, I that speak unto you am He. Now she had made the greatest of all discoveries, for the Messiah, Himself, had come to her and told her all things. This was her test of the Messiah and Christ had answered it!

27. And about this time His disciples came and marvelled that He talked with the woman: yet no man said, What are You seeking? or, Why do You talk with her? They had too much respect for Him to ask such questions, except in their own hearts, but their Oriental prejudices made them marvel that He was talking with a woman!

28-33. The woman then left her water pot and went her way into the city and said to the men, Come, see a Man who told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ? Then they went out of the city and came unto Him. In the meanwhile His disciples prayed Him, saying, Master, eat. But He said unto them, I have meat to eat that you know not of. Therefore said the disciples, one to another, Has any man brought Him something to eat? They did not like to ask Him plainly, although they were very curious about the matter, they scarcely dared to pry further into it. And His next words may have deepened the mystery still further.

34, 35. Jesus said unto them, My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work. Say not you, there are yet four months, and then comes harvest? Behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. [See Sermon #707, Volume 12

FIELDS WHITE FOR HARVESTRead/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at

http://www.spurgeongems.org.] Look at those Samaritans trooping out of the city, drawn by that womans testimony concerning Me. They are coming, at her invitation, to learn more about the Christ.

36-38. And He that reaps, receives wages, and gathers fruit unto life eternal: that both he that sows and he that reaps may rejoice together. And herein is that saying true, One sows and another reaps. I sent you to reap that whereon you bestowed no labor: other men labored, and you are entered into their labors. The Prophets had spoken and written concerning the Messiah. Their words had prepared the minds of the Jews and also of the Samaritans, to receive the Gospel. So the great success of the Apostles must not be traced merely to their teaching, but also to the preparatory work of the other laborers who had gone beforeOther men labored, and you are entered into their labors. The Church is always ready to praise her reapers, but let her not forget her sowers. There are some of us who bring many souls to Christ, who are greatly indebted to the work which was done by other men who preceded us. There are some who, perhaps, have few conversions although they preach the Gospel faithfullythey are sowing and there shall come others, by-and-by, who shall reap bounteous harvests as the result of their sowing the Good Seed of the Kingdom! No matter who sows, or who reaps, the glory of the harvest shall be unto the Most High.

39. And many of the Samaritans of that city believed on Him for the saying of the woman, which testified, He told me all that ever I did.   
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PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #706 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

FIELDS WHITE FOR HARVEST

NO. 706

**DELIVERED ON SUNDAY EVENING, JULY 29, 1866, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**Do you not say, There are yet four months, and then comes the harvest? Behold, I say to you,   
Lift up your eyes and look at the fields for they are already white for harvest.   
John 4:35.**

MANY unbelieving Christians have a very large stock of reasons for not expecting to see many conversions. They suppose that any present manifestation of the Divine power in connection with the Truth of God is not to be expected. They read the history of past ages and they wonder, and sometimes, when their eyes are sufficiently clear, they look forward with some sort of hope to the repetition of these scenes in future years, that is to say, when they, themselves, are dead and buried, and a new age shall have come upon the world.

But as to God working any wonders in the world nowas to the conversion of thousands nowthey do not expect it. And if it were to happen they would be surprised, and beyond all measure astonished. They are forever dwelling in the past, or seeking to roost in the futurebut as for now, now seeing Gods arm made bare, now setting to work for the conversion of men, now expecting that God will win hearts unto Himself they are not brought up to this mark yet. Their common reason for expecting nothing now is thisthat there are yet four months, and then comes the harvest. They say, This is not the time. We must have patience. We must wait. This is not the man. This is not the hour. This is not the place. We must wait till, under other circumstances, other men being given, we look for grander results. But we must not expect them nowthere are yet four months, and then comes the harvest.

You know that this is the general feeling at present in the Christian Churchnot to expect any great things now, but to be waiting and watching for something or other which may one of these days, in the order of Providence, turn up. Meanwhile, it is true that death does not cease to slay! Meanwhile, it is a fact that our cemeteries and graveyards are being crowded, and that multitudes are perishing for lack of knowledge. Meanwhile, it is most true that error stalks like a pestilence through the land. It is true that, as yet, Christ does not see of the travail of His soul and that few are the travelers who go through the strait gate.

But these good people seem indifferent to the perishing millions, and only say, There are yet four months, and then comes the harvest. I have noticed that this kind of feeling has crept into the smaller agenciesto the individual workers, too. In the Sunday school, how many a teacher does not expect to see the children of his class converted, but fondly hopes that perhaps, when they are grown up, the benefit of the instruction which he imparts to them may be apparent? There are yet four months, they say, and then comes the harvest. The most of those who teach our young people have become hopeful that perhaps before those young persons shall actually die, or before they come to be gray-headed, some Truth that has been dropped into their hearts may perhaps germinate, and bud, and come to perfectionbut they do not expect a present blessing. There are yet four months, and then comes the harvest.

Take the most of our ministers, and what are they looking for? They hope that God may visit their congregations. But as to holding enquirers meetings every week, and expecting to find people crying, Sir, what must I do to be saved? after their sermonsall this is not according to their notions. There are yet four months, and then comes the harvest. One of these bright sunny days, one of these long-expected months of which the Prophets have talked so long, perhaps in the Millennium year, which some say is drawing so near, they are expecting wonderful things, for there are yet four months, and then comes the harvest.

Truly, my Brethren, ones ears have been dinned and dunned with it till one has got sick of hearing that there are yet four months, and then comes the harvest. Patience is a virtue, but sometimes decision is a greater one! To wait long is well, but not when the harvest is ripe and readyfor then it will lie upon the ground and rot! To wait may be well, but not when men are dyingno, when Hell is filling! Not when immortal souls are in jeopardy! Not when the plague is raging, and we have, today, to stand between the living and the dead, and wave the censer of the Gospel of Jesus Christ that the plague may be stopped!

Four months, indeed. Four months! Have there not been months enough already? We have waited long! We have waited till our patience may well have exhausted itself. It was to be four months in the days of our grandfathers. It was to be four months in the days of our fathers! And now it is to be four months still! Oh that we would learn the Saviors words, and say no longer that there are four months, and then comes the harvest! But let us do as He says, Lift up your eyes and look at the fields for they are already white for harvest. Expect a present blessing! Believe that you will have it! Go to work to get it, and do not be satisfied unless you do have it!

Let me dream dreams of the future and put you off from looking for a blessing only in the futurefor though it may be true that your words will be blessed after you are deadyet do not be content with that hope, but want them to be blessed NOW. Though, possibly, a sermon may bring a soul to God twenty years after it is preached, yet do not think of that! Think of those who are present while it is preached, and be not satisfied unless now, on the spot, you reap some of that wheat which is already white for harvest!

We shall now come directly to our subject, and may we have strength given by Gods Grace to stir up Christian laborers to great and instantaneous diligence. We shall take our text in three wayssigns of harvest, needs of harvest, and fears of harvest.

I. SIGNS OF HARVEST. Do you not say, There are yet four months, and then comes harvest? Behold, I say to you, Lift up your eyes and look at the fields for they are already white for harvest. What signs were there, when the Savior uttered these words, from which the disciples might effect an immediate gathering of souls? I answer, first, that there was this signthat the Savior had preached a sermon and that the whole of His congregation had been converted!

You will remind me that He had but one hearer. Yes, but that is the first point to which I want to come. The conversion of one soul by the Gospel should be to you a hopeful sign that God intends to convert others! For lookthe cholera is raging in certain towns, say, on the Continent and a physician has been studying the disease. He has administered a variety of drugs but in every case without success. He has prescribed different methods of treatment, but in no case has he succeeded in effecting a cure.

At last he has hit upon the right drug, and, administering it, he sees his patient rallying. Strength evidently given by the medicine, the struggle ends favorably, and the patient rises to life and health. Now, says the physician, I know that I shall have a harvest of men who will be preserved from this disease because the same medicine which heals one will heal two, will heal twenty, will heal a thousand, or even twenty thousand! It only has to be administeredthat one person has been healed by this compound, and it is clear that as many more may be healed as are willing to receive it.

Brethren, we do not lack this sign with regard to the Gospel! We have had it! We have it still! It is clear to you that the Gospel has been blessed to the conversion of some. We, as a Church, can show every week some whom God converts by His Divine Grace. We have not been left without our witnesses at any time. During the last twelve years Gods hand has continually been stretched out. Now we ought to take this as an omen of good! If some have found the Savior, why not more? Christian Soldier, you have a sword in your hand that has won one battlewhy should it not win another, and another, and another? You have the Omnipotence of God with you which has already broken one hard heartwhy should it not break other hard hearts?

Already one stronghold of the enemy has been captured by the sounding of the silver trumpet! Why should not the rest fall, too, when, with the confidence of faith we sound the silver trumpet yet again? When Napoleon landed on his return from Elba, and one man came and presented himself as willing to serve the Emperor, Here, said Napoleon, is at least one recruit. So may we say when we have convertsHere is one recruit, and thank God for one! For the same attractive influence which draws one will draw multitudes more. We have got the right medicine! We have got the right power! Therefore let us hope that there is a harvest to be reaped now!

But, again, there was another hopeful sign, namely, that this one convert was at that very moment diligently engaged in making more converts. The woman then left her water pot and went her way into the city, and said to the men, Come, see a man which told me all things that ever I did. We hear a great deal of strategy. It was our Saviors strategy to bless the men of Samaria through this woman. He said to her, Go call your husband, and come here. This is the blessing about the Gospelthat if it gets into one persons heart it is sure to run from that one to all those who live in the neighborhood and who are the surroundings of that saved one!

Just strike the match and let the spark drop in the prairie, and what a roaring ocean of flame shall soon come from it! Let Gods Grace fall into one soul and who knows what the end shall be? When this country of ours was all asleep and religion was at the lowest possible ebb, six young men at Oxford felt the inspiration of God and they met together to pray. They were expelled by the college for the horrid crime of meeting together to pray, but what was the result of it? Soon, from the Lands End to John OGroats House that same inspiration which had fallen upon those young men had descended upon the multitudes, till from peers of the realm down to the black-faced colliers, men of all ranks and grades confessed the power of the God of Israel!

One of those young men, as you remember, wrote the hymn we sang just now   
*Saw you not the cloud arise,   
Little as a human hand?*

It only needs a beginning! Get one soul saved and you have got a preacher of Christ at once! There is not a plant that grows by the hedgeside but takes care, as it dies, to scatter all down the bank the seeds of succeeding generations of plants. And you cannot get the Grace of God into a soul but it is sure to try to disseminate the spiritual life, and to bring others to know the holy joy which it itself experiences.

Here, then, were two signs of harvestthere was one saved, and that one was trying to bring others to be saved. But there was a third sign that was better still, namely, that the others were coming to hear. There they came, a whole troop of them from that little town, all anxious to listen to the Savior! Oh, it is a blessed sign in these times of ours that men are willing to listen to the preaching of Christ! We can scarcely find places large enough now in which to accommodate the multitude. It is true they will not go to hear some ministerswho would? Who cares to go to hear where the preaching is dull?

Some charity boy being asked why the eunuch went on his way rejoicing, replied that, It was because Philip had done preaching to him, and I do not doubt that there are some now who from the same cause go on their way rejoicing when the sermon is over. But simple speech, plain talk about Christ, does win the ear still, and if it is but tried, and it really is the

Gospel that is preached, there will never be a lack of hearers! See how Sunday night after Sunday night the theatres have been filled when our Brethren have gone there to preach to the working classes the Gospel of Jesus Christ! It is false that the working men of London do not care to hear the Gospelthey do care to hear it. Only preach it so that it can be understoodtake the velvet from your mouths and speak plainlyand they will be sure to come to listen.

This is always a good sign, and we may fairly expect a harvest when once we get the people to hear. When the fish get round the net, surely some of them will be taken. And when the furrows lie open, surely he who scatters good seed may have hope that he shall see it spring up. Brothers and Sisters in Christ, I am persuaded there never was a time when people were more willing to listen to the Gospel of Christ than now! They will hear it if you only preach it so that it can be understood! Do not, of course, expect them to listen to you if you are not earnest about what you have to say. But if you have something to tell them that is worth their hearing, never fear but what they will give you the hearing. This was another sign of harvest.

But there was yet a better one. Our Savior knew that a harvest was approaching because the persons who were coming to hear were the very people who seemed the least likely to listen to His Word. They were Samaritans who were coming. Oh! said the Jew, a Samaritan! If he merely heard the word, Samaritan, he turned on his heels and went his way very much in the same style as some of our gentlemen do if they merely hear the word, rough, which is supposed to be the conglomeration of everything that is horrible! And yet the person who happens to be called a rough may be rough in nothing but his garments, and may have as gentle a heart as ever beat beneath broadcloth. But so it is. Sometimes the very people come to hearken to the Gospel whom you would least expect to see listening to it, and this is a good sign.

When the Samaritans will hear, when the giddy multitude are willing to stand crowded together to listen to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, when the working man is not ashamed to come to the House of God to hear Christ preached, and will even stand at a corner of the street and listen to itit is a good sign, and it is a sign that we see now. The publican and the harlot are willing to receive the Gospel of Jesus, and God blesses them, and they enter into the kingdom of Heaven! All these are good signs of a coming harvest! It is, moreover, an omen for good when we remember the men who have labored before us. How much of labor has been spent upon this city! How many earnest men have wept and toiled among our teeming masses, and have gone back to their Master with, Who has believed our report, and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?

Here for three centuries, I may say, since the days of old Hugh Latimer, right on from the time of the preaching at Pauls Cross, there has never been a lack of ministrations of Gods Truth in this city of London and in the surrounding parts of the metropolis. Some of you can almost look back to the days when John Newton was at St. Mary Woolnoth, and can almost remember Romaine at St. Anns, Blackfriarswhen we had among Dissenters such men as Dr. Gill, and afterwards Dr. Rippon, and Abraham Booth, and others who labored and toiled for Christ, and yet, after all met with but little comparative success.

There must be some good come from all this! Has all this labor been spent for nothing? Has the ground been watered by the sweat of these men, and have they plowed it and sown it, and is there never to come a harvest? Our Savior seems to say, Those Samaritans over yonder, they have the Word of God. They have heard something about iteven the Jews could not keep the light of prophecy away from themother men have prepared them to receive our teachings. And, doubtless, the days that are past have been preparing the population of England to receive the Gospel. And we may hope that when it does come to them it will come with a mighty power, for when the Holy Spirit is pleased to work mightily we shall see something done, the like of which England has never seen before, and which shall be the result of the accumulated labors of many years gone by.

We have a right to expect a harvest when we remember what has been done already. And Brethren, I think it is a sign of some good for the Church of Christ when there is a stir among the people. The worst thing, perhaps, for true religion is the stagnation of the human mind. When people are not thoughtful about other things, it is very seldom that you can get them to be thoughtful about religion. It is generally supposed that our country friends, some of whom seem to vegetate rather than to live, and who are not so pressed with business from morning till night as we are in London, must have a great deal of time to give to religion, and that they must, therefore, be the most hopeful of congregations.

My country Brethren do not confirm the supposition, and for myself for I preach more in the country than I do in the townand often spend three or four days a week in addressing country audiencesfor myself I must say that glad as I am to address the assembled crowds in a field or anywhere else, I do not find that the supposition that their having less to do makes them think more of Divine things is at all correct. I believe that where the intellect is most exerted, above other things, there is, on the whole, the most hope of sending home some thought about Divine things. It is true that thorns may be a hindrance, and are, but at any rate they prove that the soil will grow something, and I think if I were going to take a farm, I would sooner take one that was overgrown with thistles than one which grew nothing at all.

It is better to lay hold of a man who really does think about something than of one who thinks about nothing at all, and has nothing at all to think about. It is saidI do not know how trulythat a singular apathy had seized the public mind, and that there was nothing that could stir it up. Continually it was said that was an age in which nobody cared for anything, and I think it is pretty nearly the fact. Nobody cared what anyone did or did not do. As long as people could be tolerably easy, they seemed to be pretty well satisfied. If you did not put on the income-tax too heavily, nothing else would much concern the people.

But now it is not so. I think I see the beginning of a stir in the public mind. Even the political stir of the last few days, with all about it which one would deplore, shows that the public mind is stirring, for there generally comes a waking up about every twenty years or so. People go to sleep for a long time, but all of a sudden they begin to rub their eyes, and to enquire about this, and about that, and about something else. Well, now is the time when the spirit is thus aroused to preach the Gospel to that awakened mind! It seems to me that no nobler opportunity could present itself than now. Now is the time when the corners of the streets should ring with ministers voices! When the Word of God should be distributed in every house! When you should give away tracts, not such poor tracts as are mostly given away, but tracts with something solid in them, and these should be given away by millions, for just now men are thoughtful, and let them have the grand revealed reality to think about!

I believe on this account, let others think what they will, that there are the signs of a coming harvest. And, to conclude on this point, it is quite certain that at the present period the old priest-crafts do not hinder men from hearing the Gospel. Time was, I dare say, in Sychar and Samaria, when the people dared not have come out to hear Christ. They had to ask some Samaritan Rabbi whether it was proper for them to go to hear the new Prophet. You know in half the country towns in England this is the case. The people there no more dare to think for themselves in religion than they dared to think of old in the days of serfdom and slavery.

Squire-craft and priest-craft still tread the people in the country down. But it is not so in London. Nobody here thinks of asking the parish priest where he shall go. We can get at the people! We can bring the Gospel to their doors! There is no dominant priest-craft to keep us back, and I say, Brethren, if Martin Luther could have lived in such an age as this, how he would have rejoiced to see it! And if John Bunyan, after lying twelve years in Bedford Jailif Richard Baxter, and Alleine, and men of that stamp could have lived in days where there is such perfect liberty that every man may hear the Gospel if he cares to hear itthey would have been almost ready to say, Lord, let Your servants depart in peace, for our eyes have seen Your salvation.

This is the hour of the flowing of the tide which taken at its flood leads on to fortune. If the Christian Church does not avail herself of the present crisis, she deserves to have an age of infidelity to make her mourn over her laxity and her indolence! If now the Christian Church dares not bestir herself, now when the minds of men are ready, when their ears are open, when there is nothing to stand between us and the multitudethen I fear she will have cause to repent and mourn in days of darkness and bitterness which will inevitably follow.

Up, then, Believers! If the Bible is worthy of your belief proclaim it to others, and proclaim it especially just now. Now is the day and now is the hour, for the fields are already white for the harvest.

II. Supposing all this to be true, we shall now speak of HARVEST NEEDS. The needs of harvest are, first, many laborers. If many souls are to be converted, there must be many to preach to them. If we are to expect a great ingathering, as I think we ought, there must be much energy used and much effort put forth. Pray you, therefore, the Lord of the harvest that He would send forth laborers into His harvest, and ask Him to be pleased to stir up Christian zeal throughout the whole of Christendom that advantage may be taken of this auspicious hour.

You cannot reap without laborers. I saw a reaping machine the other day doing the work very well and very fast, but somehow or other one liked the old-fashioned look of the field when the laborers were in it at work. Certainly there is no machine that can do this work of soul-reaping. It must be done by menchosen men, who, filled with the Spirit of God, shall go forth to ingather souls. The first need, then, is more laborers. Who is there among you who will consecrate himself to God? I do not ask for young men for the College just now. We have enough. But I do ask for young men, old men, and all sorts of men, and women, too, to be laborers in the great work of ingathering souls. Many sinners perish, and many saints do nothing. Oh, you who know Christ, be indifferent no longer!

The next thing that is needed is sharp sickles as well as more laborers. A laborer is no good unless he has got a sickle, and if he can keep his sickle sharp, so much the better. You must get a hold, dear Friends, of Gods Truth. You will do nothing without that Truth of God, and you must have that Truth well understood. You must grind your sicklesyou must go to work with such cutting Truths as justification by faith, as the total ruin of mankindthe hope that is laid up in the Cross, the energy of the Holy Spirit.

And when you know these Truths, and know how to use them, you shall then be made great reapers in the Masters harvest! It is idle to say, I will go, and then go with no tool in your hands. Get the Truth. Get hold of it well, get it sharp and in good order, and who knows, under the blessing of God the Holy Spirit, what you may do! The next need of harvest is some close binders. When the wheat is cut down you must tie it up with sheaves. We want some of you who cannot preach, who cannot use the sickle, to go and gather up the wheat which falls under the sickle when it is used by others.

Invite them to come into Church fellowship. Talk to them, get them into union with the people of God. And oh, if you happen to be in the Church yourselves, try to keep the Church knit together in love. Bind the sheaves together! We cannot have good harvest work without loving hands to bind the people of God in one. Then we need beside these some to take the sheaves home. The Church of God is the barn, it is the Masters garner hereHe has another garner yonder on the hilltop in Heavenbut here we want you to assist in bringing them into the Church of Christ. When God has served them, try, if you can, to get them to practice the ordinances of God, and to be joined with His people.

And we need some of you, if you cannot do anything yourselves either in reaping, or binding, or bringing the sheaves home, at least by kind words and loving speeches to bring refreshments to the reapers. You can sometimes remind them of the success you know they have had in certain places. You can cheer them when they begin to grow uneasy. You can go to those who are working hard and say, Be not discouraged! God has blessed you to my soul. God has owned your work in such-and-such cases. Persevere, and God is with you!

As I look round this congregation I cannot help thinking what a mass of strength there must be here for the Lords cause if it could but be brought out! You, young man, who are full of ability, who would take the lead in any society into which you choose to enteroh, young man, how I long for you as a recruit for my Master and to enlist you in His service! If you were a Christian, or if being a Christian, you were all on fire with love to Christ, what might you not accomplish! I would desire have that matron yonder, with her family about her, to enlist for the Savior. Oh, what a position of usefulness she has!

And that great employer of labor there, how influential he is! How a good word from him might be blessed to hundreds of people! And even you who are servants in families, nurses and so on, you may not have so wide a sphere of labor, but you have still your place of influence. Oh, if every talent we possess were but consecrated to Christ! London, you need not be in the dark if all Gods lamps which are in you were but lit! O you mighty city! You need not be ignorant of the Gospel if the tongue of every child of God would but tell it out. If we were all enlisted, all made soldiers for Christ, might not this country yet feel the power of Christ? And what are we? A slender few, a handful compared with the masses of our fellow Christians! Would God that they were all baptized with the Holy Spirit and with fire, and then we might see such a harvest as would make Heaven itself ring as we shouted our harvest home!

I charge you who love the LordI charge you by the nearness of death, by the shortness of the time in which you can serve your Masterdo not one of you be idle! Oh, my dear Hearers, I would almost say if you are members of my Church here, and are doing nothing, get out! Of what service can you be? You are drags on the wheels! You are an impediment to the Churchs course! You are like the heavy baggage which impedes the armies of Israel! Do something! In Gods name I charge you, do something, or else be ashamed of yourselves!

Hasnt Christ done much for you? Do you profess to have been bought with His blood? Have you dared to sing   
*I love my God with zeal so great   
That I could give Him all*

and are you doing nothing? Some of you drink in the Doctrines of Grace, but if they are, indeed, true to you, show the Grace of the doctrines by spending and being spent in the Masters cause!

These, then, are the needs of harvest.   
III. And now, lastly, THE FEARS OF HARVEST. The farmer sometimes fears that through lack of laborers he may be obliged to leave the wheat out in the field till it is considerably damaged. After a certain time the wheat spears out and there is a loss sustained. Birds, also, will feast upon it, and the farmers gains are going. My dear friends and fellow reapers, this great city is the field that is white for the harvest! And every hour in which men are not saved there are capabilities of usefulness that are falling out and Satan is running away with opportunities for good!   
Supposing those souls to be saved in a few years, yet there are all the years between now and then lost for God. I am jealous, not only to have souls saved, but to have them saved while young. Why should Satan have so much of their time? Why should so many years of their influence be thrown into the wrong scale? The wheat, even if you do not get it in before it perishes, is losing part of its value every hour. Oh, should we not be moved by this to take the sickle and go at once to the work?   
But there is a worse fear than this, namely, that some other wheat may remain unharvested and so be destroyed. It may rot in the place where it grows! And instead of gladdening the farmer, it may be there to become a mere mass of rottennessthe very thing which might have been so useful! Ah, how much of London may be destroyed for want of laborers to go and take in the harvest! Ah, the millions that never enter a place of worship! I speak within bounds, for even if they all wished to enter there is hardly room for one million out of three, and a great mass never come at allbut how few of us there are who go after them! They perish, my Brothers and Sisters, they perish! They perish with an overwhelming destruction!   
You know how they perish! You know how you were once on the brink of perishing, and how mercy snatched you from it. You have read in that old Book of everlasting destruction which is the portion of the men who die unwashed in the blood, and unforgiven. I charge you, if you would not see souls lost, rise, and with the sickle get to the harvest, for meanwhile do you not know that there are other reapers at work? If the Christian does not work, there are others who will labor. If the Truth of God does not now spread among the masses, error is spreading! You cannot silence the tongue of infidelity if you shut your own mouth. You cannot stop the voice of priest-craft if you are quiet yourselves. You know that the messengers of Satan are busy.   
As Hugh Latimer said, The busiest bishop in England is the devil. He is always traveling up and down his diocese. He neither neglects town nor village, nor hamlet, nor so much as one of those who live in his see. He is seeking both by night and by day the ruin of souls. Other handsthey are gathering the harvest. But it belongs to your Master, and will you endure it, will you endure it? You servants of Christ, will you allow it? Shall the harvest be taken away? No! By the love you bear your Master take the prey from the mighty.   
And now, lastly, perhaps the most solemn reflection is that whether we gather in the harvest or not, there is a reaper who is silently gathering it every hour. Just now it is whispered that he is sharpening his sickle. That reaper is DEATH! You may look upon this great city as the harvest field, and every week the bills of mortality tell us how steadily and how surely the scythe of Death moves to and fro, and how a lane is made through our population. Those who were once living men are taken like sheaves to the garnertaken to the graveyard and laid aside. You cannot stop their dying, but oh, that God might help you to stop their being damned! You cannot stop the breath from going out of their bodies, but oh, if the Gospel could but stop their souls from going down to destruction!   
It can do it, and nothing else can take its place. Just now this cholera has come. There can be little doubt, I suppose, about it being here already in some considerable force, and probably it may be worse. The Christian cannot dread ithe has nothing to loseand everything to gain. Still, for the sake of others he may well pray that God would avert His hand and not let His anger burn. But since it is coming, I think it ought to be a motive for active exertion. If there ever was a time when the mind is sensitive it is when death is abroad.   
I remember when first I came to London how anxiously people listened to the Gospel, for the cholera was raging terribly. There was little scoffing then. All day and sometimes all night long I went about from house to house and saw men and women dying. And oh, how glad they were to see ones face, and when many were afraid to enter their houses for fear of disease, we who had no fear about such things found ourselves most gladly listened to when we spoke of Christ and of Divine things.

And now, again, is the ministers time! Now is the time for all of you that love souls! You may see men more alarmed than now, I hope they may not beI pray to God that they may not bebut if they should, avail yourselves of it. You have the balm of Gileadwhen their wounds smart, pour it in! You know of Him who died to save, tell them of Him. Lift high the Cross before their eyes. Tell them that God became Man that man might be lifted up to God. Tell them of Calvary, and its groans, and cries, and sweat of blood. Tell them of Jesus hanging on the Cross to save sinners. Tell them that there is life for a look at the Crucified One!   
Tell them that He is able to save to the uttermost, all them that come unto God by Him. Tell them that He is able to save at the eleventh hour, and to say to the dying thief, Today shall you be with Me in Paradise. Oh, dear Hearers, while I am exhorting you who are Christians to look after strangers, I may well ask you to look over those who are sitting in the pews with you! For there are some of you who, if you were to die tonight if, instead of going down yonder steps beneath the columns you were to die in your seatswhere would your souls go? If you reached your home and staggered into your bed, and found it your tomb, what would be your eternal fate? Will not conscience tell you that you could not plead a Saviors blood? You have never trusted it!   
You cannot expect a living Savior to meet you in a dying moment, for you have never loved Him! Oh, may Gods Grace make you love Him now, tonight! Sinner, look to Jesus, and you shall be saved! Trust Christ now! Trust Him only! Trust Him wholly! Trust Him earnestly and you shall rejoice, even tonight, and you shall be a part of that wheat which is white already unto harvest! Oh, my Hearers, I am concerned for your souls! I would gladly reap, myself, and bind up some sheaves to be carried into our earthly sheltering place in prospect of our heavenly home. I cannot bear the thought that any of you should ever be bound in bundles to be burned!   
What? Will any of you be lost, and be borne into the flame which never can be quenched? It must not be! Turn! Turn! Why will you die? Are there any reasons you can urge for your choice when you select companionship with sinners here and devils hereafter, and despise the Gospel of salvation, and reject the overtures of Grace? There are none! You know you are wrong! You are persuaded that your present position is false and you are not without some dread of the result at last. Are there not at times fears which sting like serpents and poison your peace of mind so that you would gladly be free from them if you could?   
Well, listen to me, or rather hearken to Gods Word as spoken by me Come unto Me all you that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. I speak of no untried remedy! I have myself tasted it! I am a witness of the efficacy and power of the blood of Christ to cleanse from all sin. I am surrounded by thousands who are all so many proofs of its value and unchanging might   
*Venture on Him, venture wholly,   
Let no other trust intrude.   
None but Jesus   
Can do helpless sinners good.*   
He is waiting to be gracious, near at hand, and not afar off. There are, in some parts of the Continent where I have traveled, places so sparsely inhabited and the people so poor, that no medical man resides in the district. And in such cases, if anyone falls sick he must write to the nearest wayside inn to have a notice put up that if any doctor or medical man is passing by, they would be glad if he would in kindness stay and pay them a visit, so as to give them a chance of being healed, if human help can avail in their case. Should no physician pass that way, then the man must diethere is no help for him. The ignorance of his friends and their poverty cannot help himhe must go to his grave.   
But here, my dear Hearers, is the difference in your case. The Physician knocks at your door and tells you of your disease. He proffers to you the remedy, assures you of a complete and of an immediate cure. And you oh madness and folly unspeakable!you hesitate to welcome Him! And you reject, it may be, all His offered care. Then you must perish! For your ignorance and poverty are such that no help of man can avail. You cannot effect your own cure and therefore you will go down to the pit with your blood upon your own head.   
May this folly soon cease, and you be inclined to listen to Him whose touch gives health, yes, life from the dead! In His name I proclaim salvation! Look, then, to Him! Believe, and life everlasting shall be yours. May God Almighty bless you, and may we meet in Heaven. Amen.

Adapted from The C.H. Spurgeon Collection, Version 1.0, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307 Sermon #1053 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

TESTIMONY AND EXPERIENCE   
NO. 1053

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, JUNE 2, 1872, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**And many of the Samaritans of that city believed in Him because of the saying of the woman, who testified, He told me all that I ever did. So when the Samaritans had come**

**to Him, they urged Him to stay   
with them; and He stayed there two days. And many more believed because of His own word. Then**

**they said to the woman, Now we believe,   
not because of what you said, for we have heard Him ourselves, and we know that this is, indeed,   
the Christ, the Savior of the world.   
John 4:39-42.**

THE most important question concerning any man living is thisis he a saved soul or not? It is of comparatively little consequence whether he is rich or poor, educated or uneducated, compared with thisis he among the living before Godor is he dead in sins? Is he pardoned or unpardoned? Is he a child of God or an heir of wrath? Is he walking in the darkness or has he passed into light? Therefore of all the days of a mans history the most important is the day in which he is born-again.

If the man is, indeed, saved, and a new man in Christ Jesus, he will look back upon the day of his regeneration as his chief birthday. His new birth is second in order of time, but he will always put it first in importance. His birth gave him his being, but his new birth secured his well-being. Being born first we might have descended into Hell, but, being born a second time we are assured of Heaven! If we were to observe those days with the greatest festivity which deserved best to be commemorated, we should certainly make high days and holidays of the days in which we looked to Jesus, and found in Him our star, our sun.

For this reason the circumstances which surround our new birth are to us among the most deeply interesting incidents of our own or any other human history. The details may be very simple. They may not suffice to make a biography, but still, to us, they are most important. We delight to think of the place where Jesus met with us, the Providence which brought us to the spot where we first heard the words which convicted us of sin. We feel pleasure in remembering every detail of our sorrows when we were seeking rest and finding noneand we are charmed as we read in our diary the story of how it was that we found the way of salvationhow it was that we looked to Jesus and lost our burden in a moment!

Our memory lingers and our heart loves to remember where it was, and by whose lips it was, that the life-giving message came and we looked to the Crucified One and were lightened. This is the reason why this chapter is so interesting, because it is the story of a conversionthe registry of a new birththe record of salvation. It is the story of the conversion of a remarkable woman, great in sin and afterwards great in zeal! It tells us how the work was effected, what was said to her by the Lord, how she replied, what she felt, and how she was brought out into light. This fourth chapter of the Gospel of John has in it not only that touch of nature which makes the whole world kin, but that touch of Divine Grace which creates sympathy in all regenerate hearts. And, consequently, it will always remain one of the most interesting portions of Holy Writ.

But it is not for itself alone that I shall conduct your minds to this suggestive history. While I shall be talking of this woman, my earnest desire is to feel in my own soul whatever of the Truth of God is uttered, and that each one here may be putting every Truth to himself in the form of searching questionssaying concerning each thought now uttered Do I understand that Truth? Am I partaker of that Grace? Thus, our hearing will be profitable, by the blessing of the Holy Spirit, and the woman of Samaria will become a prophetess to us, also.

First, then, our text most naturally suggests the remark that testimony is frequently the means of creating faith. Many of the Samaritans of that city believed in Him because of the saying of the woman, who testified, He told me all that I ever did. But, secondly, where personal testimony fails, faith may yet arise, apart from human witness, for many more believed because of His own word. Then, thirdly, even where faith has been begotten through testimony, personal experience very soon eclipses all human witness. Now we believe, they said, not because of what you said, for we have heard Him ourselves, and we know that this is, indeed, the Christ, the Savior of the world.

I. The first doctrine, this morning, is that HUMAN TESTIMONY IS FREQUENTLY MADE THE MEANS OF PRODUCING FAITH IN MENS HEARTS. That is evident to all. Hundreds of instances in proof thereof are present here this morning. A very large number of us owe our conversion to God to the personal testimony of others who told us what the Lord had done for themtold us in words, but also showed us in their actionsfor we perceived the change that was in them. We saw their calm mind under trouble. We noticed their general happiness. We noticed and we admired their holiness. And we were led, both by their verbal and practical testimony, to seek a Savior.

This is the usual mode of Divine operation, that the testimony of one renewed soul should be blessed to another, and so the kingdom of Christ should be propagated in mens hearts. To encourage all here who know the Lord to bear testimony for Him, let us notice the case before us. It was that of a woman. Pauls preaching is very plain upon the subject of female preaching. He does

not allow a woman to preach, but this by no means bars her from bearing testimony in her own wayand she can so bear it as to do Gods work quite as effectually as if she occupied the pulpit!

A woman was the founder of the Church in Samaria, which was afterwards multiplied by Christs teaching, which continued till the time of Philipand was then in a state of gracious revival. The first person baptized in Europe was a woman, therefore let none of our Sisters in Christ exempt themselves from bearing witness for Jesus Christ! Neither let them think that their witness is unimportant. God will put high honor upon it if it is rendered in simple faith in Him and, perhaps, where public ministry may have failed, their private testimony may yet succeed!

Again, the testimony was not only that of a woman, but of a sinful womanone who would usually be condemned to silence by the customs of society. She had lost her character. It was fit for her to be quiet. How could she be expected to be a witness for holiness, whose life had been unholiness? How should she bear witness to the pure Savior who had been, herself, impure? It is best for the unchaste to be little seen and never heard. The objection would have been unanswerable had not the woman been changed in character. She was washed, she was sanctified and renewedand now the very life which had otherwise been so just a cause for silence, became an impelling motive for witness-bearing since she loved much because much had been forgiven!

In her own person she was a notable proof of the Saviors power to pardon and reclaim. She had become a saint who formerly had been one of the chief of sinners and her witness for Christ was all the weightier. If any of you shall have been, up till now, great offenders against God, this is no reason why you should not come to Jesus at once and seek and find mercy! And after you have come to Him, your past transgressions shall be no bar to your future usefulnesson the contrary, you shall the more zealously and powerfully declare the power of His Grace! The more mischief we have done in the past the more good we should try to do in the futurethat by any means we may undo the evil we have done. How often has it turned out that the chief of sinners, like Paul, have become not a whit behind the very chief of the Apostles, and the very force of character which made them ringleaders in evil has aided in bringing them to the front as captains of the Lords host! We ought to be thankful, therefore, that we are allowed to bear testimony, and that our testimony may be useful even though much of our past life has been such that we would wish to blot it out forever.

Observe that this womans testimony was personal, and there was the secret of its power. She said, Come, see a Man that told me all things that I ever did: is not this the Christ? Now, suppose that she had said, Come, see a man who has opened up the prophecies to me? Why they would have said, Prophecies? What have you to do with prophecies? Go and fetch your water pot, attend to your business, mend your character, and do not talk to us about prophecies. Or, if she had said, I find, by reference to the words of Rabbi Simeon, that the Messiah is to be very much like a person in whom I have just now seen sitting on the well. They would have cared very little for the Rabbi, or for her inference from his words.

It was not because of any learning in what she said that they were convinced, but the personality of her declaration puzzled them. Now, we make a mistake, I believe, when we assail mens consciences with quotations from the fathers and passages from the reformed Divines. Human hearts will not be conquered by such poor artillery! And if we think that explaining a doctrine will suffice to win most men to Christ, we labor under a mistake. This woman did far better than that. She did as good as say, You know what I have been, all of you! It is of no use for me to attempt concealing it. But I went to draw water at the well and there sat a stranger, a Jew. And though He could not have known anything about me by report, yet He directed a question to me which led me to discourse upon my character, and then He told me in detail all that I had ever been, and mentioned some facts which you do not know, and which I had forgotten myself. Surely, He must be the Messiah.

They were very startled as they heard the womans tale. She was startled herself! How surprised she appeared! They listened to her eagerly, wondering why she should talk of holy things. And, let me say, Beloved, if we wish to win souls to Christ, there is nothing like telling to others what the Lord has done for our souls. It is of small use to tell them what we have learned in bookswe must declare what God has written on our hearts! It is not describing what was said by the preacher, but what has been felt in our souls. Many a husband has been won to God by his wifes witness to the power of religion in her own souland many a child has been brought to the Saviors feet by the fathers speaking to him of what Divine Grace had done for him. Proclaim, then, your personal testimony, each of you, for this is the most effectual weapon for overcoming human unbelief and bringing men to Christ!

But, then, you will note that the womans personal testimony was delivered very earnestly. In the first place she had left her water pot, which was not only left for Christ to use, but much more likely because she was absorbed in the purpose to tell others what she had learned and she was so full of her message that she left the water pot behind! The men would notice that it was sothey would observe the hurried way in which she came back from the well, and, above all, they would see the way in which her eyes shonethe manner in which every muscle of her body bespoke the excitement under which she labored.

She said, Come, come, see, see, a man that told me all things I ever did. How much depends in bearing testimony upon the way in which it is done! If our sermons were to hang like icicles around our lips they would not be very likely to melt the ice in your minds. And if, in speaking to your Sunday school class, your words fall like snow, they are not very likely to make childrens hearts burn within them. If, in speaking privately to an individual, you treat your own conversion as though it were a commonplace affair, or aim at his conversion whom you address as though it were a matter that was not very significant, you might as well be silent! O Brothers and Sisters, you waste your breath! You waste your time! No good will come of it!

Your testimony must be earnest or it will be fruitless! There must be passion and there must be pathos. The soul must run over at the mouth, and the speech must be the lava flowing out of a heart that swells and heaves with inward fires. I would have you notice the judiciousness of the womans testimony. It is very striking. She did not say, Come, see a Man that told me all things that I ever did: I am sure He is the Christ. She was too wise to be peremptory. If you positively assert a thing it is very likely that somebody will deny it. There is a propensity in many minds to question inferences drawn by others, though they would draw those very inferences themselves if let alone. So, though she did not doubt that it was the Christ, yet she did not say it is, but she deferred to the self-assumed wisdom of the men!

And she said to them, Is not this the Christ? Dont you think it is? as though she would have her belief confirmed by their judgment and humbly requested them to come and see. This is a kind of Pauline taking them by guilea method which is commendablebecause there is no sinful guile in it. It is all plain, innocent guile. She knew something about human nature from herself, and, judging the men by herself, she did not dogmatize, but she put it in such a way that she knew what answer they must give to her question, Is not this the Christ? In fishing for the souls of men you need as much judgment as you do in anglingfor men are curious fish and they will often be frightened at a shadow! And, in the very way of throwing the line and managing the fly, there is an art not very readily learned.

Some never learn the way and are never able to attract souls, while others are endowed with sacred instincts by which they know how to handle mens hearts and win power over them. We must be wise to win souls! Souls are not won by fools. We must have a sympathy with men, even reaching to their infirmitiesand we must woo them as men, dealing with them not as they ought to be, but as they areand putting the Truth of God in the shape in which it is likely to be acceptable to them. David chose out a smooth stone from the brookhe knew what sort of stone he could sling best, what sort of a stone was suited to his sling, what stone was best adapted to Goliaths foreheadand he sent the right stone in the right way.

And so must you. If you bear witness for Christ, ask the Spirit of Wisdom to guide you. Pray to be directed lest your earnestness should lead you into an injudicious mode of speech. Let prudence be mingled with your zeal. He is the Christ, but if you need men to believe that He is, you will sometimes do better to ask men if He is than actually to assert His claims. The woman bore her testimony, and bore it well.

Now, observe the result. There were many that believed on Christ at once, because of the womans speech. Happy woman, thus to become a mother in Israel! Blessed testimony, which was thus fruitful on the spot a hundred-fold! I guarantee you that many a bishop and doctor of divinity, and many a mighty orator has spoken hundreds of times with less result than this poor untrained, un-ordained, female Apostle of Jesus Christ! Her simple talk did more than eloquence could accomplish, though it should be as mighty as that of Cicero or Demosthenes! Her heart was in the words she spoke! Her speech was simplethere was nothing to recommend it of beauty of verbiage, or gaudiness of oratory. She said what she knew and testified what she had seen with an earnest desire that others would know and see what she had learned. Therefore God blessed her. Oh, may God bless many of us, whether men or women, to the same endthe bringing of many to Jesus!

Those who were not converted under her were awakened and stirred up so that they went to see the Lord Jesus and brought Him into their city, and asked Him to stay with them. Many of these were afterwards converted, so that she became, in some sense, the instrument of their salvation. Would to God that each one of us aimed at the same thing! But, I have more practical work to do than this. I have a question to put to many here who have not believed in Jesus. Your not believing in Jesus, many of you, does not arise from need of testimony about Him. The Samaritans only heard the testimony of a woman of very doubtful characterbut they believed in Jesus Christ through it! I need to speak very pointedly to some here. You have heard the testimony of the best people who have ever lived, and yet you have not believed! Had you not the testimony of a mother who loved the Savior and loved you, and above all things in this world coveted that you should love her Savior, too?

You know how earnestly she has spoken to you with as many tears as words, and how often she has backed her testimony with her prayers but you have not believed. She told you that Jesus could pardon sin, could give rest to your conscience and could preserve you unto His eternal kingdom and glory. And she besought you to come to Him, but you did not come. In her case there was a good character to back her testimony. You saw, year after year, her quiet, patient, godly life, and what is more, it may be I speak to some who saw the triumphant death of that same motherand yet you have not believed!

I have seen death beds which I have thought would have been enough to have convinced the most hardened, for there has been about the dying saint evidence conclusive of the power of Divine Grace. The body has been pained but the soul has been placid. Storms have swept through every nerve, and yet perfect peace has ruled the spirityes, and more than peacefor the soul has rejoiced with unspeakable joy and full of glory! That is an unbelieving heart, indeed, which will not be convinced by the testimony of a near and dear onea testimony supported throughout a holy life and crowned by a glorious death!

There are husbands here, probably, whose wives always bear good witness for Christ. Your wife is not dead and you know very well, in the bottom of your heart, that religion has done great things for her. If she were to die you would feel deep regrets for the ridicule you sometimes pour upon her. Why, if I were not this day a Believer in Christ, I think I should be of all men the most incorrigible, for I have seen the fruits of Grace in a beloved mother and in a gracious father! I could not be so base as to doubt their truthfulness, and yet I must do so or else accept their witness for the Lord Jesus. Did I not believe in the depravity of the human heart, I should wonder how so many can reject the pious testimonies which everywhere surround themtestimonies of persons of the most honorable character, who, on any other matter would be at once believed!

Perhaps there may be some here who will say, I do not know that I have ever had any testimony of the sort borne to me. Now, if you will allow me, you shall not be able to say that any longer. I will bear my testimony for Jesus Christ at once. When I preach Christ and His salvation to you I do not preach what I learned in a college or was taught by men! I preach to you what I would die for! I preach to you what is the chief joy of my soul! I preach to you what I know and believe and have experienced! Years ago I was under the greatest conceivable darkness of spirit. I was but a lad, but my sin haunted me. I had such an idea of the guilt of my past life that my heart was heavy within me, and at intervals I was crushed down with fear. I would get away into corners, where no one could see me, and cry and pray. And I labored under the belief that everybody else might be saved, but that I should perish.

Now I heard of Jesus Christ, that He was able to put away sin at once from anyone who simply looked to Him and trusted Him. I heard that, and I was enabled by Divine Grace, as soon as I heard it, to trust the Savior. I did then and there rest the whole weight of my soul for time and eternity upon the Person and work of Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God. And my witness is that, in one single moment, a load was rolled from off my spirit and as swiftly as a flash of lightning I passed from darkness into lightfrom misery into joy! From that hour I bless God that, being not exempt from trouble, and especially not free from a tendency to despondency which is always with me, I yet rejoice and will rejoice, and am happy, unspeakably happy in resting upon Jesus Christ!

Moreover, I have found that those points of my character which were most weak have been strengthened, while strong passions have been subdued, propensities have been kept under, and new principles have been implanted. I am changed! I am as different from what I was as a man could be who had been annihilated and had then been made again. Nor do I claim any credit for thisfar from it! God has done great things for me, but He has done the same for others, and is willing to do it for any soul that seeks His face! He is willing to do it for every seeker here! There is such a thing as a new heart and a right spiritI know there is. There is such a thing as perfect happiness in death, yes, and even a longing to depart! I know that peace with God is to be had, for I have felt it and bear witness to it!

Do you reject my witness? Perhaps you doubt my truthfulness. Then I must endure your injustice, for I know that I do not lie. But, if my character is right, and if you think I speak the truth, then I ask you to receive the witness I bear! I wish I could bear it more judiciously and more earnestly, but I do bear it in all sincerity with this desire in my soulI would that not only some of you, but all that hear me this day knew the preciousness of Christ Jesus my Lord, and understood that beneath Gods Heaven there is nothing so blessed as to be resting upon the blood and merits of the once crucified but now exalted Savior!

I bear my testimony as the woman from the well did. If you reject it, so must it be. But I pray you do not, but come and see Jesus for yourselves, for He is, indeed, the Christ, the Savior of the world!

II. FAITH MAY ARISE APART FROM THE TESTIMONY OF MEN. I shall speak of this second head for this reason. When you, who are earnest soul-winners, have borne testimony to any man about Christ, and he does not yield to it, do not despair of him. When you have preached to a man and he is not converted, do not think that there is no other hope for him. The Lord has other ways of work besides the witness of His servants. Some of those Samaritans who had not received the womans testimony believed because of His own word. Have we Gods own Word among us now? Yes, thank God, we have.

We have it in the Scriptures! There are some who will not listen to the witness of men, though it is loving and personal, who will yet bow before the majesty and power of the infallible Word of God. Let us hope that those who refuse our persuasions will yield homage to the Word of God. Let us trust that some, in quietly reading their Bibles, may yet be convicted and converted. If all our arrows shall miss them, let us hope that Gods Word will yet dart an arrow between the joints of their harness. Remember, the Spirit of God can work on mens hearts through Truths of God which they heard a long time ago. He will not reveal new truths to anybodythe complete Revelation is in the Scripturesbut He will often freshen up old Truths in the mind.

I have hopes of many men in London who never go to a place of worship, that they will be converted, because when they were children they were at a Sunday school and there they obtained knowledge which the devil will never be able to make them forget. The seed is hidden, but not dead! I have seen in the country men digging a ditch, throwing up the earth from 10 or 12 feet deep, and yet in that earth there were strange seeds, long covered with earth, which only wanted unearthing and exposure to rain and sun to develop them to the amazement of the neighborhood. And so there may die seeds of Truth deep down in the memory, and God the Holy Spirit may quicken them! We have known persons at their work not thinking of Divine things at all, but yet a sudden thoughtfulness has come over them, and they have considered their ways.

The Spirit of God, in fact, moved upon them! They began to meditate, and meditating they confessed their sins and turned to God. Besides, remember that God has many preachers that are not in human flesh. For instance, fever is a terrible Elijah. When the cholera came to London it was a Jonah in our streets! Many, then, began to think who would have gone blindfold down to perdition! When poverty visits some mens houses and they can no longer indulge in drunkenness and gluttony, then they think of their Fathers house and the hired servants who have bread enough and more to spare. Omnipotence has servants everywhere! God can make use of even the ills of life to work eternal good.

I have even known cases in which sin has been overruled by God to the awakening of souls. I remember a young man whose life had been strictly moral and upright but who had disregarded all religion. He was a working man, and on one occasion he upset a can of varnish at his work. He was afraid of his masters anger and, when asked who did it, he denied the fact. He had never lied beforeat least not in such a mannerand he felt himself so mean, so degraded in having told a lie that he felt himself to be no longer righteous before God. He bowed his knee and confessed his sin, and with a burdened conscience he went to hear the Gospel and found peace and pardon through the precious blood of Jesus!

Disease within a man may be as dangerous as when it breaks out and throws its pustules through the skin. When the man sees sin in eruption, he only sees what was in him beforeit could never come out if it were not first in him! The wrong act could never come forth if it was not in the man and, sometimes, the wrong act has convinced the man that his nature was impure, and so sin, though evil in itself, has been the means of bringing conviction to the soul. God has many ways of bringing men to Himself and we should pray that where we fail, the Word of God, accompanied by the power and energy of the Divine Spirit may convert them that they may be saved!

There are persons in the world of a singular disposition, and of a peculiarly independent mind who do not care to be shown anything, but prefer to find it out for themselves. And the probability is that if you wish them to see they will shut their eyes. The very thing they would find out and rejoice in, they will not learn from you. They keep themselves to themselves and will never be brought in by testimony. But they will be converted, let us hope, by the effectual working of the Spirit. I have known some, too, who are of such a skeptical turn of mind so that testimony is not received by them. They have seen so much of persons being led by the nose by priests that they will not believe anybody! And, whereas some will swallow a lie, these will only, with difficulty, accept the Truth of God itself from fear of being credulous.

They are something like Thomas. Mary Magdalene said she had seen the Savior. Ah, no doubt you are an excellent woman, but you have certainly been deceived. You are so imaginative. Then Peter said, I have seen the Lord. I am sure you think so, but you must be in error. Then John said, But, indeed, I have seen the Lord. That is good evidence for yourself. But it does not convince me. Then Bartholomew and others would say, We have seen the Lord. And five or six others have told you so. Do you think we have conspired to tell a lie? To, my Brethren, far from it! Yet I have known such things in the world as for five or six persons to be mistaken. I feel that your witness deals with such improbabilities that I cannot receive it.

At last Thomas declared downright, Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into His side, I will not believe. Now this was not right, but at the same time it was soand our Lord was graciously pleased to yield to the infirmity of Thomas, and He said, Reach here your finger, and behold My hands, and reach here your hand and put it into My side, and be not faithless but believing. Persons of this character make eminent saints when once convincedand our Lord has, in some cases, dealt with them in a special way. And, where the word of man has failed, His own Word, attended with special power of the Holy Spirit, has brought them to believe.

We must tarry no longer. I only introduce the point by way of encouragement to you who work for Jesus, not by way of sedative to you who will not believe! You have no right to expect you will ever have any other testimony than you have already received. You have Moses and the Prophetsif you will not hear them, neither would you be converted though one rose from the dead! You are not to expect miracles to convert you! Christ may go out of His way, but He is not bound to do so, and you have no right to look for it. You may say, Except I see signs and wonders I will not believe, but the probabilities are that you will not see signs and wonders, and will perish in your unbelief! Beware, I pray you!

III. PERSONAL EXPERIENCE ECLIPSES HUMAN TESTIMONY. The very people who believed through the woman, afterwards said, Now we believe, not because of what you said, for we have heard Him ourselves, and we know that this is, indeed, the Christ, the Savior of the world. Personal experience is far more convincing than any testimony can be! You may believe a thing because you are credibly informed of it, but you believe it a great deal more deeply and thoroughly when you have seen it for yourself! In the times of famine Jacob was told there was corn in Egypt, and the Patriarch believed the word. But when they had gone to Egypt and had their sacks full, there was a deeper conviction in their minds about Egypts corn than ever before.

A missionary, speaking to the inhabitants of a tropical region, informed them that water in our country, through cold, sometimes became solid. The generality of the natives would not believe him! It was too absurd a thing to be true! One, however, who knew the missionarys character, did believe that water could become solid so that persons could walk upon it. And when he came to England and saw a river frozen over, his faith was very different from what it had been before! It was the same in essence, but of a deeper degree. So when we heard that Jesus Christ is precious and that He is a Savior, we believed it. But when we were saved by Him, and found peace through Him, we received a far deeper faith! The faith that is based upon personal experience is more essential than any other, for until we have this faith we cannot know that we are saved.

Those doctors who advertise their medicines know that the public depends very much upon testimony and therefore they generally give us a list of cures with the names of persons who have been healed. They expect that the readers of such testimonials will look with favor upon their medicineand I suppose it is so. But if ever you have taken any medicine and you have yourself been perfectly restored from some very painful and dangerous ailment, your faith in that medicine is quite another thing! Before, you said, I do not know that all those people live at the addresses which are given, and perhaps they never lived anywhere. Or, if you really believed that the thing was correct enough, you did not take any interest in it, but, after your own disease has been removed by it, you are certain to talk about it to other people and say to them, You know such-and-such a medicine? It is wonderful how it actsperfectly marvelous the restoration I have received through it! Now, it is just so when we come to Jesus. We are so fully convinced that we begin to tell others.

But my point is that it is essential we come. If I believe in the mans medicine, and yet do not take it, it is of no use to me. If I believe in Christs saving sinners, but do not go to Him to save me, He is nothing to me. If I am in danger at sea and there is a lifeboat, and I believe in her, such faith will not save meI must get into her! If I am hungry and believe in breadit will not take away my hungerI must eat it! If I am dying of thirst and see the crystal spring by my sideit will not save me merely to believe in the waterI must stoop down and drink it for myself! Personal experience is the essential proof and we must have it.

And, let me add, that personal experience is always a more complete witness than testimony can ever be. Testimony can tell you something about Christ, but not much compared with what you will learn by going to Him yourself! The Queen of Sheba was told of Solomon that he was wise, that his court was richly furnished and that his dominion was magnificent. But, when she had herself entered the royal presence, her heart failed her, and she said, The half has not been told me. Witnesses about other things exaggerate, but witnesses concerning, Jesus Christ always fall short! Painters have frequently won repute by making portraits fairer than the originals, but none can ever paint Jesus with a pencil that shall give too much of luster to His noble face. He is so glorious that even angels, who have seen Him all their lives, and bowed before Him where His splendor is best revealed, could not tell man nor one another the thousandth part of His excellences!

If you need to know Him you must see Him for yourself. You must make Him your personal acquaintance. You must press by faith into the inner circle and cry with the spouse, Let Him kiss me with the kisses of His mouth, for His love is better than wine. This kind of evidence is the most enduring. What you receive from another man you might, perhaps, give up. In days of persecution those who believed the Bible on secondhand have denied the faith, but those who have had it worked into the warp and woof of their beingwho have had their souls dyed and tinctured through and through with it, because they have lived upon Christ, and Christ has lived in themthose were the people who stood on the firewood to burn, and learned to sing the high praises of God while their flesh and bones were being consumed! If we need to become stalwart men who cannot be turned aside by every wind of doctrine whom neither Rationalism nor Sacramentarianism can shake from the Gospelwe must be those who have been with Jesus! In that way we learn experimentally from Himand such experimental Christians can never give up the Truth of God.

Now, to close, I would observe thisonly those who know the Savior experimentally can bear testimony to others, for this woman, through whose secondary testimony many were converted, had, first of all, a personal experience herself. She said, He told me all things that I ever did. If she had not personally learned of Him, she could not have gone out and spoken to others. So you who would be useful must get the Truth into your own souls by personally feasting upon it. Only that which is in yourself can you communicate to others. Out of an empty bottle nothing comes. The Lord says to you as to Ezekiel, eat this roll. Digest in your own soul the doctrine you would preach! Have within yourself a well of living water, and then out of you shall flow rivers for others!

Let me add that while it is a serious thing to reject the personal witness of others, it is a fatal thing to reject this other test of Truth, namely, the trying for yourself whether Jesus is what He professes to be. When the offer is made to a man concerning any article of commerce, This is an excellent production and here are recommendations given by persons able to judge. But, moreover, you can take it home with you. You can try it for a month and if it does not answer your purpose it can be taken backthat is always considered to be an honest system of trade.

Now, we say concerning the things of Godif you do not care to take our testimony, do not take it. But, do another thing, try the Lord Jesus for yourself! God hears prayergo and see if He does. God accepts penitent hearts and He has regard to contrite spiritscome and see, come and see for yourself

*There is life in a look at the Crucified One.* Go and try it, go and try it! If you can prove Jesus Christ to be false. If, after having tried Him, He rejects you, very wellthen it must be sobut there has never been anything of the kind yet! Him that comes unto Me, I will in nowise cast out. Did He ever cast out one of you? If so, He has broken His Word, and that shall never be! Heaven and earth shall pass away, but none of His Words shall ever fail! He declares that He is able to save to the uttermost them that come unto God by Him. Go to God by Him and see!

If He does not save you. If it turns out that you are beyond His powerthat He cannot save to the uttermostthen proclaim it! Preach the devils gospel all the world over, and say the truth, however horrible it may be! We challenge you to the test! If God is God, serve Him! If the Gospel is true, believe it! If it is a lie, dont come here worshipping, or anywhere else pretending to worship a God you know to be false! Be not as double-faced persons who say, We are Christians, and yet do not worship the Savior. One thing or the other! If the Gospel is true, it ought to be accepted. If it is not true, bear your witness honestly like men and let the world be undeceived! We challenge the trial!

In the name of Him that died and rose from the dead. In the name of ten thousands times ten thousands arrayed in white robes who have washed them in His precious blood! In the name of the Church militant, which is on its way to Heaven, we challenge you to the test this day whether Jesus is a Savior or not! And we pray God to lead you to try it, for we know that your conclusion will beWe have heard Him ourselves, and we know that He is the Christ, the Savior of the world. May Gods Spirit rest on these words, and may we meet in Heaven, for Jesus sake. Amen.

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HOW FAITH COMES

NO. 2623

A SERMON   
INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS-DAY, MAY 21, 1899.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON THURSDAY EVENING, FEBRUARY 2, 1882.

**And many of the Samaritans of that city believed on Him for the saying of the woman who testified, He told me all that I ever did. So when the Samaritans were come unto Him, they sought Him that He would tarry with them: and He abode there two days. And many more believed because of His own word; and said unto the woman, Now we believe not because of your saying: for we have heard Him ourselves, and know that this is, indeed, the Christ, the Savior of the world.   
John 4:39-42.**

WHEREVER faith exists, it is the gift of God. It is a plant that never sprang up spontaneously from the soil of corrupt human nature. Whether it is little faith or great faith, it is equally of Divine origin, and wherever it is foundwhether in the child of pious parents who was brought up with the utmost care, or in one who has lived all the former part of his life in the vilest sinit is equally and alike the fruit of the Spirit and the effect of Gods Grace. From this fact I gather great encouragement because, if it needs Divine power to implant faith in the heart that looks more favorable, it needs no more to implant and preserve it in the soul that appears most unprepared to receive it. Casting our eyes over the whole map of Palestine, we might have said that Samaria was probably as unlikely a place as any in the entire country in which we might expect to find followers of the Lord Jesus, for, at the very threshold of Christs announcing Himself, there would be found this prejudice, that the Samaritans would not believe in a Jew.

They would not even listen to a Jew, for, while the Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans, the Samaritans reciprocated the feeling and had no dealings with the Jews. Yet it was among the Samaritans, the members of the mongrel faith into which Judaism had deteriorated, that Christ was to find a large number of His followers! My Brothers, you will be wise to go, first, to those places where there seems to be least likelihood of conversions. You will often find that God judges not as man judgesMan looks on the outward appearancebut God, who reads the hearts of men, can see a certain readiness where we reckon that there is the most unreadiness! The Lord knows that the soil where the Seed of the Kingdom is sown may be in the best condition for fruitfulness even when we fancy that it cannot possibly yield us any return for our labor. If faith is the work of Goda supernatural thingas it certainly is, what have you and I to do with judging according to natural appearances?

You may go and speak, my Brother, feeble as you feel yourself to be, for the Seed owes very little, indeed, to the hand that sows it. And you may go, my Brother or my Sister, and scatter this precious Seed upon what you may regard as waste soil, but the Seed owes very little, after all, to the soil! God can make it spring up like a root out of a dry ground and, as of old He brought water out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock, so can He bring a harvest to His Glory where everything seems utterly barren. If it is Gods work, let us have no doubts, much lese any despondencies, concerning it, but let us continue to put ourselves into His hands that He may use us anywhere that He pleases, for we know not where He will most glorify His name through our feeble instrumentality.

I am going to talk about faithfaith as it came to these Samaritans. And we shall notice, first, faiths annunciationNow we believe. Secondly, faiths nativitywhere it is born. Thirdly, faiths upbringing faiths Nazarethfor, according to the text, it grows and takes higher ground as it develops. Now we believe, not because of your saying: for we have heard Him ourselves. I give these names to my three divisions in order to assist your memories.

I. First, then, I call your attention to FAITHS ANNUNCIATION. Here we have it, in the 42nd versewe believe.   
Genuine faith may, through timidity, be hidden for a little while, or, possibly, the love of carnal ease may lead some to conceal their faith in Christ. But it is of the very nature of faith that it should make its appearance known and felt. As Christ had what our Church of England friends call His Epiphany, when He was manifested to men, so faith, though it may, for a while, be swaddled and laid in a manger, and kept in a stable, must have its coming outit must have its manifestation and men must see it! Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea managed, for three years or so, to conceal their faith to a great degree. Every now and then the light would burn a hole through the bushel, for they could not quite hide the fire that was within them, but when Jesus died, then the thoughts of many hearts were revealed and both these men stood out in the clear light of day as His avowed disciples. They could not help it! The occasion had come when their faith must be manifested and they must, by their actions, say, Now we believe. Our Lord has always put, side by side with the faith that saves, the duty of confession of that faith. His own words are, He that believes and is baptized shall be saved. And Paul, guided by the Holy Spirit, wrote, If you shall confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus, and shall believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved. For with the heart man believes unto righteousness and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. Christ loves not a tongue-tied faithHe would not have Faith dumb, but would have her speak to the glorifying of her Lord on whom she depends! So these Samaritans, when they had come to believe in Jesus, must confess their faith and they did so by saying, Now we believe.   
Possibly, dear Friends, they felt some little difficultyI suppose that it was but little in their casein saying, Now we believe, because they had previously undergone a period of doubt. Evidently these people did not receive the womans testimony, although others had done so. They listened to it and were sufficiently moved by it to go out and see the Teacher of whom she spoke, but they were not brought to faith by it. Perhaps they even battled with her and raised questionsI will not say quibblesbut, at last, to her great joy, they said to her, Now we believe. We have got out of all the muddle and confusion in which we were. We have left the darkness, the doubt and the difficulty. And now we believe.   
Are there any of you, dear Friends, who have been amusing yourselves for years with the notion that you were infidels? Have you tried to make up, in your own minds, a sort of belief that you were agnostics? I think that is the favorite word for those who are proud of being know as nothings or ignoramuses. Have you tried to bolster up in your mind the idea that you were something very amazing in the form of a skeptical person all the while, I doubt not, believing a great deal more than you liked to admitbelieving and trembling at the same time? But have you played that foolish game out and have you now truly trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ as your own Savior? If so, then do not be ashamed to say, Now I believe. You may have to eat your own wordswell, then, eat them! You may have to be very humble when you meet your old friendswell, then, be humblethere will be no harm to you in that! And, perhaps, they will bring against you some of your own arguments. Well, it will serve you right if they do and, besides, it will give you the pleasure of breaking those arguments in pieces and, perhaps, of winning your friends for Christ, for you have seen those fallacies broken in your own case and you may be the means, in the hand of God, of breaking the bow and cutting the spear in sunder in the case of those who have been your fellow doubters!   
Do not be ashamed of confessing your past folly. I think a man who says, I was wrong, really says, in effect, I am a little wiser, today, than I was yesterday. But he who never admits that he has made a mistake and who claims that he has always been in the right, has evidently never made much growth in knowledge of himself. So, do not be ashamed to say, Now I believe, though that confession may have been preceded by many a doubt.

And do not hesitate to say it to the person who has, up to now, been baffled by you. I expect the tears were in that poor womans eyes when she said to the men, You remember what sort of person I used to be, and you see the change that has been worked in me. You know that I always spoke straight out what I believed, and this blessed Man, who read my very soul, is the Christ! I know He is. Then, why do you not believe what I say about Him? I should not wonder if she pleaded very hard with them, and prayed, and entreated them to believe her testimony. And now, at last, when they did believe, it was due to her that they should cheer her heart by saying, Now we believe. And, even though they had to add, not because of your saying, that qualification would not grieve her. Oh, she would say, so long as you believe, I do not mind how you came into that happy condition! I would have been glad if God had used my saying to bring you to faith, but, inasmuch as He blessed the saying of the great Preacher, the Lord and Master, Himself, I am the more glad on that account, for He will have all the glory of it and, so long as you do but believe, you give gladness to my heart.   
There are some of you, dear Friends, to whom I have preached in vain for a long while and God knows that when I have been laid aside, I have often felt a holy joy in my heart at the thought that the man who has been preaching for me will be blessed by God to some who have never been converted under my ministry. Sometimes, when I have longed to be fishing for souls, but could not even stand and, therefore, had to lie at home in pain, it has been my hope that some other fisherman would throw the fly better than I might have done, and that you would take the bait from him, though you have often refused it from me. And when you come forward to join the Church, and say to me, as many have done, Sir, we believe, but it was through Fullerton and Smiths mission, or, it was through the teaching in the Sunday school, or, it was through the agency of someone who spoke to us in the aisle, I am sure that I have been just as glad and happy as if you had told me that it was by my own personal testimony that you had found the Lord. Glad, indeed, am I to be the instrument of saving souls, but still, if you are saved, the instrumentality by which that blessed result is reached is, after all, a very small matter! But, when you do really believe in our Lord Jesus Christ, take care that you tell us, for we have wept over you and prayed for you. And when you are converted, it seems but a fair and honest recompense that you should say to the individual whom God has honored to be your spiritual parent, Now we believe. By doing so, you will strengthen and encourage him to go on with his work more earnestly than before! Perhaps you will even stave off a heartbreak and make the Christian sower fill his hands the fuller and scatter the seed more deftly because he knows that he has not labored in vain, nor spent his strength for nothing!   
In this annunciation of faith, I want you to observe, also, that it was very speedy. The Lord Jesus Christ was only in that place for two days, so that those who said, Now we believe, must have testified very speedily after they believed. I do not think that it is the duty of people to wait several months before they come forward and confess Christit may sometimes be the wisdom of the officers and members of the Church to say to some persons, We would like to see a little of your life, that we may judge by your fruit, before we receive you into fellowship. It may even be their duty to say that, and to keep them waiting outside the Church for a while to test their genuineness, but it is not the duty of the candidate, himself. His business is, as speedily as may be convenient after he has believed in Jesus, to confess his faith and to seek to be baptized and added to the Church. You do not find Paul waiting several months, after he was converted, before he was baptized. You see, in Scripture, no trace of what our old people in the country used to practice, namely, summering and wintering converts, to see what they were like before they permitted them to make a confession of their faith in Jesus. No, noif you have believed in Him, come along with you!   
The next step is to say so, and to say it as quickly as you can, Now we believe. If tonight you are brought to faith in Jesus Christ, I would say to you, find some Christian Brother and tell him at once that you have believed in Jesus. When this precious child of the Spirit of God, namely, Faith, is born, let it be known to the Kings house that it has come! In Heaven they make such blessed tidings known for, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repents. Though it is but the initial stage of faith, hold not the glad news back from the Church of God, but let it be speedily proclaimed, Now we believe. What a joyous moment it is when any can say, Now we believe! It is the end of suspenseit is the end of the kingdom of darkness, it is the end of fear, it is the end of despairit is the dawn of hope, it is the dawn of Heaven! Oh, what a world of meaning there is in those three words! What glory is opened up to the poor tearful eye by faith! What sights are visible when we can say, Now we believe!   
O my dear Hearers, can you all say, Now we believe? If you can do so, truthfully, you can say a greater thing than Cicero or Demosthenes, with all their eloquence, ever uttered! Have you been seekers for months and years? Have you been tempest-tossed and driven up and down upon the sea of doubt? May you now cast your anchor overboard into the depths of Jehovahs love and when you find that it holds, may you cry out, with ecstasy, Now we believe! There, then, is the annunciation of faith.   
II. Now, very briefly, I want you to look, in the second place, on FAITHS NATIVITY. How does faith come into mens hearts?   
According to the plain teaching of Scripture, Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God. But faith is not always created in the human heart by the same form of instrumentality. It is always the fruit of the Spirit of God but it comes in different ways. Some of these Samaritans believed because of the saying of the woman and, I suppose that in the Christian Church, a very large number derive their faith through the power of Gods Spirit, from the personal witness of others who have been converted. Now look, dear Friends, all of you, at this woman, and be encouraged to use your personal testimony for Christ! She was the spiritual mother of many a Samaritan believer, yet she was a woman of bad character. An ill savor was about her nameeverybody in Sychar must have looked upon her as a dangerous person of fickle love and of foul ways and yet, after she had found Christ, she did not hesitate to tell her neighbors about Himand God did not refuse to bless her testimony! I believe that there are thousands of persons whom no man would ordain, but who are ordained of God, for all thatand there are many whom we would say that the Church could not employ, whom the great Head of the Church employs, and employs grandly, too! What if you have been converted from great sin? Be careful and watchful that you sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto you, but let not shame with regard to the past make you ashamed to confess the Christ of the present, and to acknowledge that He has worked a great work upon you! Here was a poor fallen woman and yet, after her conversion, she became a missionary of Christ to the city of Sychar! She was, altogether, quite an unofficial person. She does not appear to have been called a sister of mercy, or to have put on any peculiar garb, but she ran straightway to the people with whom she had lived and, perhaps, to the very men with whom she had sinned! She went to tell the story that Christ had come to her and had given to her that Living Water, of which, if a man shall drink, he shall never thirst again! Well, Believer, if no man sends you, go all the same, for God sends you! Perhaps no man has laid his hands upon you, but of what use is the laying on of hands? Full often I fear it is only empty hands laid on empty headsso, if no man has laid his hands on you, go without the laying on of hands, in the name of Him who has laid His pierced hands upon you and said to you, Fear not, for I am with you: be not dismayed, for I am your God: I will strengthen you, yes, I will help you, yes, I will uphold you with the right hand of My righteousness.   
If you ask, What shall my message be? let your message be your own personal testimonywhat you have, yourself, seen, heard, tasted, handled and felt of the good Word of God. I do not suppose that this woman arranged her discourse under three heads, or that she had an introduction and a conclusion and all that, but she just went to the men of the city and said, Come see a Man who told me all things that I ever didis not this the Christ? That was her little sermon and as often as she repeated it over and over again, she spoke out and bore her personal testimonyand so she brought the men of Sychar to Christ. Go home, said Christ to one whom He had healed, go home to your friends and tell them how great things the Lord has done for you, and has had compassion on you. It is amazing how attractive a personal narrative is! If you begin to explain to some people the doctrines of the Gospel, your audience will diminish one by one. But tell them your own experience of the power of Christ and they will listen as listened the wedding guest when the ancient mariner laid his hand upon him, detained him and told him that strange legend of the sea! You will have attentive hearers when you speak about your own dealings with Christ, the wonders that Christ has worked in you and for you, and of which you can testify because they are your own experience! That is, in many a case, the nativity of faith. The mother tells her child, the husband tells his wife, the brother tells his sister and, more often, still, the sister tells her brother. One man communicates it to his co-workersa gentleman speaks of it in the drawing room to those of his own classand so faith is born in other hearts as the result of the personal testimony of Believers!

But, dear Friends, there are some persons who do not seem as if they would ever be converted by that means. Personal testimony evidently fails with them as it did with some of these Samaritans. What, then, remains? Why, it will suffice if personal testimony leads the way and excites attention to the subject! Then, if the man is wise, he asks for time and thoughtand our Lord Jesus is always ready to attend to those who are anxious about spiritual matters, but are not quick to believe. Two days did He remain in Sychar and those unbelievers who were candid sat at His feet and heard Him through the two days. Now, what did Jesus preach during those two days? Turn to your New Testaments and find the sermon. Even though you look very carefully, you will not discover it, for it is not there! And it is a very curious thing that when the woman preached, we have notes of her sermon, but when Christ preached, we are not told what He said. Very remarkable is it that, frequently, we have those discourses of Christ which did not convert anybody and we have not those discourses which did convert people! Why is that? I suppose that the Holy Spirit gives us the discourses which were rejected in order to let us see that there was no fault in the sermon, but that the fault was in the people. But as for those that were received, He simply tells us the result and does not state the particular form of the discourse. I would infinitely rather preach sermons that win souls and are then forgotten, than go on preaching and having my discourses printed from week to week, and hear of no results! Happily, I have not to choose either alternative, but these people who were not persuaded to believe by the witness of the woman, were converted through hearing Christ, Himself.   
Well, says one, but we cannot personally come to Christ right now. No, I know that you cannot, but you can do what is very much like it. I recommend every man who finds faith to be a difficult thing, to carefully read through the four Gospels, asking the Holy Spirit to enable him to believe what is recorded and revealed there. I usually find that the greatest doubters are the people who do not read the Bible. Holy Scripture has within itself a mighty convincing powerand when men lie soaking in it, it soon penetrates into their very souls! A man says, I cannot believe, and yet he does not read or hear about the very thing that is to be believed! He keeps out of the way of it and yet says, I cannot believe it. If there is something in the newspaper today, about which you felt compelled to say, Other people seem to believe it, but, somehow, I am unable to do soI would be very glad to believe it, but I cannotwhat would you do? You would read the statement again! You would refer to any other account that would be likely to confirm it. You would candidly examine the whole affair to see whether it was true or not. Yet how few how very, very few have thus come to Holy Scripture, itself, and virtually listened to Jesus, Himself, and then have gone away and still said, We do not believe. Unless they are really given up to hardness of heart, the result, in every case, seems to be that when they search the Scriptures, and seek to know what Christ did and said, they are soon subdued by His sweet power and are found sitting at His feet, believing in His name! If anybody has not done this and yet remains an unbeliever, I charge his unbelief upon himself as his own fault and sin. If I will not examine the evidence, I am to blame if I do not believe the Truth of God!   
Do you ask, What evidence shall I examine? I say again, examine the documents themselves! Let Christ speak for Himself. Had I not better read a, Life of Christ? Listen, there is no, Life of Christ, extant but the one written by the four Evangelists. All the attempts that have been made at lives of Christ, whatever value they may have, are not biographies of Christ! They are somebodys idea of what He may have been. We need no other, Life of Christ, than the fourfold one given to us in the Gospels! Those Inspired Evangelists have told us all we ought to wish to know. And if you read those Booksnot mens books which have been written upon those BooksI believe that through the blessing of God the Holy Spirit, you will yet be able to say, with these Samaritans, Now we believe. God grant that it may be so! It is in this way that faith is often born. Holy Scripture is the Bethlehem of faith! There is this blessed Child brought forth and happy are they who take it, and nurse it, that it may grow.   
III. This is our last point, FAITHS UPBRINGING, or, as I called it, faiths Nazareth.   
It is possible that there were some of the Samaritans who believed and who, when they said to the woman, Now we believe, not because of your saying, for we have heard Him ourselves, meant that they did, at first, believe because of the womans saying, but, after a while, they outgrew that first stage of faith and they came to believe in Jesus still more strongly because they had heard Him themselves.   
This was a higher form of faith. The beginnings of faith are as a spiders web. It would be difficult to say how little a thing faith may be at first. I doubt not that many believe the Bible because they were always taught by their parents that it is the Word of Godalthough they have never thoroughly examined that question for themselves. Some have believed the Truth of God, at first, because their minister preached it. Well, I would not discourage even that form of faith, for it may be like a very tiny thread which may be fastened to a stringand the string may be tied to a rope and the rope be attached to a cableand, at last, the shipwrecked mariner may thus be saved from drowning! Anything that links men to Christ may, nevertheless, be overruled of God to their salvation. When that woman said, concerning our Lord, If I may but touch His clothes, I shall be made whole, I fear that there was some superstition in the notion, but, nevertheless, Christ overlooked that and, seeing the real faith that lay hidden underneath, took care that it should live. Do not discourage anything that tends towards faith in Christ, but it is a grand thing when men grow, by Gods Grace, till they can say, Now I do not believe simply because of what my dear mother taught me. I do not believe merely because of what my minister preached. I do not believe because of any human being at all, but I believe because I have heard Christ for myself, I have had personal dealings with Him and, now, I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day.   
The faith that sprang from Christs own testimony would also be much more vivid faith. The other day there was a meeting held to protest against the barbarities indicted on our Jewish brethren. All the speakers spoke very strongly, but if any one of you had seen what has been done and had come fresh from the deeds of blood, I guarantee that you would have spoken very intensely, indeed. Your indignation would have flamed fiercely if you had seen the homes of the people burned down and men murdered and women ravished, for the sight of the cruelties and abominations would have affected you far more than merely hearing about them! So, when Faith gets to deal with Christ for herselfwhen she sees sin forgivenwhen she feels the weight taken from her troubleswhen she realizes the great possessions of joy which Christ has given to her to her, herselfthen she becomes much more vivid and truly living than the faith that rests simply upon the testimony of others!   
And, Beloved, as our faith becomes more vivid, so, also, it becomes more independent. We need more independent Christian people in the present day! I hope that we are growing a race of them, here, and I pray that we may grow far more of them. I have seen young people and, for all that matter, old people, too, behave excellently and seem to be admirable Christians while they have lived here in the midst of other warm-hearted Believers. But they have gone down into the country to live and it has been very grievous to see how cold-hearted they have becomehow some of them have even, at last, forsaken the assemblies of Gods House and, if they have not utterly turned aside, yet they have been very different from their former selves! Beloved, if you have seen Christ and are truly one with Him, you will live with Him when all Christian association is withdrawn! Look at many of the houses in our London streets. If a giant were to pull one of them out of the middle of the row, they would all come tumbling down! They only stand because they lean on one another. But Christians should be detached housesno, semi-detachedfor they must be attached to Christbut they ought to stand alone, apart from men, because of their living faith in Him!   
This kind of faith has grown beyond that which was at first exercised and it has become broader. If you will kindly look at the chapter, you will notice that all the woman could tell the men was this, Come, see a Man who told me all things that I ever didis not this the Christ? But these men had learned more than that, for they had listened to Jesus Himself! They wondered, at first, that He, being a Jew, should care for them. But, by-and-by, it darted into their mind that He had not come to be the Savior of Jews, alone, so they said, We have heard Him, ourselves, and know that this is, indeed, the Christ, the Savior of the world. Oh, that was grand, broad faith, when they saw that this Christ was not the Jews Christ alone, but the Christ of the Samaritansthe Christ of the Gentiles, toothe Savior of sinners all over the world! May your faith and mine, dear Friends, grow broad! May we believe for others! May we hope for others! May we expect to see Gods salvation extending even unto the ends of the earth and, moved by this faith, may we be stirred up to go out and find the lost sheep, that we may bring them to the Great Shepherd, that He may fold them in safety by His tender care! Let us be so much with Christ that we may catch His spirit, and that our faith may grow exceedingly, and our love to all the saints be increased!

The Lord give His blessing, for Jesus sake! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON:  
**JOHN 4:1-42.**

Verses 1-6. When, therefore, the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, (though Jesus Himself baptized not, but His disciples), He left Judea and departed again into Galilee. And He must needs go through Samaria. Then came He to a city of Samaria which is called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son, Joseph. Now Jacobs well was there. Jesus, therefore, being wearied with His journey, sat thus on the well: and it was about the sixth hour. Do not be surprised, dear Brothers and Sisters, if you sometimes grow weary in the Lords work. I trust that, even then, you will not be weary of it, but that you will believe that your blessed Master can still use even His tired servants and bless their labors. The Lord Jesus Christ worked great marvels even when He sat wearily on the brink of Jacobs welland you, perhaps, are at this moment as fatigued and worn as you well can beyet, will you not awaken all the energies of your soul if you should see an opportunity of doing good, even if it should be to some poor fallen woman, as in the case here mentioned? It is a blessed thing never to be too tired to pray and to never be too tired to speak to an anxious enquirer!

7. There came a woman of Samaria to draw water. Providence was at work so that when Christ reached the well, this woman was on her way there. It was very late in the day for anyone to go to draw water, but, probably, the other women, who went to the well early in the morning, were not willing to associate with her, so she had to go by herself. Late as she was, however, she was all in good time, for she reached the spot just when Christ was waiting to bless her!

7, 8. Jesus said unto her, Give Me to drink. (For His disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat). Or else they might have drawn water from the well to refresh Him.

9, 10. Then said the woman of Samaria to Him, How is it that You, being a Jew, asks drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? For the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans. Jesus answered and said unto her, If you knew the gift of God, and Who it is that says to you, Give Me to drink; you would have asked of Him, and He would have given you living water. See the deadly mischief of ignorance concerning spiritual things? If she had known, she would have asked, and Christ would have given! But the first link was missing and, therefore, the rest of the chain was not drawn on. Sometimes all that people need is a little wise instruction and they will then trust the Savior. God grant that we may always be ready to give it! Alas, there are some who need much more than that, but Christ could truly say to this Samaritan woman, If you had known, you would have asked, and I would have given. O dear Hearers, do not perish through ignorance! You have your Biblesthen, search them! You have a Gospel ministry among youtake care that you give diligent heed to what you hear from the servants of the Lord!

11. The woman said unto Him, Sir, You have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from where, then, have You that living water? Christ told the woman that He could give her living water, but it puzzled her to know how He could get at it. The well where they had met was deep and He had nothing to draw the water out of ithow, then, could He go still deeper to get the living water of which He had spoken? She could not understand His simile and, to this day, it is the same with many of our Hearers. The simplest language of Gods ministers goes right over the heads of the people. They take our words literally when they ought to see that they are spiritual and, on the other hand, I have known them spirit them away when they ought to be accepted literally. Such is the perversity of mans mind that, often, he will not understand the Truth of God.

12-14. Are You greater than our father, Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle? Jesus answered and said unto her, Whoever drinks of this water shall thirst again: but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. These words set forth the wonderful nature of Divine Grace! They greatly err who suppose that we can receive it and yet, after all, be left to perish without it! No, but when it is once imparted to us, it continues to spring up within us like a well that never runs dry! It is the living and incorruptible seed, which lives and abides forever. It is of the very nature and essence of the Grace of God that it is indestructibleit cannot be taken away from the heart in which it has been implanted by the Holy Spirit!

15. The woman said unto Him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come here to draw. This was an ignorant prayer on the part of the woman, but it is one which I would commend to every enlightened soul Sir, give me this water. Do you want a form of prayer? Here is one for you! Sir, Lordgive me this water. The Lord is ready to hear that petition and to give this precious living water even now.

16, 17. Jesus said unto her, Go, call your husband and come here. The woman answered and said, I have no husband. The Lord Jesus knew all about her character and here He touched the weakest point in it. His plainest teaching had so far missed the mark, for He had not reached her consciencebut He was about to do so.

17, 18. Jesus said unto her, You have well said, I have no husband: for you have had five husbands; and he whom you now have is not your husband: in that said you truly. You can imagine her astonishmenther blank amazement as the secret story of her life was thus repeated to her!

19. The woman said unto Him, Sir, I perceive that You are a Prophet. It would have been a sign of better things if she had said, Lord, I perceive that I am a sinner, but that confession had to be made a little farther on. How apt people are rather to think about the preacher than about themselves! If half the criticisms which are passed upon ministers of Christ were bestowed upon the hearers, themselves, how much sooner they might receive the blessing they need! The woman then asked our Lord a question about religion which was strangely out of place from such a woman as she. Yet, often, those who have least morality will have the most ceremonialism and concern about the externals of worship!

20. Our fathers worshipped in this mountain. This Mount Gerizim   
20. And You say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship. This she thought was a very important matter.   
21. Jesus said unto her, Woman, believe Me, the hour comes when you shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. There shall be an abolition of all specially-holy shrines, for all places shall be, alike, holy. There shall be a putting an end to all your traditions and your forms of worship, for God shall be worshipped after another fashion than that which is merely formal and superficial.   
22-26. You worship what you do not know: we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour comes and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeks such to worship Him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth. The woman said unto Him, I know that Messiah comes, who is called Christ: when He is come, He will tell us all things. Jesus said unto her, I that speak unto you am He. That majestic word of Christ carried conviction with itthe woman believed it then and there!   
27, 28. And upon this came His disciples, and marveled that He talked with the woman: yet no man said, What do You seek? or, Why do You talk with her? The woman then left her water pot. She was too glad, too happy to recollect so poor a thing as a water pot! It was much to her before, but very little now. As one who finds a precious pearl forgets some trifle that he carried in his hands, so she left her water pot.   
28, 29. And went her way into the city, and said to the men, Come, see a Man, who told me all things that I ever didis not this the Christ? Her notion was that when Christ came, He would tell all things. Here was a Man who revealed her innermost secretswas not He the Christ?   
30-32. Then they went out of the city and came unto Him. In the meantime, His disciples urged Him, saying, Master, eat. But He said unto them, I have meat to eat that you know not of. O Beloved, there is a wonderful fascination about the blessed work of soul-seeking! When one is really anxious to bring a sinner to the Savior, eating and drinking are often forgotten! As the hunter of the chamois, in the heat of the chase leaps from crag to crag, and is oblivious of danger, and forgets all about the time for his meals, so he that hunts after a precious soul, to win it for Christ, forgets everything else! He is altogether absorbed in this holy pursuitthe Master was more absorbed in it than any of us are ever likely to be.   
33-35. Therefore said the disciples, one to another, Has any man brought Him anything to eat? Jesus said unto them, My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work. Say not you, There are yet four months, and then comes harvest? Behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes and look on the fields for they are white, already, to harvest. That was probably an old Oriental proverb, used by lazy men who never thought it time to get to work, but Jesus said, Do not use the idlers language any longer. Now, at once, there is work for you to do.   
36-42. And he that reaps receives wages, and gathers fruit unto life eternal: that both he that sows and he that reaps may rejoice together. And herein is that saying true, One sows, and another reaps. I sent you to reap that whereon you bestowed no labor: other men labored and you are entered into their labors. And many of the Samaritans of that city believed on Him for the saying of the woman, which testified, He told me all that I ever did. So when the Samaritans were come unto Him, they besought Him that He would tarry with them: and He abode there two days. And many more believed because of His own word and said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of your saying: for we have heard Him, ourselves, and know that this is, indeed, the Christ, the Savior of the world. The Lord bring us all to trust in Him for His dear names sake! Amen.

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THE NOBLEMANS FAITH

NO. 1865

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, OCTOBER 11, 1885, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**There was a certain nobleman, whose son was sick at Capernaum. When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judea into Galilee, he went unto Him, and besought Him that He would come down, and heal his son: for he was at the point of death. Then said Jesus unto him, Except you see signs and wonders, you will not believe. The nobleman said unto Him, Sir, come down before my child dies. Jesus said unto him, Go your way, your son lives. And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him and he went his way. And as he was now going down, his servants met him, and told him, saying, Your son lives. Then inquired he of them the hour when he began to mend. And they said unto him, yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him. So the father knew that it was at the same hour in which Jesus said unto him, Your Son lives: and he believed, and his whole house. John 4:46-53.**

THIS narrative illustrates the rise and progress of faith in the soul. While I try to speak of it, I pray that we may experimentally follow the track, desiring that such faith may have a rise in our hearts, may make progress in our spirits and may become even stronger in us than it was in this nobleman. The point, my Brothers and Sisters, is not to hear about these things, only, but to have them repeated in your own soul. We need to come to real business and to make the things of God matters of downright fact to ourselves. We need not only to hear about this nobleman from Capernaum, or anybody elsebut to see in our own souls the same work of Grace as was worked in him. The same living Christ is here and His help we as greatly need as ever did this nobleman. May we seek it as he sought it and find it as he found it! Thus will the Holy Spirit, who inspired the narrative before us, be found writing it over again, not upon the pages of a book, but upon the fleshy tablets of our hearts!

Observe then, at the commencement, that trouble, first of all, led this courtly person to Jesus. Had he been without trial, he might have lived forgetful of his God and Savior. But sorrow came to his house and it was Gods angel in disguise. It may be, dear Friend, that you are in trouble this morning and, if so, I pray that affliction may be the black horse upon which Mercy shall ride to your door! It is a sad, sad thing with some men that the better the Lord deals with them in Providence, the worse return they make. On the other hand, there are hearts that turn to the Lord when He smites them. When they drift into deep waters, when they can scarcely find bread to eat, when sickness attacks their bodies and especially when their children are smitten, then they begin to think of God and better things. Blessed is the discipline of the great Father in such a case! It is well for the troubled if their tribulation bruises their heart to repentance and repentance leads them to seek and find pardon.

The particular form of trial which visited this nobleman was the sickness of his child. He had a little son whom he dearly loved and who was down with a deadly fever. The father appears to have been a naturally kind and affectionate person. His servants evidently took a great interest in him and in the domestic affliction which grieved him, for you observe with what eagerness they came to meet him, to tell him of the recovery of his child. The fathers heart was sadly wounded because his dear boy was at the point of death. No doubt he had tried all the remedies known to the times, had sent for every physician that could be found within miles of Capernaum and now, having heard of one, Jesus of Nazareth, who at Cana had turned water into wine and at Jerusalem had done many mighty works, he resorts to Him with eager petition and desperate hope.

He might never have thought of seeking Jesus if it had not been for that dear dying boy. How often does it happen that children, though they are not angels, yet are used to do better work than angels could accomplish, for they sweetly lead their parents to God and Heaven! They twine themselves about our hearts and then, if we see them sicken and mark their pains, our sympathetic hearts are wrung with anguish and we cry, O God, spare my child! Lord, have mercy upon my little one! The first prayers that come from many hearts are, under God, fetched forth by grief for little ones most dearly loved. Is it not written, And a little child shall lead them? It was so with this manhe was brought to Jesus by troublebrought to Jesus by anxiety about a child. I have it strongly upon me, at this moment, that I am speaking to certain persons who are not converted, but they have come here because they are in great sorrow possibly a dear little one is pining awayand their hearts are crying to God that, if possible, the precious life may be spared. In the House of Prayer they feel somewhat comforted, but their hearts are ready to break because of the loss they so much dread. How much I pray our Lord to make this trouble a means of Grace!

Trial was the occasion, the preface to the work of Divine Grace. We will now proceed to look upon the saving part of it, namely, the faith which was born in this noblemans heart. We will first spy out the spark of faith; then the smoldering fire of faithmuch heaped over and dampened, so as to be smoke rather than fire. Then, thirdly, we will look upon the flame of faith, or faith at last showing itself decidedly. And fourthly, the conflagration of faith, when faith, at last, blazed up in the man, fired his whole nature and spread to his whole houseAnd he believed, and his whole house. Again, I say, let us try to follow in fact as well as in meditation.

I. I want you carefully to mark THE SPARK OF FAITH, all the while sayingI am going to look and see if I have such a spark of faith. And if I find it, I will prize it much and pray the Holy Spirit to breathe softly upon it, that it may rise to something more permanent and powerful.

The faith of this nobleman rested, at the first, entirely upon the report of others. He lived at Capernaum, down there by the sea. And among the newsmongers it was common talk that there had risen a great Prophet who was working great wonders. He himself had never seen Jesus, nor heard Him speak, but he believed the report of others and he was right in doing so, for they were credible persons. No doubt many were in the early stages of faiththey have heard friends say that the Lord Jesus receives sinners. That He puts away sin. that He calms the conscience. That He changes the nature; that He hears prayer; that He sustains His people under trouble. These things they have heard from persons of good repute, whom they esteem and, therefore, they believe them.

Friend, are you saying to yourself, I have no doubt it is all true, but I wonder whether it would be true for me. I am in trouble this morningwill

the Lord Jesus help me? I have a present pressure upon my spiritwill prayer to Him relieve me? You cannot say that you know, from anything you have ever seen of Him, that Jesus would thus bless you, but you infer that He will do so from what friends have told you. Well, faith often begins in that way. Men believe the report which is brought to them by wellknown persons who have experienced the power of Divine Love and thus, at first, like the Samaritans, they believe because of the womans report. In future time they will come to believe because of having heard, seen, tasted and handled for themselves, but the beginning is good. This faith which comes of a report by others is a spark of true fire. Take care of it! May God grant you Grace so to pray about it, that that spark may increase into a flame!

Observe that this faith was such a little faith that it only concerned the healing of the sick child. The nobleman did not know that he needed healing in his own hearthe did not perceive his own ignorance of Jesus and his own blindness to the Messiah. He did not, perhaps, know that he needed to be born again. Neither did he understand that the Savior could give him spiritual life and light. He had little knowledge of the Saviors spiritual power and thus his faith had a very narrow range. What he did believe was that the Lord Jesus, if he would come to his house, could prevent his child from dying of the fever. He had reached as far as thatand such faith as he had, he turned to practical use at once. Friend, you do not as yet know how great my Lord is and what wonderful things He does for those who put their trust in Him. But you are saying, Surely He could help me, this morning, in my present trial, and deliver me out of my present difficulty. So far, so good. Use what faith you have. Bring before the Lord the trial of the hour. Let me encourage you to do so. If you cannot come to Him for heavenly things, you may, for the present, begin with the sorrows and trials of earth.

If you cannot come to Him for an eternal blessing, you may come to Him for a passing favor and He is ready to hear you. Though your prayer is only about worldly things and nothing more than a merely natural prayer, yet pray it, for, He hears the young ravens when they cry, and I am sure they do not pray spiritual prayers! All that ravens can ask for will be for worms and fliesand yet He hears them and feeds them! And you, a man, though you may but pray at this time for a very commonplace mercyone of the slighter blessingsyet you may pray with confidence if you have any faith in the gracious Lord. Though that faith is only a spark and nothing more, I would not blow it out, nor will the Lord Jesus do so, for He has said that a smoking flax He will not quench. If you have any desire towards Him and any degree of faith in Him, let it live and lead you to the dear Masters feet!

The noblemans faith was so feeble that he limited the power of Jesus to His local Presence. Hence his prayer was, Sir, come down before my child dies. If he could but induce the Lord Jesus to enter the room where the sick child lay, he believed that He would speak to the fever and the fever would be curedbut he had no idea that the Lord Jesus Christ could work at the distance of 25 miles! He had no notion that the Word of the Lord could operate apart from His Presence. Still, it was better to have that limited faith than to have none at all! You, children of God, when you get to limiting the Holy One of Israel, are guilty of gross sin! But if those who are seeking the Lord, through ignorance and weakness of faith, are found limiting Him, it is far more excusable in them. The Lord Jesus treats it graciously and removes it by a gentle rebuke. It is not the same thing for a beginner to be weak of faith as for you who have enjoyed long experience of Gods goodness, to fall into mistrust of Him. Therefore I say to you, in whom the Lord is beginning to work, if you have no more faith than just to say, The Lord Jesus could heal me if He were herethe Lord would help me and answer my cry if He were hereit is better to have such a faith than to be unbelieving! Your narrow faith limits Him exceedingly and shuts Him up in a very close place and, therefore, you may not expect Him to do many mighty works for youand yet, up to the measure of your faith, He will go with you and bless you.

As a matter of unpromised Sovereign Grace, He may even do exceeding abundantly above what you ask or even think. Therefore I would treat your faith like a little babeI would nurse it until it can stand alone and hold out my finger to help it till its tottering steps become firm. We will not blame the babe because it cannot run or leap, but we will cherish it and urge it to greater strengthto which strength it will come in due time. Our Lord Jesus Christ deserves the largest faith from each one of us. Grieve Him not by suspicions of His ability! Give Him what faith you have and ask for more.

The noblemans faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, though it was only a spark, yet influenced him. It led him to take a considerable journey to find our Lord. From Capernaum he went up the hills to Cana that he might plead with Jesus. And he went personally. This is the more remarkable because he was a man of rank and position. I do not know whether he was Chuza, Herods steward. I should not wonder if he were because we do not hear of any other noble family being on the side of Christ. But we do hear of the wife of Chuza, Herods steward, as among those that ministered to our Lord of their substance. We hear, also, of Manaen, fosterbrother to Herod. It may have been one of these. We do not know, but noblemen were scarce birds in the Church in those days as, indeed, they are now! We naturally expect, therefore, to hear of such a person as this again. And as we have honorable mention of those two, we are not very rash in conjecturing that this nobleman may have been one of them.

Now noblemen do not, as a rule, think of taking journeys themselves while they have so many servants at their disposal. But this nobleman came to Christ, himself, and personally sought Him that He would come and heal his son. If your faith is weak in some respects and yet strong enough in others to drive you personally to Christ, personally to pray to Him, it is faith of an acceptable order! If it leads you to pray to our Lord with all your heart, beseeching Him, then your faith is of the right sort. If it leads you to beseech Christ to have mercy upon you, it is the faith which saves the soul! It may be little as a grain of mustard seed, but its importunity shows that there is pungency in itit is true mustard! Dear Sir, are you beginning to pray, at this time, because of sorrow? In the silence of your soul are you crying, O God, save me today! I have come up to London to see other things and I have dropped in here, this morning oh, that this may be the day in which I shall be helped out of my trouble and myself be saved? If your faith brings you to prayer, it is the acknowledged child of Grace, for true-born faith always cries! Your faith helps you to lay hold of Jesus with a resolute grip, saying, I will not let You go, except You bless me! It may be little faith, but it is true faith. It is worked in your soul by the Spirit of God and it will bring a blessing with it. You shall be saved by this faith, to our Lords Glory and to your own comfort!

I notice that this mans faith taught him how to pray in the right style. Notice the argument he used. He sought Him that He would come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death. He urged no merit, but pleaded the misery of the case. He did not plead that the boy was of noble birththat would have been very bad pleading with Jesus. Nor did he urge that he was a lovely childthat would have been a sorry argument. But he pleaded that he was at the point of death. His extremity was his reason for urgency. The child was at Deaths door and, therefore, his father begs that Mercys door may open. When you, my Friend, are taught by Grace to pray aright, you will urge those facts which reveal your own danger and distressand not those which would make you appear rich and righteous. Remember how David prayed. Lord, he said, pardon my iniquity, for it is great. That is evangelical pleading. Most men would have said, Lord, pardon my iniquity, for it was excusable and by no means reached to the heinousness of my fellow men. David knew better. His cry is, Pardon my iniquity, for it is great. Plead with God, poor Sinner, the greatness of your necessity, the direness of your needs! Say that you are at the point of death. Say that the matter about which you plead is a matter of life and deaththis will be an argument calculated to move the heart of Infinite Compassion.

Any tint of goodness that your pride would tempt you to throw into the picture would spoil it. Lay on the black colors thick and three-fold. Plead with God for His mercys sake, for mercy is the only attribute which you can hopefully address while you are an unforgiven sinner! You cannot ask the Lord to bless you because of any desert or merit you have, for you have no trace of any such thing! But you will be wise to plead your necessities. Cry, O God, have mercy upon me, for I need mercy! State your childs case and say, For he is at the point of death. This is the key which opens the door of Mercy!

Do you follow me, dear Hearers, you that are not yet converted? Is there, at any rate, in you some desire to come to the Lord Jesus Christ, though it is only because a temporal trouble is pressing you sorely? A horse does not need a dozen spurs to make it run. The one which now wounds your flank is sharp enough and it is plunged in so deep that you must feel it. Yield to it, lest there should be need of whip as well as spur to make you stir. If you are the Lords chosen, you will have to come and the more readily you do so, the better will it be for you. Come at once! Be you not as the horse or as the mule which have no understandingbut come to Jesus while He gently draws. Though it is with such a feeble faith that you fear it is rather unbelief than faith, yet draw near to Him! Come just as you are and look up to Jesus and prayfor in that prayer shall lie the hope, no, the certainty of relief! The great heart of Jesus will feel your prayer and say, Go in peace.

II. Thus have we seen faith in the spark. We will now look at THE FIRE OF FAITH struggling to maintain itself and gradually increasing. Let us see how the fire smolders, the heap begins to smoke and thus betrays the inner fire.

This mans faith was true as far as it went. That is a great thing to say. He stood before the Savior resolved not to go away from Him. His only hope for his childs life was in this great Prophet of Nazareth and, therefore, he did not intend to leave Him till his request was granted. He does not, at first, get the answer that he wants, but he perseveres and pleads on. This showed that his faith had heart and vitality in it. It was no whim or sudden impulse, but a real persuasion of the power of Jesus to heal. What a mercy it is to be delivered from all sham faith! Better to have little faith and that faith real, than to possess a great creed and give the Lord Jesus no hearty credit! Tell me, my Hearer, have you any real practical faith in the Lord Jesus?

The noblemans faith was true as far as it wentbut it was hindered by a desire for signs and wonders. Our Lord, therefore, gently chided him, saying, Except you see signs and wonders, you will not believe. Now I know that many of you believe that the Lord Jesus can save, but you have fixed in your mind the way in which He must do it. You have been reading certain religious biographies and you find that such a man was driven to despair, had horrible thoughts and so ontherefore you settle it in your minds that you must have similar horrors or you will be lost. You lay it down as a program that you must be saved in that way, or not at all. Is this right? Is this wise? Do you mean to dictate to the Lord?

Perhaps you have read or heard that certain eminent persons were converted through amazing dreams, or by remarkable movements of Providence and you say to yourself, Something equally singular must happen to me, or I will not believe in the Lord Jesus. In this you err like the nobleman! He expected the Savior to come down to the house and perform some act peculiar to His prophetic office! In fact, this nobleman is the New Testament reproduction of Naaman in the Old Testament! You remember how Naaman said, Behold, I thought he would surely come out to me and stand, and call on the Lord, His God, and strike his hand over the place and recover the leper?

Naaman had planned it all in his own mind and had, no doubt, arranged a very proper and artistic performance! And, therefore, when the Prophet simply said, Go and wash in the Jordan seven times, he could not receive so simple and bald a Gospelit was too commonplace, too free from ritual! Many persons, by their mental prejudices, would bind the Lord of Mercy to such and such a way of saving them! But our Lord will not be thus laid under constraint! Why should He? He will save

whom He wills and He will save as He wills. His Gospel is not, Suffer so much horror and despair, and live, but, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved. He comes to many and calls them effectually by the soft whispers of His lovethey do but trust Him and they enter into immediate rest. With little striking feeling, either horrible, or ecstatic, they quietly exercise a child-like confidence in their Crucified Lord and they find eternal life! Why should it not be so with you? Why should you keep yourself out of comfort by laying down a program and demanding that the Holy Spirit should pay attention to it? Let Him save you as He wills! Away with foolish prejudices!

Yet this is to be said of the noblemans faith it could endure a rebuff. Think of the Master only saying to this poor anguished father, Except you see signs and wonders, you will not believe. It was sadly true, but it sounded honestly sharp. Oh, the dear lips of Jesus! They are always like lilies, dropping sweet-smelling myrrh! Myrrh, you know, is bitter to the taste and there was a seeming bitterness about this speech to the nobleman. Yet the father did not give up his suit and turn on his heels and say, He treats me harshly. He said within himself, to whom should I go? and, therefore, he went not away. He was like that woman for whom the Lords lips dropped a far more pungent morsel of myrrh, as He said, It is not meet to take the childrens bread, and to cast it to dogs. Yet she found a sweet smell in that myrrh and perfumed her prayer with it as she said, Truth, Lord, yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters table. This man answered our Lord by still greater importunity. He would not go away, not he! Oh, dear Heart, may you have such faith in Christ that though He should rebuke you, you will not leave Him! Jesus is your only hope, therefore do not turn away from Him. Imitate Bunyan when he spoke words to this effectI was driven to such straits that I must of necessity go to Jesus. And if He had met me with a drawn sword in His hand, I would sooner have thrown myself upon the edge of His sword than have gone away from Him, for I knew Him to be my last hope. O Soul, cling to your Lord, come what may!

Then see how passionately this man pleaded. He cried, Sir, come down before my child dies. As much as if he had said, Lord, do not question me just now about my faith. O my Lord, I pray you do not think of me at all, but heal my dear child, or he will be dead! He was at the point of death when I left him: do hurry down and save him. Limited was that faith, for he still asks Christ to come down and seems to think it essential that our Lord should make a journey to Capernaum to work the cure. But note how intense, how eager, how persevering was his pleading! If His faith failed in breadth, it excelled in force! Dear anxious Friend, keep close to the example now before us! Pray and pray again! Hold on and hold out! Cry on and cry out! Never cease till the Lord of Love grants you an answer of peace.

III. We come to a higher stage and watch THE FLAME OF FAITH. The spark increased as a smoldering fire and now the fire reveals itself in flame. Observe that Jesus said to the petitioner, Go your way, your son lives. And the man truly believedand went his way.

Here note that he believed the Words of Jesus over the head of all his former prejudices. He had thought only that Christ could heal if He came down to Capernaum, but now He believes, though Jesus remains where He is and only speaks the Words. Friend, will you, at this moment, believe the Lord Jesus Christ on His bare Word? Without laying down any rules as to how He will save you, will you trust Him? You have prescribed dark convictions, or vivid dreams, or strange sensationswill you cease from such folly? Will you believe in Jesus Christ as He is revealed in the Scriptures? Will you believe that He can and will save you right now upon your simple trust? Have you not heard of His passion and death upon the Cross for the guilty? Have you not heard it said that all manner of sin and of iniquity shall be forgiven unto men if they believe in Him? Do you not know that he that believes in Him has everlasting life? Will you have done with your nonsense about, Come down and save me, or, Make me feel this and I will believe You? Will you believe in Him, now, despite all your former thoughts, pretensions and desiresand just say, I will trust my soul with Christ, believing that He can save me? You shall be saved as surely as you do thus trust!

The next thing this man did to prove the sincerity of his faith was that he at once obeyed Christ. Jesus said to him, Go your way, that is, Go homeyour son lives. If the man had not believed the Words, he would have lingered there and kept on pleading and looking for favorable signs. But as he has believed, he is satisfied with the Word of the Lord and goes his way without another word. Your son lives is enough for him! Many of you have said, when you have heard the Gospel preached, you tell us to believe in Christ, but we will continue in prayer. That is not what the Gospel commends you. Do I hear you say, I shall continue to read my Bible and attend the means of Grace? That is not the precept of the Savior. Are you not satisfied with His Word? Will you not take that Word and go your way? If you believe in Him, you will go your way in peaceyou will believe that He has saved you and act as if you knew it to be true. You will joy and rejoice in the fact that you are saved. You will not stop to quibble and to question, or to follow after all kinds of religious experiences and feelings but you will exclaim, He tells me to believe Him and I believe Him. He says, He that believes on Me has everlasting life and I do believe in Him and, therefore, I have everlasting life! I may not feel any peculiar emotion, but I have eternal life! Whether I see my salvation or not, I am saved! It is written, Look unto Me, and be you saved, all you ends of the earth. Lord, I have looked and I am saved. My reason for believing it is that You have said it. I have done as You have bid me and You will keep Your promise. This mode of reasoning is due to the Lord Jesus. He deserves to be taken at His Word and trusted in real earnest.

Now, the noblemans faith has flamed up, indeed. He believes not upon mere report, but upon the Word of Jesus. He does not wait for a sign, but he hears the Word and on that Word he hangs his confidence. Jesus said, Your son lives; go your wayand he goes his way that he may find his son alive! O seeking Soul, may God, the Holy Spirit, bring you to this state at once, that you may now say, O Lord, I will wait no longer for any sort of feeling, or evidence, or sign, but on Your Word, Your blood has sealed, I will trust my everlasting all, for I do now accept Your promise and since I believe it, I will go my way in peace.

Still, I am bound to say, concerning this mans faith at this stage, that it still fell somewhat short of what it might have been. It was a great thing for him to have come so far, but he had farther yet to go. He expected less than he might have expected and, therefore, when he saw his servants, he asked them when the dear child began to mend. He was overjoyed when they virtually said, He never did begin to mend. The fever left him all at once; at the seventh hour he recovered. You see, he expected a gradual restoration. He looked for the ordinary course of Nature, but here was a miraculous work! He received far more than he reckoned on. How little we know of Christ and how little we believe in Him, even when we do trust Him! We measure His boundless treasure by our scanty purses. Yet the faith that saves is not always full-grownthere is room for us to believe more and to expect more of our blessed Lord. Oh, that we would do so!

But one thing I want to mention here, though I do not quite understand itperhaps you can make it out. The father traveled with the leisure of confidence. It was about 25 or 30 miles to Capernaum and I have no doubt the good man started off as soon as the Master said, Go your way. No doubt he would go at once in obedience to such a command and make progress on the road home. But we read that the servants met him. Did they start as soon as the child was cured? If so, they might meet him halfway, or thereabouts. It was uphill. Say, therefore, that they came 10 miles and that 15, or even 20, remained for the nobleman to travel. The servants said, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him. The seventh hour was about one oclock in the day and that day was yesterday. I know that the day closed at set of sun, yet one would hardly talk of yesterday without a night between.

Did the nobleman take 15 or 16 hours for that partial journey? If so, he did not travel with any excessive speed. It is true that 25 miles was a good days journey for a camel, for in the East the roads are very bad, but still, it seems to me that the happy father moved with the ease of a Believer rather than with the hurry of an anxious parent! A noblemans usual progress through the villages was slow and he did not alter the usual pace because he would not even seem to hurry, now that his mind was believingly at rest. He felt quite sure that his son was all right and, therefore, the fever of anxiety left the father, even as the fever had left his child! Anxious minds, even when they believe, are in a hurry to seebut this good man was so sure, he would not allow parental love to make him act as if the shadow of a doubt remained! It is written, He that believes shall not make haste and in him it was literally fulfilled!

He journeyed on in such style as a member of the royal household would be expected to travel, accompanied by a fitting retinue, and thus all saw that his mind was at ease about his son. I like this consecrated restfulness. It befits a solid faith. I want you all, when you believe in Jesus Christ, to believe right up to the hilt. Give Him not a half faith, but a whole faithwhether about a child, or about yourselfbelieve in earnest. Say, Let God be true, but every man a liar. On His bare Word, my soul reposes. I will rest in the Lord and wait patiently for Him. What, though no amazing joys flash through my spirit? God has said, He that believes on Me has everlasting life and, therefore, I have everlasting life! What if I do not rise up and dance for joy? Yet will I sit still and sing within my soul because God has visited His believing servant. I will wait until high joys shall come to me, but meanwhile I will trust and not be afraid.

Dear Hearer, are you accompanying me in all this? Are you ready, in this manner, to exercise a substantial, restful confidence in Jesus?   
IV. So far, the noblemans faith has grown, but now we shall see it become THE CONFLAGRATION OF FAITH. As he went home, his servants met him with good news. In the quietude of his faith, he was exceedingly delighted when they said, Your son lives. The message came upon him like the echo of the Words of Jesus. I heard that, he said, yesterday, at the seventh hour, for then Jesus said, Your son lives. Another day has come and, behold, my servants salute me with the same words, Your son lives. The repetition must have astonished him! I often notice about the preaching of the Word of God, how the sentences strike you as to their very words when God blesses them. People say to me, You said, Sir, the same thing that we were talking of when we were on the roadyou described our cases even to our thoughts and you mentioned certain expressions which had been used in our conversationsurely God was speaking through you. Yes, it is often so. Christs own Words find many echoes from the mouths of His commissioned servants. The Lords Providence rules words as well as deeds and makes men say the right words without their knowing why they say them! God is so graciously Omnipresent that all things reveal Him when they are bid to do so.   
Now the noblemans faith is confirmed by the answer to his prayers. His experience has come in to the aid of his faith. He believes in a more assured sense than he did before. He has proven the truth of the Lords Words and, therefore, he knows and is persuaded that He is Lord and God. The faith of a sinner coming to Christ is one thing. The faith of a man who has come to Christ and has obtained the blessing is another and stronger matter! The first faith, the simpler faith, is that which saves, but the further faith is that which brings comfort, joy and strength into the spirit.   
My prayer is heard, he said and then he spoke to the servants, and after enquiry his faith was sustained by each detail. He cried, Tell me all about it: when was it? When they replied, At the seventh hour the fever left him, he remembered that at that very moment, when over there above the hills at Cana, the Lord Jesus Christ had said, Go your way; your son lives. The more he studied the case, the more wonderful it became! The details were singularly confirmatory of his confidence and, by their means, he rose to a clearer and firmer faith. Brothers and Sisters, how many such confirmations some of us have had! Doubters attempt to argue with us about the simplicities of the Gospel and they want to fight with us upon their own ground of mere speculative reasoning. Dear Sir, this is hardly fair to us! Our own ground is of quite another kind! We are not strangers to the business of faith, but adepts in itand you ought to allow something for our personal experience of the faithfulness of the Lord our God!  
We have a thousand treasured memories of happy details which we cannot tell you. We do not call you swine, but at the same time we dare not throw our pearls before you! We have a host of things laid by, but we cannot repeat them, for to us they are too sacredthus we are not able to use those reasons which to our own hearts are the most convincing! We have other arguments than those which we choose to bandy in open court. Be not surprised if we seem obstinateyou do not know how intensely sure we are. You cannot argue us out of our secret consciousnessyou might as well try to argue our eyes out of their sockets! We know and are sure, for we have seen, heard, tasted and handled of the good Word of the Lord. Certain things are so intertwisted with our lives that we are anchored by them. Coincidences, you say. Ah well! Say what you pleaseto us they are other than to you! Our soul has cried out, time after time, This O Sir, this seems a very cold-blooded remark!   
If you had been where I have been and experienced what I have experienced, you would acknowledge that the Lord stretched out His hand and saved His servant! You would have the same solemn conviction as I have that God was there, working out salvation. I know that I cannot create those convictions in you by telling you my story. If you are determined not to believe, you will not accept my testimony, but will think me a deluded person, though I am no more apt to be deluded than you are. However, whether you are inclined to believe or to disbelieve, I am in no such hesitation. I am forced to believe, for the more carefully I examine my life, the more I am convinced that God must have been at work with me and for me.   
At the same moment that Christ said, Your son lives, the noblemans son did live! The same word that Jesus used to the father was used, also, by the servants who had been 30 miles away and, therefore, the father felt that something more than human had crossed his path. Do you wonder at it? Besides, that dear boy, whom he found sound and well, was a potent argument. You could not argue the happy father out of a faith which had brought him such joy. The child was at the point of death till faith received the Words of the Lord Jesusand then the fever left. The father must believe would you have him doubt?   
Strengthened in his faith by his experience, after having believed the bare Words of Jesus, the good man now sees that Word fulfilled and he believes in Jesus in the fullest sense. He believes for everythingfor his body and for his soulfor all that he is and for all that he has. From that day forth he becomes a disciple of the Lord Jesus! He follows Him, not only as a Healer, nor only as a Prophet, nor only as a Savior, but as his Lord and his God! His hope, his trust and his confidence are fixed upon Jesus as the true Messiah.   
What follows is so natural and yet so joyous, that I pray it may be true to all of youhis family also believe! When he gets home, his wife meets him. Oh, the delight that sparkles in that womans eyes! The dear boy is well, she said, He is as well as ever he was in his life. He did not need to lie in bed for weeks to recover his strength after the weakening influence of the fever! The fever is all gone and the boy is well. Oh, my dear Husband, what a wonderful Being this must be who has heard your prayers and at all that distance has spoken our child into health! I believe in Him, Husband. I believe in Him. I am sure she would speak in that fashion! The same processes which had been working in her husband had been working in her by Gods Grace!   
Now, think of the little boy. Here he comes, so happy and cheerful. And his father tells him all about his fever and his going to see that wonderful Prophet at Cana, and how He said, Your son lives. The little boy cries, Father, I believe in Jesus! He is the Son of God. Nobody doubts the dear childs faithhe was not too young to be healed and he is not too young to believe! He had enjoyed a special experience, more personal than even that of his father and mother. He had felt the power of Jesusand it was no marvel that he believed. Meanwhile, the father is rejoicing to find that he will not be a solitary Believer, for there are his wife and boy also confessing their faith. But we are not at the end of the matter, for the servants standing around exclaim, Master, we cannot help believing in Jesus, also, for we watched the dear child and saw him recover, and the power which healed him must have been Divine.   
One and all, by His Grace, they emulate their masters faith in Jesus. I sat up with the dear boy, says the old nurse. I would not go to sleep, for I felt that if I did sleep, I might find him dead when I awoke. I watched him and just at the seventh hour I saw a delightful change come over him and the fever left him. Glory be to Jesus! shouted the old woman, I never saw or heard of such a thing! It is the finger of God. All the other servants were of the same mind. Happy household! There was a grand Baptism soon after, when they all went to confess their faith in Jesus. Not only was the child cured, but the whole household was cured! The father did not know, when he went pleading about his boy, that he, himself, needed to be savedthe mother, also, probably thought only of her son but now salvation has come to the whole family and the fever of sin and unbelief is gone away with the other fever!   
May the Lord work such a wonder as that in all our houses! If any of you are groaning under a burden of grief, I trust you will be so relieved that when you tell your wife of it, she will believe in Jesus, too. May the dear child of your care believe in Jesus while yet a childand may all who belong to your domestic circle also belong to the Divine Lord! Grant, at this time, Your servants desire, O Lord Jesus, for Your Glorys sake! Amen.

**PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMONJohn 4:28-54.** HYMNS FROM OUR OWN HYMN BOOK406, 603, 595.  
Adapted from The C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307 Sermon #317 The New Park Street Pulpit 1

CHARACTERISTICS OF FAITH   
NO. 317

**DELIVERED ON SABBATH MORNING, MAY 27, 1860, BY THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT EXETER HALL, STRAND.

**Then said Jesus unto him, Except you see signs and wonders, you will not believe.   
John 4:48.**

You will remember that Luke, in his letter to Theophilus, speaks of things which Jesus began both to do and to teach as if there was a connection between His doings and His teachings. In fact, there was a relation of the most intimate kind. His teachings were the explanation of His doingsHis doings confirmations of His teachings. Jesus Christ had never occasion to say, Do as I say, but not as I do. His words and His actions were in perfect harmony with one another. You might be sure that He was honest in what He said, because what He did forced that conviction upon your mind. Moreover, you were led to see that what He taught you must be true, because He spoke with authorityan authority proved and demonstrated by the miracles He worked.

Oh my Brethren in Christ! When our biographies shall come to be written at last, God grant that they may not be all sayings, but that they may be a history of our sayings and doings! And may the good Spirit so dwell in us that at the last it may be seen that our doings did not clash with our sayings! It is one thing to preach, but another thing to practice. And unless preaching and practice go together, the preacher is himself condemned and his ill practice may be the means of condemning multitudes through his leading them astray. If you make a profession of being Gods servant, live up to that profession and if you think it necessary to exhort others to virtue, take care that you set the example. You have no right to teach, if you have not yourself learned the lesson which you would teach to others.

Thus much by way of preface. And now concerning the subject itself. The narrative before us seems to me to suggest three points and those points each of them triplets. I shall notice in this narrative, first, the three stages of faith. In the second place I shall notice the three diseases to which faith is subject. And then I shall come, in the third place, to ask three questions about your faith.

I. To begin, then, with the first point. It seems to me that we have before us FAITH IN THREE OF ITS STAGES.  
Doubtless, the history of faith might with propriety be divided just as accurately into five or six different stages of growth. But our narrative suggests a threefold division and therefore we stand to that this morning. There is a nobleman living at Capernaum. He hears a rumor that a celebrated Prophet and preacher is continually going through the cities of Galilee and Judea and is given to understand that this mighty preacher does not merely enthrall every hearer by His eloquence, but wins the hearts of men by singularly benevolent miracles which He works as a confirmation of His mission. He stores these things in his heart, little thinking that they would ever be of any practical service to him. It comes to pass on a certain day that his son falls sickperhaps his only son, one very dear to his fathers heartthe sickness, instead of diminishing, gradually increases.   
Fever breathes its hot breath upon the child and seems to dry up all the moisture in his body and to blast the bloom from his cheek. The father consults every physician within his reach. They look upon the child and candidly pronounce him hopeless. No cure can possibly be worked. That child is at the point of death. The arrow of death has almost sunk into his flesh. It has well near penetrated his heart. He is not merely near death, but at deaths very point. He has been forced by disease upon the barbed arrows of that insatiate archer.   
The father now remembers and calls to recollection the stories he had heard of the cures worked by Jesus of Nazareth. There is a little faith in his soulthough but a littlestill enough to make him use every endeavor to test the truth of what he has heard. Jesus Christ has come to Cana again. It is some fifteen or twenty miles. The father travels with all speed. He arrives at the place where Jesus ishis faith has got to such a stage that as soon as he sees the Master, he begins to cry, Lord, come down before my child die. The Master, instead of giving him an answer which might console him, rebukes him for the littleness of his faith and tells him, Except you see signs and wonders, you will not believe.   
The man, however, pays little regard to the rebuke, for there is a desire which has absorbed all the powers of his soul. His mind is so overwhelmed with one anxiety that he is oblivious of all besides. Sir, said he, come down before my child dies. His faith has now arrived at such a stage that he pleads in prayer and earnestly importunes the Lord to come and heal his son. The Master looks upon him with an eye of ineffable benevolence and says to him, Go your way, your son lives.   
The father goes his way cheerfully, quickly, contentedlytrusting in the word which as yet no evidence has confirmed. He has now come to the second stage of his faith. He has come out of the seeking stage into the relying stage. He no more cries and pleads for a thing he has not. He trusts and believes that the thing is given to him, though as yet he has not perceived the gift. On his road home, the servants meet him with joyful haste. They say, Master, your son lives. He enquires quickly at what hour the fever left him. The answer is given himabout the seventh hour the fever abated.   
Then he comes to the third stage. He goes home. He sees his child perfectly restored. The child springs into his arms, covers him with kisses. And when he has held him up again and again to see if he was really the little one that lay so wan and pale and sick, he triumphs in a higher sense still. His faith has gone from reliance up to full assurance. And then his whole house believed as well as himself.   
I have given you just these outlines of the narrative that you may see the three stages of faith. Let us now examine each more minutely. When faith begins in the soul, it is but as a grain of mustard seed. Gods people are not born giants. They are babes at first. And as they are babes in grace, so their graces are as it were in their infancy. Faith is but as a little child, when first God gives it. Or to use another figure, it is not a fire, but a sparka spark which seems as if it must go outbut which is nevertheless fanned and kept alive until it comes to a flame, like unto the vehement heat of Nebuchadnezzars furnace. The poor man in the narrative, when he had faith given him, had it but in a very small degree. It was seeking faith. That is the first stage of faith.  
Now just notice that this seeking faith excited his activity. As soon as ever God gives a man the seeking faith, he is no more idle about religion, he does not fold his arms with the wicked Antinomian and cry, If I am to be saved, I shall be saved and I will sit still, for if I am to be damned, I shall be damned. He is not careless and indifferent, as to whether he should go up to the House of God or no. He has got seeking faith and that faith makes him attend the means of grace, leads him to search the Word, leads him to be diligent in the use of every ordained means of blessing for the soul. There is a sermon to be heardno matter that there are five miles to walkseeking faith puts wings upon his feet.   
There is a congregation where God is blessing souls. The man, if he enters, will probably have to stand in the crowd. But it does not matter seeking faith gives him strength to bear the uneasiness of his position, for, Oh, he says, if I may but hear the Word. See how he leans forward that he may not lose a syllable for, Perhaps, says he, the sentence that I lose may be the very one that I want. How earnest he is that he may not only be sometimes in the House of God, but very often there. He becomes among the most enthusiastic of hearers, the most earnest of men that attend that place of worship. Seeking faith makes a man active.   
More than this, seeking faith, though it is very weak in some things, gives a man great power in prayer. How earnest was this nobleman Lord, come down before my child dies. Yes, and when seeking faith enters into the soul, it makes a man pray. He is not content now with muttering over a few words when he rises in the morning and then, half asleep, ringing the same chimes at night when he goes to bed. But he gets awayhe steals a quarter of an hour from his business if he canthat he may cry to God in secret. He has not the faith yet which enables him to say, My sins are forgiven. But he has faith enough to know that Christ can forgive his sins and what he wants is that he may know that his sins are really cast behind Jehovahs back.   
Sometimes this man has no convenience for prayer, but seeking faith will make him pray in a garret, in a hayloft, in a saw pit, from behind a hedge, or even walking the street. Satan may throw a thousand difficulties in the way, but seeking faith will compel a man to knock at mercys door. Now the faith that you have received does not yet give you peace, it does not put you where there is no condemnationbut yet it is such a faith that if it growsit will come to that. It has but to be nourished, to be cherished, to be exercised and the little one shall become mighty. Seeking faith shall come to a higher degree of development and you that knocked at mercys gate shall enter in and find a welcome at Jesus table. And I would have you further notice that the seeking faith in this mans case did not simply make him earnest in prayer, but importunate in it. He asked once and the only answer he received was an apparent rebuff. He did not turn away in a sulk and say, He rebukes me. No. Sir, says he, Come down before my child dies. I cannot tell you how he said it, but I have no doubt it was expressed in soul-moving terms, with tears starting from his eyes, with hands that were placed together in the attitude of entreaty. He seemed to say, I cannot let You go except You come and save my child. Oh, please come! Is there anything I can say that can induce You? Let a fathers affection be my best argument. And if my lips be not eloquent, let the tears of my eyes supply the place of the words of my tongue. Come down before my child dies.   
And oh, what mighty prayers those are which seeking faith will make a man pray! I have heard the seeker sometimes plead with God with all the power that Jacob ever could have had at Jabboks brook. I have seen the sinner under distress of soul seem to take hold of the pillars of the gate of mercy and rock them to and fro as though he would sooner pull them up from their deep foundations than go away without effecting an entrance. I have seen him pull and tug and strive and fight and wrestle, rather than not enter the kingdom of Heaven, for he knew that the kingdom of Heaven suffered violence and the violent would take it by force.   
No wonder that you have not any peace, if you have been bringing before God your cold prayers. Heat them red-hot in the furnace of desire, or think not they will ever burn their way upwards to Heaven. You that merely say in the chill form of orthodoxy, God be merciful to me a sinner, will never find mercy. It is the man that cries in the burning anguish of heart-felt emotionGod be merciful to me a sinnersave me or I perishthat gains his suit. It is he who concentrates his soul in every word and flings the violence of his being into every sentence, that wins his way through the gates of Heaven. Seeking faith, when once it is given, can make a man do this. Doubtless there are some here who have got as far as that, already. I thought I saw the tears starting from many an eye just now brushed away very hastily, but I could see it as an index that some said in their souls, Yes, I know the meaning of that, and I trust God has brought me thus far.

One word I must say here with regard to the weakness of this seeking faith. It can do much, but it makes many mistakes. The fault of seeking faith is that it knows too little, for you will observe that this poor man said, Sir, come down, come down. Well, but he need not come down. The Lord can work the miracle without coming down. But our poor friend thought the Master could not save his son unless He came and looked at him and put His hand upon him and knelt down perhaps, upon him, as Elijah did. Oh, come down says he. So is it with you. You have been dictating to God how He shall save you. You want him to send you some terrible convictions, and then, you think, you could believe. Or else you want to have a dream or a vision, or to hear a voice speaking to you, saying, Son, your sins are forgiven you.   
That is your fault, you see. Your seeking faith is strong enough to make you pray, but it is not strong enough to cast out of the mind your own silly fancies. You are wanting to see signs and wonders, or else you will not believe. O Nobleman, if Jesus chooses to speak the word and your son is healed, will not that suit you as well as His coming down? Oh, says he, I never thought of that! And so, poor Sinner, if Jesus chooses to give you peace this morning in this hall, will not that suit you as well as being a month under the whip of the Law? If, as you pass out of these doors, you are enabled simply to trust in Christ and so find peace, will not that be as good a salvation as though you should have to go through fire and through water and all your sins should be made to ride over your head?   
Here, then, is the weakness of your faith. Though there is much excellence in it because it makes you pray, there is some fault in it because it makes you imprudently prescribe to the Almighty how He shall bless youmakes you in effect to impugn His sovereignty and leads you ignorantly to dictate to Him in what form the promised blessing shall come.   
We will now pass on to the second stage of faith. The Master stretched out His hand and said, Go your way, your son lives. Do you see the face of that nobleman? Those furrows that were there seem smoothed in a moment, all gone. Those eyes are full of tears, but they are of another sort nowthey are tears of joy. He claps his hands, retires silently, his heart ready to burst with gratitude, his whole soul full of confidence. Why are you so happy, Sir? Why my child is cured, says he. No, but you have not seen him cured. But my Lord said he was and I believe Him.   
But it may be that when you get home you will find your faith to be a delusion and your child a corpse. No, says he, I believe in that Man. Once I believed Him and sought Himnow I believe Him and have found Him. But you have no evidence whatever that your child is healed. No, says he, I do not want any. The naked word of that Divine Prophet is enough for me. He spoke it and I know it is true. He told me to go my way. My son lives. I go my way and I am quite at peace and at ease.   
Now mark, when your faith gets to a second stage in which you shall be able to take Christ at His word, then it is you shall begin to know the happiness of believing and then it is your faith saves your soul. Take Christ at His word, poor Sinner. He that believes on the Lord Jesus Christ shall be saved. But, says one, I feel no evidence. Believe it none the less for that. But, says another, I do not feel enjoyment in my heart. Believe it, be your heart ever so gloomythat enjoyment shall come afterwards. That is an heroic faith which believes Christ in the teeth of a thousand contradictions.   
When the Lord gives you that faith, you can say, I consult not with flesh and blood. He who said to me, Believe and be saved, gave me grace to believe and I therefore am confident that I am saved. When I once cast my soul, sink or swim, upon the love and blood and power of Christ, though conscience gives no witness to my soul, though doubts distress me and fears plague me, yet it is mine to honor my Master by believing His Word, though it be contradictory to sense, though reason rebel against it and present feelings dare to give it the lie.   
Oh, it is an honorable thing when a man has a follower and that follower believes that man implicitly. The man propounds an opinion which is in contradiction to the received opinion of the universe. He stands up and addresses it to the people and they hiss and hoot and scorn him. But that man has one disciple, who says, I believe my Master. What he has said I believe is true. There is something noble to the man who receives such homage as that. He seems to say, Now I am master of one heart at least, and when you, in the teeth of everything that is conflicting, stand to Christ and believe His words, you do Him greater homage than Cherubim and Seraphim before the Throne. Dare to believe. Trust Christ, I say and you are saved.   
In this stage of faith it is that a man begins to enjoy quietness and peace of mind. I am not quite certain as to the number of miles between Cana and Capernaum, but several excellent expositors say it is fifteen, some twenty. I suppose the miles may have altered in their length lately. It need not, however, have taken this good man long to get home to his son. It was at the seventh hour that the Master said, Your son lives. It is evident from this text, that he did not meet his servants till the next day, because they say, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him.   
What do you conclude from that? Why I draw this inferencethe nobleman was so sure that his child was alive and well, that he was in no violent hurry to return. He did not go home immediately, as though he must be in time to get another doctor, if Christ had not succeeded. But he went his way leisurely and calmly, confident in the truth of what Jesus had said to him. Well says an old father of the Church, He that believes shall not make haste. In this case it was true. The man took his time. He was, it may be, twelve hours or more before he reached his homethough probably it was but fifteen miles for him to travel.   
He who takes the naked word of Christ to be the basis of his hope, stands on a Rock while all other ground is sinking sand. My Brothers and Sisters, some of you have got as far as this. You are now taking Christ at His word. It shall not be long before you will get to the third and best stage of faith. But if it should be ever so long, still stand herestill believe your Lord and Masterstill trust Him. If He does not take you into His banqueting house, still trust Him. No, if He locks you up in the castle, or in the dungeon, still trust Him. Say, Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him. Should He let the arrows of affliction stick fast in your flesh, still trust Him. Should He break you to pieces with His right hand still trust Him. And by-and-by your righteousness shall come forth as the light, your glory as a lamp that burns.   
We must now hurry on to the third and best stage of faith. The servants meet the noblemanhis son is healed. He arrives at home, clasps his child and sees him perfectly restored. And now, says the narrative Himself believed and his whole house. And yet you will have noticed that in the fiftieth verse, it says that he believed. The man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him. Now some expositors have been greatly puzzled. For they did not know when this man did believe. Good Calvin says and his remarks are always weighty and always excellent(I do not hesitate to say that Calvin is the grandest expositor that ever yet thought to make plain the Word of God. In his commentary I have often found him cutting his own institutes to pieces, not attempting to give a passage a Calvinistic meaning, but always trying to interpret Gods Word as he finds it)Calvin says this man had in the first place, only a faith which relied for one thing upon Christ. He believed the word Christ had spoken.   
Afterwards he had a faith which took Christ into his soul, to become His disciple and trust Him as the Messiah. I think I am not wrong in using this as an illustration of faith in its highest state. He found his son healed at the very hour when Jesus said he should be. And now, he says, I believe. That is to say, he believed with full assurance of faith. His mind was so rid of all its doubts, he believed in Jesus of Nazareth as the Christ of GodHe was a Prophet sent from Godand doubts and misgivings no longer occupied his soul. Ah, I know many poor creatures who want to get up to this state, but they want to get there all at first. They are like a man who wants to get up a ladder without going up the lowest rounds. Oh, they say, if I had the full assurance of faith, then I should believe I am a child of God. No, no, believe. Trust in Christs naked word. And then you shall come afterwards to feel in your soul the witness of the Spirit that you are born of God.   
Assurance is a floweryou must plant the bulb first, the naked, perhaps unseemly bulb of faithplant it in the grain and you shall have the flower by-and-by. The shriveled seed of a little faith springs upwards and then you have the ripe corn in the ear of full assurance of faith. But here I want you to notice that when this man came to full assurance of faith, it is said his house believed, too. There is a text often quoted and I do not think I have heard it quoted rightly yet. By the way, there are some people who know no more of authors than what they hear quoted and some who know no more of the Bible than what they have heard quoted, too.   
Now, there is that passage, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be savedwhat have the last three words done that they should be cut off?And your house. Those three words seem to me to be as precious as the first. Believe and you shall be saved, and your house. Does the fathers faith save the family? Yes! No!Yes it does. In some ways. Namely, that the fathers faith makes him pray for his family and God hears his prayer and the family is saved. No, the fathers faith cannot be a substitute for the faith of the children, they must believe, too. In both senses of the word, I say Yes, or No. When a man has believed, there is hope that his children will be saved. No, there is a promise. And the father ought not to rest satisfied until he sees all his children saved. If he does, he has not believed right yet.

There are many men who only believe for themselves. I like, if I get a promise, to believe it as broad as it is. Why should not my faith be as broad as the promise? Now, thus it stands, Believe and you shall be saved and your house! I have a claim on God for my little ones. When I go before God in prayer, I can plead, Lord, I believe, and You have said I shall be saved and my house. You have saved me, but You have not fulfilled Your promise till You have saved my house, too. I know it is sometimes thought that we who believe that the Baptism of infants is heresy (and not a single text of Scripture gives it so much as an inferential support)neglect our children. But could there have been a greater slander?   
Why, instead thereof, we think we are doing our children the greatest service that we can possibly do themteaching them that they are not members of Christs Church, that they are not made Christians in the day that they are christened, that they must be born againand that that new birth must be in them a thing which they can consciously realize. Not a thing we can do for them in their babyhood, while they are yet in their long clothes, by sprinkling a handful of water in their faces. We think they are far more likely to be converted than those who are brought up in the delusive notion taught them in that expression of the catechisma most wicked, blasphemous and false expressionIn my Baptism wherein I was made a member of Christ, a child of God, an inheritor of the kingdom of Heaven.   
The Pope of Rome never uttered a sentence more unholy than that never said a syllable more contradictory to the whole tenor of Gods Word. Children are not saved by Baptism, nor grown-up people either. He that believes shall be saved. And he that believes and is baptized shall be savedbut the Baptism precedes not the belief. Nor does it co-act or cowork in our salvationfor salvation is a work of gracelaid hold of by faith and faith, alone. Baptized or unbaptized, if you believe not, you are lost. But unbaptized, if you believe you are saved.   
II. And now we come to the second department of our subject, the THREE DISEASES TO WHICH FAITH IS VERY SUBJECT and these three diseases break out in different stages.   
First with regard to seeking faith. The power of seeking faith lies in its driving a man to prayer And here is the disease. For we are very likely, when we are seeking to begin, to suspend prayerfulness. How often does the devil whisper in a mans ear, Do not pray, it is of no use. You know you will be shut out of Heaven! Or, when the man thinks he has got an answer to prayer, then Satan says, You need not pray any more, you have got what you asked for. Or, if after a month of crying he has received no blessing, then Satan whispers, Fool that you are to tarry at Mercys gate! Get gone! Get gone! That gate is up and barred fast and you will never be heard.   
O my Friends! If you are subject to this disease while seeking Christ, I bid you cry against it and labor against it. Never cease to pray. A man can never sink in the river of wrath so long as he can cry. So long as you can cry to God for mercy, mercy shall never withdraw itself from you. Oh, let not Satan push you back from the closet door, but push in, whether he will or not. Give up prayer and you seal your own damnation. Renounce secret supplication and you renounce Christ and Heaven. Continue in prayer and though the blessing tarry, it must come. In Gods own time it must appear to you.   
The disease which is most likely to fall upon those in the second stagenamely, those who are trusting implicitly on Christis the disease of wanting to see signs and wonders, or else they will not believe. In the early stage of my ministry, in the midst of a rural population, I used to meet continually with persons who thought they were Christians, because, as they imagined, they had seen signs and wonders. Most ridiculous stories have been told me by earnest and sincere people as reasons why they thought they were saved.   
I have heard a narrative something like thisI believe my sins are put away. Why? Well, Sir, I was down in the back garden and I saw a great cloud and I thought, now God can make that cloud go away if He pleases and it did go away. And I thought the cloud and my sins were gone, too, and I have not had a doubt since then. I have thought, well, you have good reason to doubt, for that is totally absurd. Were I to tell you the whims and fancies that some people get into their heads, you might smile and that might not be to your profit.   
Certain it is that men patch up any idle story, any strange fancy, in order to make them think that they may then trust Christ. Oh, my dear Friends, if you have no better reason to believe you are in Christ than a dream or a vision, it is time you began again. I grant you there have been some who have been alarmed, convicted and perhaps converted by strange freaks of their imagination. But if you rely on these as being pledges from Godif you look on these as being evidences that you are savedI tell you that you will be resting on a dream, a delusion. You may as well seek to build a castle in the air, or a house upon the sands.   
No, he who believes Christ, believes Christ because He says it and because here it is written in the Wordhe does not believe it because he dreamed it. Or because he heard a voice that might probably be a blackbird singing, or because he thought he saw an angel in the sky, which was just as likely to be mist of a peculiar shape, as anything else. No, we must have done with this desire to see signs and wonders. If they come, be thankfulif they come not, trust simply in the Word which says, All manner of sin shall be forgiven unto men.   
I do not wish to say this to hurt any tender conscience, which conscience may perhaps have found some little comfort in such singular wonders. I only say this honestly, lest any of you should be deceivedI do solemnly warn you to place no reliance whatever on anything you think you have seen, or dreamed, or heard. This volume is the sure word of testimony, unto which you do well if you take heed, as unto a light which shines in a dark place. Trust in the Lordwait patiently for Him. Cast all your confidence where He put all your sins, namely, upon Christ Jesus aloneand you shall be saved, with or without any of these signs and wonders.   
I am afraid some Christians in London have fallen into the same error of wanting to see signs and wonders. They have been meeting together in special Prayer Meetings to seek for a revival. And because people have not dropped down in a fainting fit and have not screamed and made a noise, perhaps they have thought the revival has not come. Oh that we had but eyes to see Gods gifts in the way God chooses to give them! We do not want the revival of the North of Irelandwe want the revival in its goodnessbut not in that particular shape.   
If the Lord sends it in another, we shall be all the more glad to be without these exceptional works in the flesh. Where the Spirit works in the soul, we are always glad to see true conversion and if He chooses to work in the body, too, in London, we shall be glad to see it. If mens hearts are renewed, what matter is it they do not scream out? If their consciences are quickened, what matters it though they do not fall into a fit? If they do but find Christ, who is to regret that they are not, for five or six weeks, motionless and senseless? Take it without the signs and wonders. For my part I have no craving for them. Let me see Gods work done in Gods own waya true and thorough revival, but the signs and wonders we can readily dispense withfor they are certainly not demanded by the faithful and they will only be the laughing-stock of the faithless.   
Having thus spoken of these two diseases, I will only just mention the other. There is a third, then, which lies in the way of our attaining the highest degree of faith, namely, full assurance and that is, want of observation. The nobleman in our text made careful enquiries about the day and the hour when his son was healed. It was by that he obtained his assurance. But we do not observe Gods hand as much as we should. Our good Puritan forefathers, when it rained, used to say that God had unstopped the bottles of Heaven. When it rains nowadays, we think the clouds have become condensed. If they had a field of hay out, they used to plead of the Lord that he would bid the sun shine. We, perhaps, are wiser than we think. We consider it hardly worth while to pray about such things, thinking they will come in the course of nature.   
They believed that God was in every storm, no, in every cloud of dust. They used to speak of a present God in everything. But we speak of such things as laws of nature, as if laws were nothing, except there was someone to carry them out and some secret power to set the whole machine in motion. We do not get our assurance because we do not observe enough. If you were to watch providential goodness each dayif you noticed the answers to your prayersif you would just put down somewhere in the book of your remembrance Gods continued mercies towards you, I do think you would become like this father who was led to fall assurance of faith, because he noticed that the very hour when Jesus spoke, was the very hour when the healing came. Be watchful, Christian. He that looks for providences will never lack a providence to look at.   
Take heed, then, of these three diseasesceasing from prayerwaiting to see signs and wondersand neglect of observing the manifest hand of God.   
III. And now I come to my third and last head, upon which solemnly, though briefly, there are THREE QUESTIONS TO BE ADDRESSED TO YOU ABOUT YOUR FAITH.   
First, then, you say, I have faith. Be it so. There is many a man who says he has gold that has it not. There are many that think themselves rich and increased in goods that are naked and poor and miserable. I say unto you, therefore, in the first place, does your faith make you pray? Not the praying of the man who prates like a parrot the prayers he has learned. But do you cry the cry of a living child? Do you tell God your wants and your desires? And do you seek His face and ask His mercy?

Man, if you invest without prayer, you are a Christless soulyour faith is a delusion and your confidence which results from it, is a dream that will destroy you. Wake up out of your death-like slumber. For as long as you are dumb in prayer, God cannot answer you. You shall not live to God if you do not live in the closet. He that is never on his knees on earth shall never stand upon his feet in Heaven. He that never wrestles with the angel here below, shall never be admitted into Heaven by that angel above.   
I know I speak to some today that are prayerless ones. You have plenty of time for your counting-house, but you have none for your closet. Family prayer you have never had. But I will not talk to you about that. Private prayer you have neglected. Do you not sometimes rise in the morning so near the time when you must keep your appointments, thatyou do kneel it is true, but where is the prayer? And as to any extra occasions of supplication, why, you never indulge yourselves in them. Prayer with you is a sort of luxury too dear to indulge in often.   
Ah, but he who has true faith in his heart is praying all day long. I do not mean that he is on his knees. But often when he is bargaining, when he is in his shop, or in his counting-house, his heart finds a little space, a vacuum for a momentand up it leaps into the bosom of its God and it is down again, refreshed to go about its business and meet the face of man. Oh, those ejaculatory prayersnot merely filling the censer in the morning with incense, but that casting in of little bits of cinnamon and frankincense all day long, so as always to keep it freshthat is the way to live and that is the life of a true genuine Believer! If your faith does not make you pray, have nothing to do with itget rid of itand God help you to begin again.   
But you say, I have faith. I will ask you a second question. Does that faith make you obedient? Jesus said to the nobleman, Go your way, and he went without a word, however much he might have wished to stay and listen to the Master, he obeyed. Does your faith make you obedient? In these days we have specimens of Christians of the most sorry, sorry kindmen that have not common honesty. I have heard it observed by tradesmen that they know many men that have not the fear of God before their eyes, that are most just and upright men in their dealings. And on the other hand, they know some professing Christians who are not positively dishonest, but they can back and hedge a little.   
They are not horses that will not go, but every now and then they jib. They do not seem to keep up to the time if they have a bill to pay. They are not regular, they are not exact. In fact sometimesand who shall hide what is true?you catch Christians doing dirty actions and professors of religion defiling themselves with acts which merely worldly men would scorn. Now, Sirs, I bear my testimony this morning as Gods minister, too honest to alter a word to please any man that livesyou are no Christian if you can act in business beneath the dignity of an honest man. If God has not made you honest, He has not saved your soul. Rest assured that if you can go on disobedient to the moral laws of Godif your life is inconsistent and lasciviousif your conversation is mixed up with things which even a worldling might reject, the love of God is not in you.   
I do not plead for perfection, but I do plead for honesty. And if your religion has not made you careful and prayerful in common lifeif you are not in fact made a new creature in Christ Jesusyour faith is but an empty name, as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. I will ask you one more question about your faith and I have done. You say, I have faith. Has your faith led you to bless your household? Good Rowland Hill once said, in his own quaint way, that when a man became a Christian, his dog and his cat ought to be the better for it. I think it was Mr. Jay who always would say that a man, when he became a Christian, was better in every relation. He was a better husband, a better master, a better father than he was before. Or else his religion was not genuine.   
Now, have you ever thought, my dear Christian Brothers and Sisters, about blessing your household? Do I hear one saying, I keep my religion to myself? Do not be very anxious about its ever being stolen, then. You need not put it under lock and key. There is not enough to tempt the devil, himself, to come and take it from you. A man who can keep his godliness to himself has a small proportion of it. I am afraid it will be no credit to himself and no blessing to other people. But you do sometimes, strange to say, meet with fathers that do not seem as if they interested themselves in their childrens salvation any more than they do about poor children in the back slums of St. Giless.   
They would like to see the boy put out well and they would like to see the girl married comfortably. But as to their being converted, it does not seem to trouble their head. It is true the father occupies his seat in a house of worship and sits down with a community of Christians. And he hopes his children may turn out well. They have the benefit of his hope certainly a very large legacyhe will, no doubt, when he dies, leave them his best wishes and may they grow rich upon them! But he never seems to have made it a matter of anxiety of soul as to whether they shall be saved or not.   
Out upon such a religion as that! Cast it on the dunghill. Hurl it to the dogs. Let it be buried like Koniah, with the burial of an ass. Cast it without the camp, like an unclean thing. It is not the religion of God. He that cares not for his own household is worse than a heathen and a publican.   
Never be content, my Brethren in Christ, till all your children are saved. Lay the promise before your God. The promise is unto you and unto your children. The Greek word does not refer to infants, but to children, grandchildren and any descendants you may have, whether grown up or not. Do not cease to plead, till not only your children but your great grandchildren, if you have such, are saved. I stand here today a proof that God is not untrue to His promise. I can cast my eye back through four or five generations and see that God has been pleased to hear the prayers of our grandfathers grandfather, who used to supplicate with God that his children might live before him to the last generation and God has never deserted the house, but has been pleased to bring first one and then another to fear and love His name.   
So be it with youand in asking this you are not asking more than God is bound to give you. He cannot refuse unless He runs back from His promise. He cannot refuse to give you both your own and your childrens souls as an answer to the prayer of your faith. Ah, says one, but you do not know what children mine are. No, my dear Friend, but I know that if you are a Christian, they are children that God has promised to bless. O but they are such unruly ones, they break my heart. Then pray God to break their hearts and they will not break your hearts any more. But they will bring my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave. Pray God, then, that He may bring their eyes with sorrow to prayer and to supplication and to the Cross and then they will not bring you to the grave.   
But, you say, my children have such hard hearts. Look at your own. You think they cannot be savedlook at yourselvesHe that saved you can save them. Go to Him in prayer and say, Lord, I will not let you go except you bless me. And if your child be at the point of death and, as you think, at the point of damnation on account of sin, still plead like the nobleman, Lord, come down before my child perishes, and save him for Your mercys sake. And oh, You that dwells in the highest heavens, You will never refuse Your people. Be it far from us to dream that You will forget Your promise. In the name of all Your people we put our hand upon Your Word most solemnly and hold You to Your Covenant. You have said Your mercy is unto the childrens children of them that fear You and that keep Your Commandments. You have said the promise is unto us and unto our children. Lord, You will not run back from Your own Covenant! We challenge Your Word by holy faith this morningDo as You have said.

TO THE READERS OF THE NEW PARK STREET PULPIT, MY DEAR BRETHREN,   
Incessant labor has so completely wearied me that I am compelled to retire for a few weeks from active service. The great Master bade His disciples to go into the desert and rest awhile, and I feel that I should be acting in opposition to the warnings of Providence in my mental and physical frame if I did not seek repose. During my absence I shall continue to address you through the evening sermons, which are richer and more full of doctrinal truth than those of the morning. If the sermons addressed to the mixed assemblies of Exeter Hall have been in any measure profitable to you, I am full well assured that the evening sermons to the Church of God will not fail, under the Divine blessing, to edify you far more.   
I shall hope to write a few lines to you, which will be appended to the weekly sermon, that the links of our communion may not be broken and that I may have the opportunity of begging your daily prayers. The Lord bless you and preserve you until the day of His appearing.   
I am, yours in Jesus,

*C. H. SPURGEON*   
Clapharn, Monday, June 4th, 1860.   
Adapted from The C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Version 1.0, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307 Sermon #744 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

JESUS AT BETHESDAOR, WAITING CHANGED FOR BELIEVING

NO. 744

**DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, APRIL 7, 1867, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE AGRICULTURAL HALL, ISLINGTON.

**After this there was a feast of the Jews; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep market, a pool which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches. In these lay a great multitude of impotent**

**folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water. For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool and troubled the water: whoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made**

**whole of whatever disease he had. And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty-and-eight years. When Jesus saw him lying there, and knew that he had been now a long time in that case, He said unto him, Will you be made whole? The impotent man answered him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steps down before me. Jesus said unto him, Rise, take up your bed, and walk. And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and on the   
same day was the Sabbath.   
John 5:1-9.**

THE scene of this miracle was Bethesda, a pool, according to the Evangelist, adjoining the sheep market, or near the sheep gatethe place through which, I suppose, the cattle consumed by the inhabitants of Jerusalem would be drivenand the pool where, perhaps, the sheep intended for sale to the offerers in the temple were washed. So common was sickness in the days of the Savior that the infirmities of men intruded upon the place which had been allotted to cattle! And the place where sheep had been washed became the spot where sick folk congregated in great multitudes, longing for a cure. We do not hear that anyone remonstrated at the intrusion, or that public opinion was shocked. The needs of mankind must override all considerations of taste. A hospital must have preference over a sheep market.

This day you have another case in point. If the physical infirmities of Jerusalem intruded into the sheep market, I shall ask no excuse if, on these Sundays, the spiritual sickness of London should demand that this spacious place, which has up to now been given up to the lowing of cattle and to the bleating of sheep, should be consecrated to the preaching of the Gospelto the manifestation of the healing virtue of Christ Jesus among the spiritually sick!

This day there is, by the sheep market, a pool, and impotent folk are here in exceeding great multitudes. We might never have heard of Bethesda if an august visitor had not condescended to honor it with His PresenceJesus, the Son of God, walked in the five porches by the pool. It was the place where we might expect to meet Him, for where should the Great Physician be found if not in the place where the sick are gathered? Here was work for Jesus healing hand and restoring word. It was but natural that the Son of Man, who came to seek and to save that which was lost, should make His way to the laver-house by the side of the pool. That gracious visit is Bethesdas glory.

This has lifted up the name of this pool out of the common rank of the springs and waters of the earth! O that King Jesus might come into this place this morning! This would be the glory of this Hall for which it should be famous in eternity! If Jesus would be here to heal, the remarkable size of the congregation would cease to be a wonder! The renown of Jesus and His saving love would eclipse all else, as the sun puts out the stars. My Brethren, Jesus will be here, for there are those who know Him and have power with Him, who have been asking for His Presence. The Lords favored people, by prevailing cries and tears, have won from Him His consent to be in our midst this day, and He is walking amid this throng as ready to heal and as mighty to save as in the days of His flesh!

Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world, is an assurance which comforts the preachers heart this morning! A present Savior present in the power of the Holy Spiritshall make this day to be remembered by many who shall be made whole. I ask the earnest attention of all, and I entreat of Believers their fervent assisting prayers while I first bid you observe the sick man. Secondly, direct your attentive eye to the Great Physician. And, thirdly, make an application of the whole narrative to the present case.

I. In order to observe THE PATIENT, I shall ask you to go with me to the pool with the five porches, around which the sick are lying. Walk tenderly among the groups of lame and blind! No, do not close your eyes. It will do you good to see the sorrowful sightto mark what sin has done and to what sorrows our father Adam has made us heirs. Why are they all here? They are here because sometimes the waters bubble up with a healing virtue. Whether visibly stirred by an angel or not it is not necessary for us to discuss. But it was generally believed that an angel descended and touched the waterthis rumor attracted the sick from all quarters.

As soon as the stir was seen in the waters the whole mass probably leaped into the poolthose who could not leap themselves were pushed in by their attendants. Alas, how small the result! Many were disappointed. Only one was rewarded for the leap! Whoever first stepped in was healed, but only the first. For the poor and meager chance of winning this cure, the sick folk lingered in Bethesdas arches year after year. The impotent man in the narrative had most likely spent the better part of his 38 years in waiting at this famous pool, buoyed up by the slender hope that he might one day be first of the throng.

On the Sunday mentioned in the text, the angel had not come to him, but something better had come, for Jesus Christ, the angels Master was there! Note concerning this man that he was fully aware of his sickness. He did not dispute the failure of his healthhe was an impotent manhe felt it and he admitted it. He was not like some present this morning who are lost by nature, but who do not know it, or will not confess it. He was conscious that he needed heavenly help, and his waiting at the pool showed it.

Are there not many in this assembly who are equally convinced on this point? You have for a long time felt that you are a sinner and have known that unless Divine Grace shall save you, you can never be saved. You are no atheist, no denier of the Gospelon the contrary, you firmly believe the Bible and heartily wish that you had a saving part in Christ Jesusbut for the present you have advanced no further than to feel that you are sick, to desire to be healed, and to admit that the care must come from above. So far, so good, but it is not good to stop here. The impotent man, thus desiring to be healed, waited by the pool expecting some sign and wonder. He hoped that an angel would suddenly burst open the golden gates and touch the waters which were now calm and stagnant, and that he then might be healed.

This, too, my dear Hearers, is the thought of many of those who feel their sins and who desire salvation. They accept that unscriptural and dangerous advice given to them by a certain class of ministersthey wait at the pool of Bethesdathey persevere in the formal use of means and ordinances, and continue in unbelief, expecting some great thing. They abide in a continued refusal to obey the Gospel and yet expect that all of a sudden they will experience some strange emotions, feelings, or remarkable impressions! They hope to see a vision, or hear a supernatural voice, or be alarmed with deliriums of horror.

Now, dear Friends, we shall not deny that a few persons have been saved by very singular interpositions of Gods hand in a manner altogether out of the ordinary modes of Divine procedure. We should be very foolish if we were, for instance, to dispute the truth of such a conversion as that of Colonel Gardiner, who, the very night when he made an appointment to commit sin, was arrested and converted by a vision of Christ upon the Cross, which, at any rate, he thought he saw, and by hearing or imagining that he heard the voice of the Savior tenderly pleading with him. It were idle to dispute that such cases have occurred, do occur, and may occur again.

I must, however, beg unconverted people not to look for such interpositions in their own cases. When the Lord bids you believe in Jesus, what right have you to demand signs and wonders instead? Jesus Himself is the greatest of all wonders! My dear Hearer, for you to wait for remarkable experiences is as futile as was the waiting of the multitude who lingered at Bethesda waiting for the long-expected angel, when He who could heal them stood already in their midst, neglected and despised by them!

What a piteous spectacle, to see them gazing into the clouds when the Physician who could heal them was present! But they offered Him no petitions and sought no mercy at His hands. In dealing with the method of waiting to see or to feel some great thing, we remark that it is not the way which God has bid His servants preach. I challenge the whole world to find any Gospel of God in which an unconverted man is told to abide in unbelief! Where is the sinner told to wait upon God in the use of ordinances so that he may be saved? The Gospel of our salvation is this Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved.

When our Lord gave His commission to His disciples, He said, Go you into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. And what was that Gospel? Tell them to wait in their unbelief in the use of means and ordinances till they see some great thing? Tell them to be diligent in prayer and read the Word of God, until they feel better? Not an atom of it! Thus says the Lord, He that believes and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believes not shall be damned. This was the Gospel and the only Gospel which Jesus Christ ever bade His ministers preach! They who say, Wait for feelings! Wait for impressions! Wait for wonders! preach another Gospel which is not another!

The lifting up of Christ on the Cross is the saving work of the Gospel ministry, and in the Cross of Jesus lies the hope of men! Look unto Me and be you saved, all the ends of the earth, is Gods Gospel. Wait at the pool, is mans Gospel, and has destroyed its thousands. This ungospellike gospel of waiting is immensely popular. I should not wonder if well near half of you are satisfied with it. O my Hearers, you do not refuse to fill the seats in our places of worship! You are seldom absent when the doors are open! And there you sit in confirmed unbeliefwaiting for windows to be made in Heavenand neglecting the Gospel of your salvation! The great command of God, Believe and live, has no response from you but a deaf ear and a stony heart while you quiet your consciences with outward religious observances!

If God had said, Sit in those seats and wait, I would be bold to urge it upon you with tears. But God has not said so! He has said, Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him. He has not said, Wait, but He Has said, Seek you the Lord while He may be found, call you upon Him while He is near. Today if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts. I find Jesus saying nothing to sinners about waiting, but very much about coming. Come unto Me, all you that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. If any man thirsts, let him come unto Me and drink. The Spirit and the bride say, come. And let him that hears say, Come. And let him that is thirsty come. And whoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

Why is this signs and wonders way so popular? It is because it administers to the conscience. When the minister preaches with power and the hearers heart is touched, the devil says, Wait for a more convenient season. Thus the arch enemy pours his deadly drug into the soul and the sinner, instead of trusting in Jesus on the spot, or falling on bended knees, with tearful eyes crying for mercy, flatters himself because he is in the use of the means. Which use of means is well enough as far as it goes, but which is bad as bad can be when it comes into the place of Christ Crucified! A child ought to hear its parents command, but what if the child puts hearing into the place of obeying? God forbid that I should glory in your listening to the Gospel if you are hearers onlymy glory is in the Crossand unless you look to the Cross, it were better for you that you had never been born!

I ask the candid attention of everyone who has thus been waiting while I mention one or two points. My dear Friend, is not this waiting a very hopeless business, after all? Out of those who waited at Bethesda, how very few were ever healed? He who stepped down first into the pool was cured, but all the rest came up from the pool just as they went in. Ah, my Hearers, I tremble for some of youyou Chapel-goers and Church-goers, who have for years been waitinghow few of you get saved! Thousands of you die in your sins, waiting in wicked unbelief. A few are snatched like brands from the burning, but the most of those who are hardened waiters, wait, and wait till they die in their sins. I solemnly warn you that, pleasing to the flesh as waiting in unbelief may be, it is not one which any reasonable man would long persevere in!

For, my Friend, are not you in your own person an instance of its hopelessness? You have been waiting for years! You can scarcely remember when you first went to a place of worship. Your mother carried you there in her arms, and you have been nurtured under the shadow of the sanctuary like the swallows that build their nests under Gods altarsand what has your unbelieving waiting done for you? Has it made you a Christian? No! You are still without God, without Christ, without hope! I shall put it to you in Gods namewhat right have you to expect that if you wait another thirty years you will be at all different from what you are now? Are not the probabilities most strong that at 60 you will be as graceless as you are at thirty?

Let me say itand I dare say it without egotismsome of you have listened to the Gospel preached to you in no mincing manner. My dear Hearers, I have been as plain with you as I know how to be! I have never shunned to declare the whole counsel of God, nor even to pick out an individual case and deal with it closely. Short of actually mentioning peoples names, I have hardly stopped. I have sought to commend the Gospel to the conscience of every man as in the sight of God. Remember the warnings you had in Exeter Hallsome of you remember how you broke down in the Surrey Gardens! [See first six volumes (The New Park Street Pulpit)]

Remember the invitations which have already come to you in this very Hall! And if all these have failed, what more is to be done in the way of hearing and waiting? Many of you have listened to other preachers, equally earnest, equally tender, perhaps more so. Now, if all these have had no effect upon youif waiting at the pool has done nothing for you is it not a forlorn and helpless mode of procedure? Is it not time that something better were tried than merely waiting for the troubling of the water? Is it not time that you remembered that Jesus Christ is ready to save you NOW, and that if you now trust in Him, you shall this day have everlasting life?

There lies our poor friend, still waiting at the waters edge. I do not blame him for waiting, for Jesus had not been there before and it was right for him to seize even the most slender chance of a cure. But it was sad that Jesus should have been so slighted. There He went, threading His way among the blind, and the halt, and the lame, and looking benignly upon them all, but none looking up to Him! Now, in other places, soon as Jesus made His appearance they brought the sick in their beds and laid them at His feet and as He went along He healed them all, scattering mercies with both His hands!

A blindness had come over these people at the pool. There they were, and there was Christ who could heal them, but not a single one of them sought Him! Their eyes were fixed on the waterexpecting it to be troubled! They were so taken up with their own chosen way that the true way was neglected. No mercies were distributed, for none were sought. Ah, my Friends, my sorrowful question isshall it be so this morning? The living Christ is still among us in the energy of His eternal Spirit! Will you be looking to your good works? Will you be trusting to your Church attendance and your Chapel-goings? Will you rely upon expected emotions, impressions, and fits of terrorand let Christ, who is able to save to the uttermosthave no glimpse of faith from any eye, no prayer of desire from any heart? If it shall be so, it is heart-breaking to think of it!

Men, with an Almighty Physician in their house, dying while they are amused with a hopeless quackery of their own inventing! O poor Souls, shall Bethesda be repeated here this morning, and Jesus Christ, the present Savior, be again neglected? If a king should give to one of his subjects a ring, and say to him, When you are in distress or disgrace, simply send me that ring and I will do all for you that is needfulif that man should willfully refuse to send it, but purchase presents, or go about to do some singular feats of valor in order to win his monarchs favor, you would say, What a fool he is! Here is a simple way, but he will not avail himself of it! He wastes his wits in inventing new devices and toils away his life in following out plans that must end in disappointment. Is not this the case with all those who refuse to trust Christ? The Lord has assured them that if they trust Jesus they shall be savedbut they go about after ten thousand imaginings, and let their God, their Savior, go!

Meanwhile the sick man, so often disappointed, was growing into deep despair. Moreover he was becoming old, for 38 years is a long time out of a mans life. He felt that he should soon die. The brittle thread was nearly snapped, and so as the days and nights wearily wore on, though he waits, it became heavy work to wait. My Friend, is not this your case? Life is wearing away with you. Are there not gray hairs here and there? You have waited all this while in vain, and I warn you that you have sinfully waited. You have seen others saved. Your child is saved, your wife is converted, but you are not. You are waiting, and will wait, I fear, till the tune of, Earth to earth, dust to dust, ashes to ashes, and the mold shall rattle on your coffin lid, and your soul shall be in Hell!

Do not, I pray you, play with time any longer. Say not, There is time enough, for the wise man knows that time enough is little enough. Be not like the foolish drunkard who, staggering home one night, saw his candle lit for him. Two candles! he said, for his drunkenness made him see double, I will blow out one, and as he blew it out, in a moment he was in the dark. Many a man sees double through the drunkenness of sinhe thinks that he has one life to sow his wild oats inand then the last part of life in which to turn to God. And, like a fool, he blows out the only candle that he has, and in the dark he will have to lie down forever. Hasten, Traveler! You have but one sun, and when that sets, you will never reach your home. God help you to make haste now!

II. Let us look at THE PHYSICIAN Himself. As we have already seen, our Lord, on this occasion walked, forgotten and neglected, through that throng of impotent folk, no one crying, Son of David, have mercy upon me! No struggling woman seeking to touch the hem of His garment that she might be made whole! All were desirous of being healed, but, either no one knew or no one trusted Him. What a strange, soul-sickening sight it was, for Jesus was quite able and willing to heal and to do it all without fee or reward! And yet none sought Him.

Is this scene to be repeated this morning? Jesus Christ is able to save you, my Hearers. There is no heart so hard that He cannot soften it. There is no man among you so lost that Jesus cannot save him. Blessed be my dear Master, no case ever did defeat Him! His mighty power reaches beyond the uttermost of all the depths of human sin and folly. If there is a harlot here, Christ can cleanse her! If there is a drunkard or a thief here, the blood of Jesus can make him white as snow! If you have any desire towards Him, you have not gone beyond the reach of His pierced hands If you are not saved, it is certainly not for want of power in the Savior!

Moreover, your poverty is no hindrance, for my Master asks nothing from youthe poorer the wretch, the more welcome to Christ! My Master is no covetous priest who demands pay for what He doesHe forgives us freelyHe wants none of your merits, nothing whatever from you! Come as you are to Him, for He is willing to receive you as you are. But here is my sorrow and complaintthis blessed Lord Jesus, though present to healreceives no attention from the most of men! They are looking another way, and have no eyes for Him. Yet Jesus was not angry. I do not find that He upbraided one of those who lay in the porches, or that He even thought a hard thought of them. I am sure that He pitied them, and said in His heart, Alas, poor Souls, that they should not know when mercy is so near!

My Master is not wrathful with you who forget Him and neglect Him, but He pities you from His heart. I am but His poor servant, but I pity from my inmost heart those of you who live without Christ. I would gladly weep for you who are trying other ways of salvation, for they will all end in disappointment. And if continued in, will prove to be your eternal destruction! Observe very carefully what the Savior did. Looking around among the whole company, He made an election. He had a right to make what choice He pleased, and He exercised that sovereign prerogative! The Lord is not bound to give His mercy to everyone, or to anyone! He has freely proclaimed it to you allbut as you reject it He has now a double right to bless His chosen ones by making them willing in the day of His power.

The Savior selected that man out of the great multitude, we know not why, but certainly for a reason founded in Divine Grace. If we might venture to give a reason for His choice it may be that He selected him because his was the worst case, and he had waited the longest of all. This mans case was in everybodys mouth. They said, This man has been there 38 years. Our Lord acted according to His own eternal purpose, doing as He pleased with His own. He fixed the eyes of His electing love upon that one man, and, going up to him, He gazed upon him. He knew all his history. He knew that he had been a long time in that case and therefore He pitied him much. He thought of those dreary months and years of painful disappointment which the impotent man had suffered, and the tears were in the Masters eyes. He looked and looked again at that man, and His heart yearned towards him.

Now, I know not whom Christ intends to save this morning by His effectual Grace. I am bound to give the general call, it is all that I can do! I know not where the Lord will give the effectual call which alone can make the Word saving. I should not wonder if He should call some of you who have been waiting long. I will bless His name if He does. I should not marvel if electing love should pitch upon the chief of sinners this day! If Jesus should look on some of you who never looked on Him, His look shall make you look, and His pity shall make you have pity upon yourselves, and His Irresistible Grace shall make you come to Him that you may be saved!

Jesus performed an act of Sovereign distinguishing Grace. I pray you do not kick at this doctrine! If you do, I cannot help it, for it is true. I have preached the Gospel to every one of you as freely as man can do it, and surely you who reject it ought not to quarrel with God for bestowing on others that which you do not care to receive! If you desire His mercy, He will not deny it to you. If you seek Him He will be found of you. But if you will not seek mercy, rail not at the Lord if He bestows it upon others! Jesus, having looked upon this man with a special eye of regard, said to Him, Will you be made whole? I have already hinted that this was not said because Christ wanted information, but because He wished to arouse the mans attention.

On account of its being a Sunday, the man was not thinking of being cured, for to the Jew it seemed a most unlikely thing that cures should be worked on a Sunday. Jesus, therefore, brought his thoughts back to the matter in hand, for, mark you, the work of Divine Grace is a work upon a conscious mind, not upon senseless matter. Though Puseyites pretend to regenerate unconscious children by sprinkling their faces with water, Jesus never attempted such a thingJesus saves men who have the use of their sensesand His salvation is a work upon a quickened intellect and awakened affections. Jesus brought back the wandering mind with the question, Will you be made whole? Indeed, the man might have said, indeed, I desire it above all thingsI long for itI pant for it.

Now, my dear Hearer, I will ask the same question of you. Will you be made whole? Do you desire to be saved? Do you know what being saved is? Oh, you say, it is escaping from Hell. No, no, no! That is the result of being saved, but being saved is a different thing. Do you want to be saved from the power of sin? Do you desire to be saved from being covetous, worldly-minded, bad-tempered, unjust, ungodly, domineering, drunken, or profane? Are you willing to give up the sin that is dearest to you? No, says one, I cannot honestly say I desire all that. Then you are not the man I am seeking this morning!

But is there one here who says, Yes, I long to be rid of sin, root and branch. I desire, by Gods Grace, this very day to become a Christian and to be saved from sin. Well, then, as you are already in a state of thoughtfulness, let us go a step further and observe what the Savior did. He gave the word of command, saying, Rise! Take up your bed and walk. The power by which the man arose was not in himself, but in Jesus! It was not the mere sound of the words which made him riseit was the Divine power which went with it. I believe that Jesus still speaks through His ministers. I trust that He speaks through me at this moment, when in His name I say to you who have been waiting at the pool, wait no longer, but this moment believe in Jesus Christ! Trust Him now!

I know that my words will not make you do it, but if the Holy Spirit works through the words, you will believe. Trust Christ now, poor Sinner! Believe that He is able to save you. Believe it now! Rely upon Him to save you this moment. Repose upon Him now! If you are enabled to believe, the power will come from Him, not from you, and your salvation will be effected, not by the sound of the word, but by the secret power of the Holy Spirit which goes with that word. I pray you observe that although nothing is said about faith in the text, yet the man must have had faith. Suppose you had been unable to move hand or foot for 38 years, and someone said at your bedside, Rise? You would not think of trying to rise, you would know it to be impossible!

You must have faith in the person who uttered the word, or else you would not make the attempt. I think I see the poor manthere he is, a heap, a writhing bundle of tortured nerves and powerless musclesyet Jesus says, Rise! and up he rises in a moment! Take up your bed, says the Master, and the bed is carried! Here was the mans faith! The man was a Jew and he knew that, according to the Pharisees, it would be a very wicked thing for him to roll up his mattress and carry it on Sunday. But because Jesus told him, he asked no questions, but doubled up his couch and walked. He did what he was told to do because he believed in Him who spoke. Have you such faith in Jesus, poor Sinner? Do you believe that Christ can save you? If you do, then I say to you in His name, trust Him! Trust Him now! If you trust Jesus, you shall be saved this morning saved on the spot, and saved forever!

Observe, beloved Friends, that the cure which Christ worked was perfect. The man could carry His bed! The restoration was proved to a demonstration! The cure was manifest! All could see it! Moreover, the cure was immediate. He was not told to take a lump of figs and put it on the sore and wait. He was not carried home by his friends and laid up for a month or two, and gradually nursed into vital energy. Oh, no! He was cured then and there! Half our professing Christian imagine that regeneration cannot take place in a moment, and, therefore, they say to poor sinners, Go and lie at Bethesdas pool. Wait in the use of ordinances. Humble yourself. Seek for deeper repentance.

Beloved, away with such teaching! The Cross! The Cross! The Cross! THERE hangs a sinners hope! You must not rely on what you can do, nor on what angels can do, nor on visions and dreams, nor on feelings and strange emotions, and horrible deliriums! You must rest in the blood of my Master and my God, once slain for sinners! There is life in a look at the Crucified One, and there is life nowhere else! I come to the same point, then, upon the second head as the first. Thus says the Lord, Look unto Me, and be you saved, all the ends of the earth.

III. Thirdly, we have to APPLY THE INSTANCE IN THE TEXT TO THE PRESENT OCCASION. I hope, Believers, your hearts are going up in prayer this morning. What a scene is before us! If someone had told us that this mass of people would have gathered to listen to the Gospel, are there not hundreds who would have doubted it? Mark this, we have had nothing novel to attract this multitudenothing by way of gorgeous ceremonythere is not even the swell of the organ! I declined its pealing notes lest we should seem to depend in the slightest degree from a thread even to a shoe lace, upon anything but the preaching of the Gospel!

The preaching of the Cross is enough to draw the people, and enough to save the people, and if we take to anything else we lose our power and shear away the locks which make us strong. The application of the text, this morning, is just thisWhy should we not, on this very spot, have instantaneous cures of sick souls? Why should there not be scores, hundreds, thousands, who shall this morning hear the gracious words, Arise, take up your bed and walk? I believe it is possible! I hope it will be done!

Let me talk with you who doubt this matter. You still think that you must waityou have had a sufficient spell of waiting, and you are getting tolerably wearybut still you stick to the old plan. Hopeless as it is, you still catch at it as drowning men do at straws. But I want to show you that this is all wrong. Regeneration is an instantaneous work, and Justification an instantaneous gift. Man fell in a moment. When Eve plucked the fruit, and Adam ate it, it did not require six months to bring them into a state of condemnation. It did not require several years of continued sin to cast them out of Paradise. Their eyes were opened by the forbidden fruit. They saw that they were naked and they hid themselves from God. Surely, surely, Christ is not to be longer about His work than the

devil was about his! Shall the devil destroy us in a moment and Jesus be unable to save us in a moment?

Ah, glory be to God, He has power to deliver far more than any which Satan uses for mans destruction. Look at the Biblical illustrations of what salvation is. I will only mention three. Noah built an arkthat was a type of salvation. Now, when was Noah saved? Christ has built the ark for us. We have nothing to do with building it. But when was Noah saved? Does anyone say, He was safe after he had been in the ark a month and had arranged all the things and looked out on the deluge and felt his danger. No! The moment Noah went through the door, and the Lord shut him in, Noah was safe. When he had been in the ark a second he was as secure as when he had been there a month.

Take the case of the Passover. When were the Jews safe from the destroying angel who went through the land of Egypt? Were they safe after the blood which was sprinkled on the door had been looked upon and considered for a week or two? Oh, no, Beloved! The moment the blood was sprinkled, the house was secured. And the moment a sinner believes and trusts in the crucified Son of God he is pardoned at oncehe receives salvation in full through Christs blood. One more instance, the bronze serpent. When the bronze serpent was lifted up, what were the wounded to do? Were they told to wait till the bronze serpent was pushed into their faces, or until the venom of the serpent showed certain symptoms in their flesh?

No, they were commanded to look. They did look. Were they healed in six months time? I read not so, but as soon as their eyes met the serpent of brass, the cure was worked! And as soon as your eyes meets Christ, poor Trembler, you are saved! Though yesterday you were deep in your cups, and up to your neck in sin, yet if this morning you look to my once slain but now exalted Master, you shall find eternal life! Again take Biblical instances. Did the dying thief wait at the pool of the ordinances? You know how soon his believing prayer was heard, and Jesus said, Today you shall be with Me in Paradise. The three thousand at Pentecost, did they wait for some great thing? No, they believed, and were baptized!

Look at the jailer of Philippi. It was the dead of the night, the prison was shaken, and the jailer was alarmed, and said, Sir, what must I do to be saved? Did Paul say, Well, you must use the means and look for a blessing upon the ordinances? No! He said, Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved, and your house, and that very night he baptized him. Paul did not take the time about it that some think so exceedingly necessary. He believed as I do, that there is life in a look at Jesus. He bade men look, and looking they lived! Possibly you will see this still more clearly if I remind you that the work of salvation is all done. There is nothing for a sinner to do in order to be savedit is all done for him.

You need washing. The bath does not need filling. There is a fountain filled with blood. You need clothing. You have not to make the garment, the robe is ready. The garment of Christs righteousness is woven from the top throughoutall that is needed is to have it put on. If some work remained for you to do it might be a lengthened process, but all the doing is accomplished by Christ. Salvation is not of works, but of Grace, and to accept what Christ presents you is not a work of time. Once more, let me say to you that regeneration itself cannot be a work of a long time, because, even where it seems to be most gradual, when looked at closely, it turns out in its essence to be the work of a moment.

There is a dead man. Now, if that man is raised from the dead there must be an instant in which he was dead, and another instant in which he was alive! The actual quickening must be the work of a moment. I grant you that at the first the life may be very feeble, but there must be a time when it begins. There must be a linewe cannot always see it ourselves, but God must see itthere must be a line between life and death. A man cannot be somewhere between dead and alive. He either is alive or he is dead. And so you are either dead in sin or alive unto God, and quickening cannot involve a long period of time.

Finally, my Hearers, for God to say, I forgive you, takes not a century nor a year. The judge pronounces the sentence, and the criminal is acquitted. If God shall say to you this morning, I absolve you, you are absolved, and you may go in peace. I must bear faithful witness as to my own case. I never found mercy by waiting. I never obtained a gleam of hope by depending upon ordinances. I found salvation by believing. I heard a simple minister of the Gospel say, Look and live! Look to Jesus! He bleeds in the garden, He dies on the tree! Trust Him! Trust to what He suffered instead of you. And if you trust Him, you shall be saved.

The Lord knows I had heard that Gospel many times before, but I had not obeyed it. It came, however, with power to my soul, and I did look, and the moment I looked to Christ, I lost my burden. But, says one, how do you know? Did you ever carry a burden yourself? Oh, yes, you say. Did you know when it was off? How did you know? Oh, you say, I felt so different. I knew when my burden was on, and, consequently, I knew when it was off. It was so in my case, too. I only wish some of you felt the burden of sin as I felt it when I was waiting at the pool of Bethesda. I wonder that such waiting had not landed me in Hell! But, when I heard the word, Look! I looked, and my burden was gone! I wondered where it had goneI have never seen it since, and I never shall see it again! It went into the Masters tomb, and it lies forever buried there.

God has said it, I have blotted out like a cloud your iniquities, and like a thick cloud your sins. Oh, come, you needy, come to my Master! You that have been disappointed with rites and ceremonies, and feelings, and impressions, and all the hopes of the fleshcome at my Masters command, and look up to Him! He is not here in the flesh, for He has risen. But He has risen to plead for sinners, and, He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever lives to make intercession for them. Oh, if I could know how to preach the Gospel so that you would feel it, I would go to any school to learn! The Lord knows I would willingly consent to lose these eyes to get greater power in my ministry. Yes, and to lose arms, legs, and all my members!

I would be willing to die if I could but be honored by the Holy Spirit to win this mass of souls to God! I implore you, my Brothers and Sisters, you who have power in prayer, pray the Lord to bring sinners to Christ! Let me say, solemnly, to you who have heard the Word of God this day, I have told you the plan of salvation plainly. If you do not accept it, I am clear of your blood, I shake my garments of the blood of your souls. If you come not to my Lord and Master, I must bear swift witness against you at the Day of Judgment!

I have told you the wayI cannot tell you it more simplyI beseech you to follow it! I entreat you to look to Jesus! But if you refuse it, at any rate, when you shall rise from the dead and stand before the Great White Throne, do me the justice to say that I did entreat and persuade you to escape, I did impress upon you to flee from the wrath to come! The Lord save each one of you, and His shall be the praise ever more. Amen.

Adapted from The C.H. Spurgeon Collection, Version 1.0, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307 Sermon #2269 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

IMPOTENCE AND OMNIPOTENCE   
NO. 2269

**INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS-DAY AUGUST 14, 1892. DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, FEBRUARY 16, 1890.

**And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him lying there, and knew that he had been in that case a long time, He said to him, Will you be made whole? The impotent man answered him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool; but while I am coming, another steps down before me. Jesus said to him, Rise, take up your bed, and walk. And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed and walked. John 5:5-9.**

THIS man had been lying, with many others, round the pool, hoping that it would be stirred by the angel, and that he might be the first put into the water and so might be healed. There he waited long, and waited in vain. Why did he wait? Because Jesus was not there. Where Jesus is not, you must wait! If it is only an angel and a pool, you must waitand one may get a blessingand many may get no blessing. But when Jesus came, there was no waiting. He walked in among the crowd of sick folk, spied out this man, bade him to take up his mattress and walk home and he was healed at once.

Now, I commend this man for waiting. I admire him for his patience and his perseverance. But I beg you not to make his case your own. He waited, for Jesus was not there. You may not wait, you must not waitas I have told youfor Jesus is here! There was necessity for him to wait. As I have told you, there was an angel and a pool, and nothing more. But where Christ is, there should be no waiting. Any soul that looks to Christ tonight shall be saved, even though he looks from the ends of the earth! You may look nowno, you are commanded to do so! Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation. Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation. There, in that pew, or in yonder aisles, if you turn your eyes by faith to Jesus, the Living One on the Throne of the Highest, you shall obtain immediate cure! Waiting is all very well at the Pool of Bethesda, but waiting at the Pool of Ordinances, as I have heard some say, is not according to the Scriptures! I read nothing about waiting there! But I do read thisBelieve on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved.

However, for the help of some who have waited till they are weary, who have persevered in the use of the means till they are becoming desponding and disappointed, let us look at the case of the impotent man at Bethesda.

I. We notice about it, first, that THE SAVIOR KNEW THE CASE. I only mention that in order to say that the Savior knows your case. Jesus saw him lying there. There were a great many objects for the Saviors eye to rest upon, but He fixed His gaze upon this man, long bedridden, 38 years impotent. Even so, Jesus knows all about your case. He sees you lying just where you are, tonightimpotent, without hope, without light, without faith. He sees you! I need you to feel this to be true. He singles you out amidst this throng, wherever you sit, and His eyes are scanning you from head to foot. No, He looks within as well as without, and reads all that is in your heart!   
Concerning the man at the pool, Jesus knew that he had been in that case a long time. He knows the years that you have been waiting. You remember being carried to the House of God by your mother. You recollect, as a boy, listening to sermons that seemed to startle youand you went home to your little bedroom and cried to God for mercybut you forgot your impressions. They were like the morning mist that vanishes in the rising sun! You came to London. You grew up to be a man, but you became careless about Divine thingsyou shook off all your early impressions. Still, you went to hear the Word of God preached and, oftentimes, you half hoped that you might get a blessing. You heard the Word, but faith was not mixed with what you heard, so you missed the blessing. Yet you always had a wish that it should come to you. You never could despise godly people, or the things of Christ. You could not get them for yourselfat least, you thought you could notbut you always had some lingering wish that you were numbered with the people of God.   
Now, the Lord Jesus knows all about that and the many years in which you have been waiting as a hearer, only, and not a doer of the Word impressed at times, but doing violence to your better feelings and going back to a careless life. My Lord knows all about you! I cannot pick you out in this congregation, but remember, while I am preaching tonight, miracles will be workedprocesses which will change the very nature of men are gong on within this house, for Christ is being preached and His Gospel is being set forth! And this is not done, with prayerful earnestness, in vain! God will bless it! He is going to bless somebody tonight! Who that somebody may be, or how many hundred somebodies there will be, I cannot guessbut He will bless His own Wordand why should He not bless you? He sees just who you are and where you areand what you are.   
In addition to this, our Lord knew all this poor mans disappointments. Many times, when he had striven to be the first to the waters edge and thought that he would be able to take the happy plunge, someone else went in before him and his hopes were dashed! Another came up out of the water healed and then, with a very heavy sigh, he fell back upon his bed and felt that it might be a long time before the angel stirred the water, again, and even then he might be disappointed again! He remembered the many times when he had lost all hope and he lay there almost in despair. Now I think I hear someone here tonight saying, My brother found the Lord. My friend who came here with me, found the Lord. I have lived to see my mother die in sure and certain hope of Glory. I have friends who have come to Christ, but I am still living without Him. When there are special services, I hope that I might have been specially blessed. I have been to Prayer Meetings, I have read my Bible in secret and I have sometimes hopedit was but a little hope, but still I hopedMaybe, one of these days, I may be healed. Yes, dear Friend, and my Lord knows all about that, and He sympathizes in all the grief you feel tonightand He hears those unspoken wishes of yoursand He knows your longing that you may be healed!   
II. Now, secondly, THE SAVIOR AWAKENED THE MANS DESIRES. He said to him, Will you be made whole? There he lay. I am not going to explain that lying at the pool, but just apply it to you who are here in a similar condition.   
Beware of forgetting why you are here. Beware of coming to the House of God and not knowing why you come! I have said that, years ago, you went to places of worship in the hope of finding salvation. Well, you have kept coming and you have not found itdo you still look for it? Have you not fallen into the habit of sitting and listening to sermons, prayers and so on, without feeling that you came for anything special for yourself? You come and go, merely that you may attend a place of worship. That is all. The Savior would not let the impotent man lie there satisfied because he was by the pool. No, no. He said to him, Why are you here? Have you not some desire? Do you want to be made whole? My dear Hearer, I wish that you were able to say, Yes, to that question! Have you come here tonight that your sin may be forgiven, that your soul may be renewed by Divine Grace, that you may meet Christ? If so, I want to keep you to that point and not let you come and take a sitting here, and come, and come, and come, and come, and be just like a door on its hinges out there, which turns in and turns out again, and is not a bit better for it! Oh, do not get into mere religious habits! Ritualistic habits they will be to you, simple as the ritual will be. You come and go, and you are satisfied. This will never do! Christ awakens your desire as He asks, Will you be made whole?   
Also, avoid a despairing indifference. I remember two brothers and a sister who heard me preach for a considerable time. They were in great distress of soul, but, at the same time, they had a notion that they could not believe in Christ, and that they must waitI hardly know what for but they did wait till they grew quite old. I did not know better people morally, or better hearers so far as interest in what they heard was concernedbut they never seemed to get any farther. At last they got into this statethey seemed to feel as though, if it was to be, it would beand if it was not to be, it would not be, and that all they could do was just sit still and be quiet and patient.   
Patient under the apprehension of being lost forever? Why, I do not expect a man in the condemned cell to be happy and patient when he hears them putting up his gallows! He must be concerned! He must be uneasy. I did my best to make these friends uneasy, but I fear that my efforts were attended with very small results. The Savior said to this man, Will you be made whole? You seem to be in such a state of indifference that you do not care whether you are made whole or not. No worse condition than that can be foundit is so hard to deal with! God save you from sullen indifference in which you leave yourself to drift to destruction at the will of some unknown fate!   
I pray you to remember that it is yours to will, for Christ said to this man, Will you be made whole? You cannot make yourself whole, but you can will and wish to be made whole. Gods Holy Spirit has given to many of you to will and to do according to His good pleasure. You will never be saved against your will! God drags nobody to Heaven by the ears! There must be in you a willing mind consenting to the work of His Sovereign Grace! And if it is there, I want you to exercise it, tonight, as Christ wished this man to exercise itWill you be made whole? Have you any wish that way, any desire or longing for healing? I want to stir this fire and make it burn. And if there is only a spark of desire, I would breathe upon it and pray the Holy Spirit to breathe upon it to make it into a great flame! Paul said, To will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good, I find not. I believe that there are some here who have the will to be saved. God be thanked for that!   
Will you be made whole? I think that the Savior put this question for another reason, which I will turn into an exhortation. Forego all prescribing as to how you are to be saved. The question is not, Will you be put into that pool? but, Will you be made whole? Have you come to this, that you are willing to be saved in Gods way, in Christs way? One says, I need to have a dream. Dear Soul, do not want dreamsthey are only dreams! Another says, I need to see a vision. My dear Friend, there is nothing in the plan of salvation about seeing visions. I need to hear a voice, says one. Well, hear my voice, then, and may God the Holy Spirit make you hear the voice of His Word through me! But I needoh, yes, you need, you know not what you need like many a silly child that has its fads, fancies, whims and wishes!   
Oh, that all were willing to be saved by the simple plan of believe and live! If this is Gods way, who are you that He should make a new way for you? When I had put the way of salvation before a friend, some time ago, she turned to me and said, Oh, Sir, do pray for me! No, I said, I will not pray for you. Oh, but, she said, how can you say that? I replied, I set before you Christ Crucified and I beg you to believe in Him. If you will not believe in Him, you will be lost! And I shall not pray God to make a different way of salvation for you. You deserve to be lost if you will not believe in Christ. I put it to her and, when she afterwards said, Oh, I see it now! I do look to Christ and trust Him, I said, Now I will pray for you! Now we can pray together and sing together, if necessary.   
But, dear Friends, do not set up your own notion about how you ought to be converted. Can you find any two people who were converted in the same way? God does not make converts as men make steel pens, a gross in a box, all alike. No, no, but in each case there is a living man created and every living man, every living animal, every living plantis somewhat different from every other of its kind, and you must not look for uniformity in the work of regeneration. Will you be made whole? Come, do you desire the pardon of sin? Do you long for a new heart and a right spirit? If so, leave off disputing as to

how you are to get themand do what Christ tells you to do!   
Will you be made whole? It is as if the Savior said, Be more than ever in earnest, now. I know that you will to be made whole. Well, now, will it more tonight than you have ever willed it before. Let the will which you have be exercisedput it forth! You are in earnest to be savedbe in more earnest tonight! You desire to find Christ? Well, desire to find Christ more tonight than ever you did in your life! You have come to an important crisis of your life. You may be at the point of death! Who knows? How many have been suddenly struck down of late! If you would be made whole, I would that you might be made whole tonight! I pray that you may feel something pressing you, something that makes you end your long delay, something that makes you feel, I have no more time to waste! I cannot afford to loiter. I must be saved tonight! I must hear the distant ticking of Gods great clock that stands in the Hall of Grace and always says, Now! Now! Now! Now! Now! and never utters any other sound. Oh, may the Lord make it to be so, by His own Free Grace!   
Thus, you see, the Savior awakened the desires of the man at the pool. First, He knew his case, and next, He awakened his desires.  
III. Now, thirdly, THE SAVIOR HEARD THE MANS COMPLAINT. This is what he said, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steps down before me.   
Some of these people had kind friends who took turns at watching day and nightand the moment that the water was stirredthey took up their patient and plunged him in! This man had lost all his friends thirty-eight years of illness had worn them all outand he said, I have no man to put me into the pool; how can I get into the water? And there are many in situation who need help. While I have been at Mentone, I have had the joy of leading a number of friends to Christ. When I had to leave them and come back to London, one and another of them said to me, What can we do without you, Sir? We shall have nobody to lead us in the right way, now. We will have no one to instruct us, no one to meet our objections, nobody to solve our doubts, nobody to whom we can tell the anxieties of our hearts.   
No doubt some of you would talk in the same fashion and I must admit that the lack of a helper is serious. It is a great deprivation to have no man to help you in these things. Sometimes, if a friend will come up after the sermon and just say a kind word, it will do more good than the sermon, itself! Many a poor troubled one who has been a long times in prison, might have been released sooner if only some kind friend had reminded the Brother of a Divine promise which, like a key, would have opened the prison door. I agree with you that there is a great help in having an earnest Christian friend to lift you over a difficulty; to bear you down to the waters edge to which you cannot go by yourself, and to put you into the pool. It is a great loss, certainly, if you have no such friend, and I am very sorry for you if you do not.   
You live in a village where there is nobody to speak to you about spiritual matters, or you attend a ministry that does not feed you. You have nobody to comfort you. There are not many, after all, who can really help sinners in coming to Christ. Some who try to do so are a great deal too wise and others are too hard-hearted. It needs a special training in the School of Grace if anyone is to learn to sympathize with others so as to be able to really help them. I can suppose that one here is saying, I have no mother to speak to. I have no Christian friend in the family. I have no one to whom I can go for helpand that is why I stick fast where I am.   
Well, a helper is very valuable, but I want to say that a helper may not be so valuable as you think. I have known some who have had plenty of Christian helpers while they were seeking the Lord, but none of them were really able to help them. If you trust the earthly helpers and think them essential, God will not bless their efforts, and they will be of no use to you! I am afraid that many a seeker has had to say, even to good and earnest Christians, what Job said to his friends, Miserable comforters are you all! After all, how can a man help you much in your souls affairs? No man can give you faith, or give you pardon. No man can give you spiritual life, or even spiritual light! Though you have no man to help you, remember that you can make too much of men and you can trust too much in Christian helpers. I beg you remember that.   
I am afraid that there are some professors who have been helped a little too much. They heard a sermon and were really impressed by it, and somebody was foolish enough to say to them, That is conversion. It was never conversion at all! The friend further said, Now, come forward and make a profession. So they came forward and made a profession of what they never had. A friend said, Now, come to such a meeting and come and join the Church. Come on! And they were led, and led, and led, never having any real internal life, or spiritual energy given them from on high. They are just like children in baby walkers who are unable to walk alone. God save you from a religion that depends upon other people! There are some who have a kind of lean-to religion, resting on somebody else, and when the support is taken away, what becomes of the lean-to? The good old lady who helped you for so many years dieswhere is your religion then? The minister used to keep you goingyou were like a whippingtopand he like the whip that kept you spinning. When he is gone, where are you? I entreat you, do not have a religion of that kind! Though a helper is very useful, remember that under certain conditions, even a Christian helper may be a hindrance.   
Now, my dear Hearer, this is the point I have come toyou have to deal with Jesus tonight and, dealing with Jesus, you need no man. You have not to deal with pools and angels! You have to deal with the Lord Jesus, Himself. Suppose that there is no man to help youdo you need a man when Jesus is here? The man was needed to put you into the pool, but he is not needed to introduce you to Christ! You may speak to Christ, yourself! You may confess your sins, yourself. You need no priestyou need a Mediator between your soul and Godbut you do not need a mediator between your soul and Jesus! You may come to Him where you are and as you are. Come to Him now! Tell Him your case! Plead with Him for mercy. He does not need my help. He does not need the help of the Archbishop of Canterbury! He does not need the help of anybodyHe alone can meet your case! Just put your case into His hands and then, if you have no man to be your helper, you need not lie down and fret about it, for He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him!   
Now this is all very plain talk, but we need plain talk nowadays. I feel as if I have not preached on Sunday unless I have tried to bring men to Christ. There are many high and sublime doctrines that I would like to speak of, and many deep and rapturous experiences that I would like to describeyet I feel that I must often leave these things and keep to the much more commonplace, but much more useful matter of persuading men, in Christs steadthat they look away from man, away from ordinances, away from self and deal with Jesus, Himself, distinctly and directly, for there is no need of man and, certainly, there is no need of delay!   
IV. This is my closing point. THE SAVIOR MET THE MANS CASE ENTIRELY.   
This impotent man has no man to help him. Christ can help him without any man. This man cannot move except with great pain. He has to crawl to the waters edge, but he has no need to crawl therehe need not move an inch! The power to heal that man was in Christ who stood there commissioned of God to save sinners and to help the helpless! Please remember that the power that savesall of itis not in the saved man, but in the Christ who saves! I take leave to contradict those who say that salvation is an evolution! All that ever can be evolved out of the sinful heart of man is sinand nothing else! Salvation is the free gift of God, by Jesus Christ, and the work of it is supernatural. It is done by the Lord, Himself, and He has power to do it, however weak, no, however dead in sin, the sinner may be! As a living child of God, I can say tonight, that *On a life I did not live,   
On a death I did not die,   
I stake my whole eternity!*   
You who would be saved must do the sameyou must look right out of self to Him whom God has exalted to be a Prince and a Savior to the sons of men! The Christ met that mans case, for He was able to do anything for him that he required. He meets your case, too, my dear Hearer, for He can do anything for you that is needed. Between here and Heavens gate there shall never be anything required which He cannot give, or any help needed which He is not prepared to renderfor He has all power in Heaven and in earth!   
Next, the Lord can do more for you than you ask of Him. This poor man never asked anything of Christ, except by his looks, and by his lying there at the pool. If you feel, tonight, as if you cannot pray. If you have needs that you cannot describe. If there is something needed and you do not know what it is, Christ can give it to you! You shall know what it is that you need when you get it, but, perhaps now, in His mercy, He does not let you know all your needs. But here is the pointHe is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think. May He do it in you tonight! Take comfort from the cure of the impotent man! Cherish hope and say, Why should He not heal me?  
Now, the way in which Christ worked was very amazing. He worked by a command. It is not a way that you and I would have selectednor a way of which some nominal Christians approve. He said to this man, Rise. He could not rise. Take up your bed. He could not take up his bed! He had been 38 years unable to get

off his bed! Take up your bed, and walk. Walk? He could not walk! I have heard some objectors say, That preacher says to people, Believe. They cannot believe. He bids them, Repent. They cannot repent. Ah, well, our Lord is our example and He said to this man who could not rise, and could not take up his bed, and could not walk, Rise, take up your bed and walk. This was His way of exercising His Divine Power! And that is the way in which Christ saves men today!   
He gives us faith enough to say, You dry bones, hear the Word of the Lord! They cannot hear. Thus says the Lord, You dry bones live! They cannot livebut they do hear, and they do liveand while we are acting by faith, delivering a command which looks, upon the surface of it, to be absurd and unreasonable, the work of Christ is done by that command! Did He not say of old, in the darkness, Let there be light? To what spoke the Lord that Word of power? To darkness and to nothingness! And there was light. Now He speaks to the sinner and He says, Believe and live. And the sinner believes and lives!   
God wants those of His messengers who have faith to give His command, to let the sinner know that he has not the strength to obey, that he is morally lost and ruined, and yet to say, in the name of the eternal God, Thus says the Lord, Rise, take up your bed, and walk. Believe, repent, be converted and be baptized, everyone of you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ! This is the way in which Christs power goes forth to the sons of men! He said to the man with the withered hand, Stretch forth your hand, and he did so! And He says to the dead, Come forth, and they come forth! His commandings are attended with enablingsand where His commands are faithfully preached, His power goes with themand men are saved!   
I close with observation. In obedience, power was given. The man did not stop and wrangle with Christ and say, Rise? What do You mean? You look like a friend, but do You come here to make sport of me? Rise? Thirty-eight years have I been lying here, and You say, Rise? Do You think that there has ever been a minute in those 38 years in which I would not have gladly risen if I could have done so? And yet You say, Rise, and You say Take up your bed. Shoulder the rug on which you lie. How can I do it? It is 38 years since I could lift a pound weight and You bid me shoulder this mat on which I lie! Do You make me a theme of jest? And walk? You say, Walk. Walk? Hear me, you sick ones around me, He tells me to walk! I can scarcely lift a finger, yet He bids me walk! Thus he might have argued the matter out and it would have been a very logical piece of argumentand the Savior would have stood convicted of having spoken empty words.   
Instead of speaking thus, no sooner did Christ say to him, Rise, than he willed, by Gods Grace, to rise! And as he willed to rise, he moved to rise and rise, he did, to his own astonishment! He rose and, stooping down, rolled up his mattress, all the while filled with wonder, every part of his body singing as he rolled it up and put it on his shoulder with speed! To his surprise he found that the joints of his feet and legs could move! And he walked right away with his mattress on his shoulderand the miracle was complete. Stop, man, stop! Come here! Now, had you the strength to do this of yourself? No, not I. I lay here 38 years. I had no strength till that word, Rise, came to me. But did you do it? Oh, yes, you can see that I did it! I rose. I folded up the mattress and I walked away!   
But you were under some kind of compulsion that made you move your legs and your hands, were you not? Oh, no! I did it freely, cheerfully, gladly! Compel me to do it? My dear Sir, I clap my hands for joy to think that I could do it! I do not want to go back to that old mat and lie there againnot I! What did you do? Well, I scarcely know what I did. I believed Him and I did what He told me, and a strange mysterious power came over methat is the whole story. Now explain it. Tell these people all about it. Oh, no, says the man, I know that it is so, but I cannot explain it. But one thing I know, whereas I was a cripple, now I can walk! Whereas I was impotent, now I can carry my bed! Whereas I was lying there, now I can stand upright.   
I cannot explain salvation to you, tonight, or how it takes place. But I remember when I sat in the pew as despairing a sinner as ever lived. I heard the preacher say, Look unto Christ, and live. He seemed to say to me, Look! Look! Look! Look! and I lookedand I lived! That moment the burden of my sin was gone! I was crippled with unbelief no longer! I went home a sinner saved by Grace, to live to praise the Lord, and *Ever since by faith I saw the stream   
His flowing wounds supply,   
Redeeming love has been my theme,   
And shall be till I die.*   
I am convinced that I am going to have ever so many, tonight, who will obey the Gospel command, Believe and live. Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved. Oh, do it! Do it now! And unto God be glory, and to yourself be peace and happiness forever! Amen and Amen!

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON **JOHN 5:1-23.**

Verse 1. After this there was a feast of the Jews; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. For He had respect to the Law. As long as the Law lasted, Christ observed it. Oh, that we were as careful to obey the rules of the Gospel as our Lord was to observe the ritual of the Law! Moreover, He went to Jerusalem because He had an opportunity of addressing great numbers of people there. While I have been resting at Mentone, I have been very glad to be of service to a few friends who were either seeking the Savior, or needing some guidance in their spiritual life. But I cannot tell you how happy I am to be once more in the Tabernacle, preaching to the great congregation! Fisherman like to cast their nets where there are plenty of fishand fishers of men delight to be where there are many men who may be enclosed in the Gospel net! After this there was a feast of the Jews; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

2. Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep market a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue, Bethesda, having five porches. This pool of Bethesda was rightly called the house of mercy. But it might have just as truly been named, the house of misery, for its five porches were the abode of many who were in misery and who needed mercy.

3. In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk. Invalid persons, diseased and scarcely able to move.   
3. Of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water. What a sight for the Great Physician to look upon! The whole world must have been, to Him, like one huge hospital full of impotent folk, blind, halt, withered. Wherever He went, He was surrounded by the sick, sad and sufferingthose who were afflicted physically, mentally and spiritually. But there was a special reason for the gathering together of so many sufferers at the pool of Bethesda.   
4. For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: whoever then, first, after the troubling of the water, stepped in, was made whole of whatever disease he had. It was the last remnant of miracle. Such things were common enough in Judea in her better days, but now the times of the Prophets had ceased and the day of miracles was almost over. But here, at Bethesda, were a few relics and remnants of the good old days! Only one was curedhe that stepped into the pool, first, after the angel had troubled the water. It was but a scanty power that was left to the troubled water, but it was quite enough, if only one in a thousand was healed, to bring a crowd of people to wait around the pool! If only one person in a year were saved, I should not wonder if you thronged the place to hear the Gospel that saved him! But your privilege is much greater! Here, all who come, if they will hear and believe, shall find healing! It is not only the first, but even unto the last who shall step into the pool, that shall be healed!  
5. And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years. That was a great portion of the mans life. If he was a full-grown man when he was attacked with the infirmity, he had now become old and gray. What a long time to be afflicted38 years! Have we not with us at this time some who have been afflicted with the soul-sickness of sin more than 38 years?   
6. When Jesus saw him lie. The Great Physician fixed His eyes on him, for his was an extraordinary case. Probably he was known and talked of as the man who had been paralyzed 38 years. Note that it does not say, When the man saw Jesus, but, when Jesus saw him. He did not know Jesus. Possibly he had not even heard of His healing power and compassionate love. He was not seeking JesusJesus was seeking him! It was so with many of us and, therefore, we sing

*Jesus sought me when a stranger,   
Wandering from the fold of God.   
He, to rescue me from danger,   
Interposed His precious blood.*

When Jesus saw the impotent man   
*6.* And knew that he had been now a long time in that case, and a long  
time in that place, too   
*6.* He said unto him, Will you be made whole? That must have seemed a   
strange question! What was he there for, if not to be made whole? But I   
will show you, by-and-by, that there was wisdom in the question of Jesus.  
It was no idle curiosity that moved Him to enquire of the man whether he   
was willing to be made whole.   
*7.* The impotent man answered him, Sir, I have no man, when the water  
is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming. Shuffling along,   
as best I may, to the waters edge   
7. Another steps down before me. Then, of course, the curative miracle   
is worked, and the curative power of the water is gone until another season when the angel troubles it again.   
8, 9. Jesus said to him, Rise, take up your bed, and walk. And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed and walked: and on  
the same day was the Sabbath. This is our Sabbath. Oh, that we might   
have the same miracle worked here, tonight, upon many spiritually impotent folk!

10, 11. The Jews, therefore, said unto him that was cured. It is the Sabbath Day: it is not lawful for you to carry your bed. He answered them. And   
he did answer them, too! It was a crushing answer   
11. He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up your bed,   
and walk. That was his warrant. None but God could have made him   
whole. God can set aside any of His Laws, if He pleases! At any rate,   
whatever He commands must be right.   
12. Then they asked him, What Man is that which said unto you, Take  
up your bed, and walk? They asked, What Man had given this command.   
Why, if it had been a mere man who had said it, the impotent man could   
not either have taken up his bed or have walked!   
13. And he that was healed knew not who it was: for Jesus had conveyed Himself away, a multitude being in that place. He never sought notoriety, but avoided popular demonstrations in His favor. The man who   
had been healed had exercised faith in Jesus, but he knew very little   
about Him. A certain something in the air and manner of Christ had won  
his faith, but he did not know His name, or who He was. How small may   
be your knowledge, and yet you may be saved by true faith! 14. Afterward Jesus found him in the Temple, and said unto him, Behold, you are made whole; sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto you.   
Probably, this mans illness had been caused by sin. Christ bids him,   
therefore, keep clear of sin lest a worse calamity should come upon him. 15. The man departed, and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had  
made him whole. Full of joy, full of delight, he must tell out the name of Him who had cured him, as grateful patients like to sound the praises of   
their physician when he has been the means of healing them! 16. And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay Him,  
because He had done these things on the Sabbath Day. This was a mere   
pretense, an idle excuse for their enmity. They not only hated Christ, but   
they must besmear Him with their calumnies, and make Him out to be an  
evil-doer although He was Goodness, itself.   
17. But Jesus answered them, My Father works hitherto, and I work.   
The whole work of Nature is continued on Sabbath Days as well as other  
days. Stars shine through the Sabbath night and the sun rises and sets   
on the Lords-Day as on all the days of the week! Gods work continues.  
My Father works, says Christ, and I work. My work is My Fathers   
work, and that goes on whatever the day may be.   
18. Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill Him, because He had not  
only broken the Sabbath, but said also that God was His Father, making  
Himself equal with God. They did not understand Him to preach Unitarianismthey understood Him to proclaim His own true and proper Godheadand He never contradicted themfor He was and is God! 19. Answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you,  
The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do: for   
what things soever He does, these also does the Son, likewise. Christs  
work runs parallel with that of the Father. The Father and the Son always   
work in perfect harmony with one Another.   
20-22. For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that He,  
Himself does; and He will show Him greater works than these, that you   
may marvel. For as the Father raises up the dead, and quickens them; even  
so the Son quickens whom He will. For the Father judges no man, but has   
committed all judgment unto the Son. The Son, as well as the Father, is the   
Quickener of the dead! The Son is also the Judge of all men! 23. That all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father.   
He that honors not the Son, honors not the Father which has sent Him. As   
the universal Judge, the Lord Jesus is to be honored by all men, even as  
they honor the Father. Whatever others may do, or not do, we will honor   
the Father, we will honor the Son and we will honor the Holy SpiritThree   
in One and One in Threethe one God of Israel, forever and ever.

HYMNS FROM OUR OWN HYMN BOOK552, 556, 557.  
Adapted from The C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307 Sermon #955 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

A SINGULAR BUT NEEDFUL QUESTION   
NO. 955

**DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, OCTOBER 16, 1870, BY C H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**Will you be made whole?   
John 5:6.**

JESUS spoke to the impotent man who had been afflicted for thirtyeight years, and enquired of him, Will you be made whole? It seems a very strange question to ask. Who would not be made whole? Would the poor man have been lying at the pool if he had not been anxious for healing? Must there not have been in the very look of his face, as he gazed upon the Savior, an answer to that question, superseding all necessity of saying it? Yet as our Lord spoke no superfluous words, it may be that He perceived that the paralysis of the mans body had, to a very painful degree, benumbed his mind and brought on a paralysis of his will.

He had hoped till his heart was sick. He had waited till despondency had dried up his spirits. And now it had almost come to this, that he scarcely cared whether he was made whole or not. The bow had been bent so long that all its elasticity was destroyed. He had hungered till appetite, itself, was gone. He was now listless, with an indifference made up of sullen repining at his disappointments and blank hopelessness for the future. The Savior touched a chord which needed to vibrate when He enquired as to his will. He aroused, by that question, a dormant faculty whose vigorous exercise, it may be, was one of the first essentials to a cure. Will you be made whole? was the enquiry of a profound investigation, the scientific probe of a great Physician, the resurrection from the grave of a great master power of manhood.

Now, in the matter of preaching the Gospel today, it may seem almost an impertinent question for me to put to each one of you gathered here who as yet are not saved, Will you be made whole? Surely, you will reply, everyone desires salvation. Believe me, I am not quite so certain as you are of the truth of that statement. But our being here, says one, our having been here so long, and our attentive listening to the Gospel go to prove that we are willing enough to be made whole if we could but discover where health is to be found, and what is that balm of Gilead of which so much is said.

And yet I should not wonder if there are many here who through having waited so long are beginning to be paralyzed in their once earnest desires. And others, who having been here so long and never having been very anxious, at last have come to occupy these pews as a mere matter of customthey have no hearty will towards the wholeness of soul which the Good Physician is always prepared to give to those who seek His help. I am persuaded that instead of the question being an unnecessary one, it is in every congregation one of the first to be pressed upon the hearers attention.

To get a truthful answer to this enquiry from the inmost soul of every hearer is my object now, believing that it will be a very healthful thing to youeven if you are honestly compelled to give a negative answer. It will at least expose the condition of the heart to itself, and that may be helpful towards something better. As God may help me, I shall labor to press upon you very earnestly this question this morning, O unsaved Man or Woman, Will you be made whole?

I. This question is necessary to be put, in the first place, because IT IS A QUESTION NOT ALWAYS UNDERSTOOD. It is not the same as this question, Will you be saved from going to Hell? Everyone answers, Yes, to that. Will you be saved so as to go to Heaven? At once, without deliberation, everyone says, Yes. For the harps of gold, for the songs of blessedness, for the eternity of immortalitywe have all a heart and a strong desirebut that, you see, is not the question.

Heaven and its joys come out of what is proposed in our question, as a result, as a consequencebut that is not the matter in hand just now. We are not now saying to the thief, Will you have your imprisonment remitted? We are putting it to him in another shapeAre you willing to be made an honest man? We are not now saying to the murderer, Are you anxious to escape the gallows? We know his reply. The question we are putting to him is, Will you be made righteous, upright, kind, forgiving, so as to give up all this evil of yours?

It is not, Are you willing to sit at the festival of mercy, and eat and drink as those do who are in health? But, Are you, yourself, willing to be made spiritually healthful, to pass through those Divine processes by which the foul disease of sin may be cast out, and the healthiness of sanctified manhood may be restored to you?

To help you to know what that question means, let me remind you that there never were but two men who were whole, perfectly whole. And those may be called the two Adamsthe first and the Second Adam. These both showed us in their own persons what a man would be if he were whole. The first Adam in the gardenwe should all be willing to be in Paradise with him! We should all be delighted to walk beneath those neverwithering boughs, and gather ever-luscious fruits, without toil, without suffering, without disease, without death.

We all should be glad enough to welcome the return of the primeval gladness of Eden, but that is not the question. It is, should we be willing to be made mentally and morally what Adam was before his sin brought disease into manhood? And what was Adam? Why, he was a man who knew his God, knew many things beside, but mainly and chiefly knew his God. His delight was to walk with God, to commune with Him, to speak with Him as a man speaks with his frienduntil he fell he was one whose will was submitted to the will of his Creator, anxious and desirous not to violate that will, but in all things to do what his Lord should bid him.

He was placed in the garden to till the ground, to keep and dress the garden, and he did all that with joy. He was a whole, a sound man. His whole enjoyment consisted in his God. It was his one object as a living creature to do the will of Him that made him. He knew nothing of rioting and drunkenness. For him there were no lascivious songs or wanton deeds. The flash of debauchery and the glitter of profligacy were far from him. He was pure, upright, chaste, obedient. How would you like to be made like he, Sinneryou who are doing your own willyou who have sought out many inventions? You who find happiness in this sin and the other filthiness, would you be willing to come back and find your happiness in your God, and from now on serve Him, and none beside?

Ah, perhaps you say, blindly, Yes, and it is possible you know not what you say. If the truth were more clearly before you, you would obstinately refuse to be made whole. Life would, under such an aspect, seem to you tame, joyless, slavish. Without the fire of lust, the excitement of drink, the laughter of folly, and the pomp of pride, what would existence be to many? To them our ideal of sound manhood is but another name for bondage and misery.

Take the other instance of a Man who was whole. It was Jesus, the Second Adam. Dwelling here among the sons of men, not in a Paradise, but in the midst of obloquy, temptation, and suffering, yet was He a whole, sound Man. Sicknesses He took upon Himself, as to His bodyand our sins were reckoned to Him as our Substitute. But in Him was no sin. The prince of this world searched Him through and through, but could find no unsoundness in Him. The perfection of our Saviors manhood consisted in thisthat He was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners.

He was holy, that is, in its root, the same thing as whole. He was a complete, perfect, uninjured, untainted Man. He was whole towards His God. It was His meat and drink to do the will of God that sent Him. Jesus as Man was man as God would have manperfectly conformed to His right position. He was as He came from the Makers hand, without blot, without loss, without excrescence of evil, and without the absence of any good thing. He was whole and holy. Therefore he was harmless, never inflicting ill on others in word or deed.

He was undefiled, never affected by the influences that surrounded Him so as to become false to His God or unkind to man. He was undefiled, though blasphemy passed through or by His ear, yet it never polluted His heart. Though He saw the lust and wickedness of man carried to its climax, yet He Himself shook off the viper into the fire and remained without spot, and blameless. He was also separate from sinners, not drawing around Him a Pharisaic cordon, and saying, Stand by, for I am holier than you, but eating with them and yet separate from them.

And never more separate than when His benignant hand touched them, and when He entered most deeply into sympathy with them in their sorrows. He was separate by His own mental elevation, moral superiority, and spiritual grandeur. Now, would you wish to be like Jesus?

There is a question. Probably if you were, it would involve in you much of His experience. You would be laughed at, you would be scoffed. You, too, would be persecuted, and unless Providence restrained your foe, you also might be brought to death. But taking Christ for All and Allwould you be willing to be made like Heto have torn away from yourself much real evil which you now admire, and to have implanted in you much real good, which perhaps at this moment you do not appreciate? Would you

be willing now to be made whole?

I can imagine that you say, I want to be like Jesus, I anxiously desire it, and yet permit me gently and affectionately to whisper in your ear that if you knew what I meant, if you knew what Jesus was, I am not so sure that your will would very vehemently incline that way. I am afraid that many a struggle, and many a rebellion would arise in your heart if the process were being carried on towards making you whole as Jesus Christ was whole.

Still further, to illustrate the meaning of the question, Will you be made whole? let me remind you that when a man is whole, complete, and what a man should be, there are certain evil propensities which are expelled, and certain moral qualities which he is sure to possess. For instance, if a man is made whole before God he is made honest before men. No man can be said to be whole while he is still guilty of injustice in his trading, in his thinking, in his conversation, or in his actions towards his neighbors.

Sinner, you have been in the habit of perpetrating in your business much that would not stand the tests of Gods all-searching eye. You often say in your trading things that are not true. You excuse them by the assertion that others do the same. I am not here to listen to your excuse, but I am about to ask you earnestly, Will you be made whole? Are you desirous to be made from this time a thoroughly, strictly, punctiliously honest man? No more lying puffs! No more exaggerations! No more overreaching, and taking of advantage! Come now, what do you think of this state of things?

Why, there are some who could not carry on their business at this ratethe trade is rotten, and if you do not fall into its practices you cannot make a living! The district is low and beggarly, and none can thrive in it but cheats. We should have to shut up the shop if we were perfectly honest. Why, cries one, I should be eaten up alive in this age of competition. I cannot believe that we are to be so excessively conscientious. I see how it is, you do not want to be made whole.

He who is quite whole becomes in all respects a sober man. Not that which goes into the mouth defiles a man. But that which comes out of the mouth, this defiles a man. And, the kingdom of God stands not in meats or drinks, yet still both in meat and drink men do frequently sin, and especially in the sin of drunkenness. Now I suppose there is no drunkard but what at least, when he is sober, anxiously desires to be saved. But Drunkard, understand the question, it is not thiswould you go to Heaven? But thiswould you give up your drunkenness, and no longer delight yourself in those cups of excess? Now what do you say?

Would you, from this moment, have done with all this rioting and wantonness, and cast them all away? Perhaps in the morning some would say, Yes, when the eyes are red, and the woe of excess is on them. But how about the eventide when the merry company surrounds the man, and the wine sparkles in the cup? Would he, then, be made whole, and renounce that which ruins his body and his soul? Ah, no. Many say, Yes, I would be made whole, but they do not mean it. They are like the dog that returns to its vomit, and the sow that was washed, to her wallowing in the mire.

To be made whole involves in a man the production of universal truthfulness. Now, there are persons who cannot stand to speak the truth. To them two must always be twenty. To their eyesight the faults of any neighbor are crimes, and the virtues of any, except their special favorites, are always tinged with vice. Naturally they have a malicious judgment towards others. They are envious of anything that is honorable in their fellow man. Now, what do you say, Sir? Are you willing to be made whole and from this hour to speak nothing but the truth towards God and towards man? I am afraid many a tongue that is glib now would have little to say if it said nothing but truth. And many a man might, and would, if he were honest enough to say it, refuse the benediction of being made perfectly truthful.

So in the matter of forgiveness. A man who is made whole can forgive even to seventy times seven. When you cannot forgive an injury, it is because your soul is sick. When a wrong is resented strongly, you are ill for the moment. When it is resisted constantly, you have a chronic disease upon you. Some persons are so far from wishing to know how to forgive that they would almost pray that they might live and die to gratify the passion of revenge. They would follow the man who has done them an injury through this world and the other, too, and be damned with him if they might have the satisfaction of seeing him amidst the flames.

Sweet is revenge to many men, and it is useless for a man to say, I would be made whole, while he still cultivates malice, and bears ill-will towards his fellow man. I might thus pass over one after another of the virtues and the vices, and show that my text is not quite such a simple question, after all, as some people think. There are some men who are afflicted with a miserly, grasping disposition. If they were whole they would be generous, they would be kind to the poor, they would be ready to give of their substance to the Lords work.

But would they be made whole if it were left to their choice this morning? Ah, no. They think generosity to be weakness and charity sheer folly. What is the good of having money and giving it away? they say. What can be the good of getting it but to hold it? And, He is the wise man who can hold it fastest and part with as little of it as may be. The man does not want to be made whole, Sir. He counts his paralyzed hand and ossified heart to be the marks of health. He reckons himself to be the only mentally healthy man about, though his narrow-mindedness and soulstarvation are visible to all.

He is a very skeleton and an anatomy of sickness. And yet he believes himself to be the paragon of health. Those who admire their failings have evidently no wish to be free from them. What a beautiful cataract I have in my eye, says one. What a precious carbuncle decorates my limb, says another. What a delightful bend this is in my leg, says a third. What a comely hump adorns my back, says another. Men do not speak thus concerning their bodily diseases, or we should think them mad. But they often glory in their shame, and rejoice in their iniquities. Whenever you meet with a man who has a fault which he mentally elevates into a virtue, you have a man who would not wish to be made whole, and who

would scorn the physicians visit if he waited at his door. And such persons are common in every street.

Let me also remark, if a man is made whole there are not only moral virtues which will abound in him, but spiritual Graces. For a man who is whole is sound in spirit as well as in outward character. What then, would happen to a man if he were made whole in his spirit? I reply, first, You see that Pharisee there, he is thanking God that he is quite as good as he should be, and a great deal better than most people. Now, if that man is ever made whole, he will say, God be merciful to me a sinner.

But if I were to ask him whether he would like to change places with the publican, he would reply, Why should I? He is a degraded and debased wretch. The language which he uses is very appropriate for him, I am glad he uses it. It would be very degrading to me to make the same confession as he does, and I do not intend doing it. The man does not want to be made wholehe thinks he is whole already. He that is made whole becomes a self-renouncing man. Paul was whole when he said, Not having my own righteousness, which is of the Law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.

When he counted his own righteousness to be but dung, that he might win Christ and be found in Him, he was a whole man. Sickly men think their own righteousness good enough, and wrap themselves in it, and stick a little sham jewelry of ceremony and outward form on it, and then conclude that they are right enough for Heaven. They are in such a fever of pride that they rave about their fancied goodness, while real goodness they call cant and hypocrisy.

He that is whole spiritually is a man of habitual prayer. He is accustomed to feel constant gratitude, and so to exhibit continual praise. He is a man of abiding consecrationwhatever he does he does it unto God, seeking Gods glory in it. His mind is fixed upon things unseen and eternal. His heart is not enslaved by the things that are seen, for he knows that they are vanity.

Now, if we were to appeal to many, and they fully knew what we meant by it, and say, Would you be made whole? Would you from this hour become a prayerful man, a praiseful man, a holy man, a God-serving man? I believe that the majority, even of our congregations, if they spoke honestly, would say, No. We do not want to be made whole. We would like to go to Heaven, but we do not want this. We desire to escape from Hell, but we do not wish to practice all this Puritan precision which you call holiness.

No. We would enjoy ourselves with sinners first, and go to Heaven with the saints last. The poison is too sweet to give up, but we, too, will have the antidote by-and-by. We would gladly breakfast with the devil, and sup with Christ. We are in no hurry to be made pure, our tastes for the present lead us in another direction.

II. So, having explained the question, I shall, as strength holds out, go on to notice in the second place, that THIS QUESTION IS CAPABLE OF A GREAT MANY REPLIES, and therefore it is the more necessary that it should be asked and answered.

1. First, there are some here whose only reply to this question may be called no answer at all, that is to say, they do not want to hear or consider anything of the sort. Will you be made whole? Well, yes, nowe do not quite know what to say. We do not want to be bothered about it. We are young people. There is plenty of time for us to think of these things. We are business people, we have something else to do besides worrying our minds with religion. We are wealthy persons, we really must not be expected to look at these things, as poor and coarse-minded persons are required to do.

Or, We are sickly, and really, our attendance to our health takes up too much time to allow us to be troubled with theological difficulties. Anything, I see, to put away the one thing necessary from your thoughts. The poor soul is most precious, and yet least esteemed. Oh, how some of you trifle with your souls! How you play with your immortal interests! I did so once myself. If tears of blood could express my regret for having so done, I would gladly weep them. For the loss of time which comes through a long carelessness with regard to our souls interests is something very solemna loss of time which even mercy cannot restore to uswhich even the Grace of God cannot give back.

I would, young people, that these things were on your minds. Oh, how earnestly I would that these questions were seen by you to be important! Yes, pressingly importantoverwhelmingly important to youso that you could not shake off religious enquiry, nor keep away from your spirit the loving pressure of the Holy Spirit who would arouse you. Would to God that you were made wise enough to desire the noble development of spiritual life, and the destruction of everything detrimental to your best welfare.

Be considerate, I pray you, concerning the first and chief question. Do not give it the go around. Your dying hour may be much nearer than you think. The tomorrow in which you hope to consider these things may never arrive. I would put it to you againif anything is deferred let it be something that may safely wait. If anything is postponed let it not be an eternal thing, a spiritual thing, but, seek you first the kingdom of God and His righteousness.

Now, there are some persons who have had a great deal of religious concern and have not shaken it off, and yet their answer to this question, Will you be made whole? is not a very earnest one. Years ago they were aroused. When they heard a sermon they used to treasure up every word. Their prayers were importunate, and their desires were eager, but they have not obeyed the command which says, Believe in Christ and live.

They have become habituated to unbelieving misery, to a continuance beneath the burden of sin which they will persist in carrying while there is a dear Savior waiting to relieve them of the burden. And now at this time their answer to the question is neither one thing nor the other. They groan out feebly, I wish I did wish. I would that I did will. But oh I my heart is hard

*If anything is felt it is only pain To find I cannot feel.*   
I will to will, but scarcely dare say I will.

See to what a state you have brought yourself, and may God help you now to make a desperate effort with that will of yoursmay His quickening Spirit bless this affectionate word to your heart, and may you say, Ah, yes, out of my deep despair, out of the pit wherein there is no water, I do yet cry to You, my God! Out of the belly of Hell do I desire deliverance. I will, I will, I would be saved! O give me Grace that I may be made whole. May none of you continue to be numbered with those who virtually give no answer to the question.

2. And, secondly, there are too many who give very evasive replies to the question. To them I must speak. Will you be made whole? My dear Hearers, I am anxious to put this question to every unconverted one, but I anticipate that from several I shall get no distinct reply. I shall hear one say, How am I to know whether I am Gods elect or not? Beloved, that is not the question. That question cannot be answered at this stage of the proceedingsit shall be answered by-and-by.

Meanwhile, why do you need to bring up that subject, except to blind your eyes to the solemn enquiry which the text would raise? Will you, or will you not, be made whole? Come, Man, do not shirk the question! Come to it, and face it like a man! Are you willing to be reconciled to God, and to be obedient to Him, or not? Say yes or no, and speak out. If you wish to be Gods foe, and to love sin and unrighteousness, say so! Be honest with yourself, and see yourself in the true light? But if, indeed, you would be purified from sin and be made holy, say soit will be no great thing, after all, to say nothing, at any rate, to boast of. It is but a will, and that is nothing in which to glory.

Well, says another, I have not the power to cease from sin. Again I say that is not the question. There must evermore be drawn a distinction between the will and the power. God will give the power, rest assured, in proportion as He gives the will. It is because our will is not there that the power is not there. When a feeble will comes, a feeble power comes. But when the will becomes intense then the power becomes intense, too. They rise and fall together. But that is not the query. I do not say, What can you do? but What would you be? Would you be holy? Are you earnestly, honestly anxious to be, this day, set free from the power of sin? There is the question, and I do pray you, for your souls sake, look into your heart and answer this enquiry as in the sight of God.

But I have been so guilty in the past, says one, my former sins alarm me. Again, though I am glad you have a sense of your sin, I would remind you that this is not the question. It is not how sick you are, but are you willing to be made whole? I know you are a sinner, and a much worse one than you think yourself to be. However black your sin is to your own eyes, it is ten times more black to Gods eyes, and you are an utterly condemned and lost sinner by nature.

But the question, now, is, Will you be made whole? It is not, Will you have the past forgiven, and be delivered from the penalty of it? Of course you would! But would you be set free from the lusts that have been your delight, from the sins that have been your darlings? Would you be delivered from the desires of your flesh and of your mind, the things that your heart hungers after? Would you be made as the saints are, as God is holy, set free from sin? Is that the yearning of your spirit, or is it not?

3. Now, I shall pass on to observe that there are a great many persons who practically say, No, to this. They do not evade it, but they honestly say, No. No, I must retract that word. I question whether they honestly say, No, they virtually say, No, by their actions. I would be made whole, says one, and yet when Divine service is over he goes back to his sin. A man says he would be cured of his disease, and yet he indulges again in that which gave the diseaseis he untruthful or insane?

The eating of a certain meat may be the cause of diseasethe doctor tells the patient so. He says he desires to be healed, and yet he falls back, at once, upon the very dish that caused his sickness. He is a liar, is he not? And he that says he would be made whole, and yet dallies with his old sindoes he not lie to himself, and his God? When a man would be made whole he frequents the places where healing is given. Yet there are some who very seldom go up to the House of God. They go, perhaps, but once on the Sunday.

They now and then hear the Gospel, or attend places because they are called places of worshipbut the Gospel is not preached, the conscience is never harrowed, the demands of Gods Law and the promises of Gods Gospel are never fully insisted on. Yet are they quite content with having gone there, and think they have done well. They are like a man who, being sick, does not go to the physician who understands the case, but calls in at any quacks shop where there is a profession made of curing, though never one was cured. Such a person does not desire to be made whole. He would not act so if he did.

How many, again, hear the Gospel but do not hear it attentively! A telegram on the Exchangethey read it with both their eyeswill there be a rise or fall of stocks? An article from which they may judge of the general current of tradehow they devour it with their minds, they suck in the meaning, and then go and practice what they have gathered from it.

A sermon heard, and lo, the minister is judged as to how he preached itas if a man reading a telegram should say the capital letter was not well inked on the press, or the dot on the I had dropped off the letter. Or as if a man reading an article of business should simply criticize the style of the article, instead of seeking to get at its meaning, and act upon its advice. Oh, how men will hear and think it to be the height of perfection to say they liked or disapproved of the sermon! As if the God-sent preacher cared one whit whether you did or did not like his sermonhis business being not to please your tastesbut to save your souls! Not to win your approbation, but to win your hearts for Jesus, and bring you to be reconciled to God.

Liking is hardly to be thought of in the questionseldom enough is a patient enamored of a surgeons scalpel. The surgeon who conscientiously removes the proud flesh, or prevents a wound from healing too rapidly, cannot expect admiration for his use of the knife while the sufferer yet feels it. Nor does the preacher, when faithfully declaring the Truth of God, expect men to commend him with their tastes. If their consciences commend him it is enough.

Ah, my Hearers, you give us listless hearing, critical hearing, anything but practical hearing, and all this goes to prove that, after all, though you crowd our houses of prayer, you do not want to be made whole! Too many take up the Gospel as a man of reading may take up a surgery book to amuse himself with a smattering of the art, but not to find out what will touch his own case, or remove his own sickness.

So you do with this Bibleyou read it as a sacred volume, but not as bearing upon your own best interests. How little you know of deep, earnest, heart-longing to find Jesus! To be reconciled to God, and to be delivered from the wrath to come! There are men who both by their nonhearing and their hearing, say, We do not want to be made whole.

Many there are, again, who do not desire to be made whole because being made whole would involve their losing their present position in society. They do not want to part with their ungodly gains or wicked companions. Religion would involve them in some degree of persecution. They would not like to be sneered at as a Methodist or Presbyterian. They could not afford to go to Heaven if the road were a little rough. They would prefer to go to Hell so long as the road which leads there is smooth and pleasant.

They count it better to be lost with the approbation of fools than to be saved with the derision of the wicked. They think it inconvenient to be gracious, irksome to be pious, disreputable to be devout, foolish to be too exact. They would gladly have the crown without the fight, the reward without the service. They would enjoy the sweets of soul health, but not lose the advantages of associating with the leprous and defiled. Alas, poor fools!

4. Thank God, there are some who can say, Yes, yes, I would be made whole. And of their case I am going to speak now.   
III. WHEREVER AN HONEST, AFFIRMATIVE ANSWER IS GIVEN TO THIS QUESTION, WE MAY CONCLUDE THAT THERE IS A WORK OF GRACE COMMENCED IN THE SOUL. If any one of my hearers can earnestly say, Yes, my great longing is to be set free from sin, my dear Friend, I am thrice happy to be privileged to speak to you this morning!   
If you say, It is not fear of punishment, sin is punishment enough for me. If I could be in Heaven and yet be a sinner such as I am, it would be no Heaven to me. I want to be clear from every fault both of thought, and word, and deed, and if I could be perfect I should be perfectly happy, even if I were sick and poor. Well, if the Lord has made you long after holiness, there is in your heart already the embryo of Divine Grace, the seed of everlasting life. Before long you shall rejoice that you are born again, and are passed from death unto life.   
Oh, you say, I wish I could see that, I wish I could feel it! I do not believe that any utterly graceless person ever could have hearty, earnest, intense longings after holiness for its own sake. Now if you would get the joy and peace that is to come out of this fact, I have to say to you very much what Jesus said to the poor man at Bethesdahe said, Take up your bed, and walk. So now, this morning, hear the Words of the Lord trust right now, at once, in the finished work of Jesus Christ, who as a Substitute was punished for your guilt.   
Rely on Him, and you shall be a joyous as well as a saved soul. Have I the power to believe in Christ? says one. I answer, Yes, you have the power. I would not say to every man, You have the power to exercise faith, for the lack of will is the death of moral power. But if you are willing you have the right, you have the privilege, you have the power, to believe that Jesus died for youthat God, who has made you to long after holinesshas prepared holiness for youand the instrument by which He will work it in you now is your faith.   
The same Spirit who in you works to will, is in you working to do of His own good pleasure. Look, then, to Christ and be saved. I pray that some of you may come to perfect peace this morning, by looking to Christ. I want holiness, you say. Yes, and it may seem a strange thing, but true is it, that while you look after holiness in yourself you will never have it, but if you look away from yourself to Christ, then holiness will come unto you. Even now, that very desire of yours has come to you from Him. It is the beginning of the new birth in your soul. Look, I pray you, away, right away, even from your best desiresto Christ on the Crossand this day shall be the day of your salvation.  
It may seem a very little thing to have a desire, but yet such a desire as I have described is no little thing. It is more than human nature ever produced of itself, and only God the Eternal Spirit can implant it. I am persuaded that a living, saving faith always goes with it, and sooner or later comes to the surface, and brings joy and peace!   
IV. But now, lastly, WHERE THIS QUESTION IS ANSWERED IN THE NEGATIVE, I must remind you, IT INVOLVES MOST FEARFUL SIN. I could wish I had not to preach on this last point, but I must, painful as it is. There are some here, there are many elsewhere, who are not willing to be made whole. You, my unconverted Brethren, are thus unwilling. Face that, now, I pray you, as you will have to face it soon.   
It is just this. You prefer yourself to God. You prefer to please yourself before pleasing Him. You prefer sin to holiness. Look at it closely and fairly. Sin is your own choice, your own present deliberate choice. You are now making it, and have often made it, and will, I fear, continue to make it, if Gods Grace does not prevent it. Look it in the face, for soon, on a dying bed, you will see the whole matter in the light of eternity. You will then discover that you preferred the pleasures of this life to Heaven.   
You preferred the gaieties and amusements, and self-righteousnesses, and prides, and self-wills of a few fleeting years to the Glory and the bliss of perfectly obeying Christ, and being in His Presence forever. Oh, when you come to die, and certainly when you live in another state, you will curse yourself for having made such a choice as this! When you lie dying unsaved, it will come to you thus, I am not here an unsaved man unwillinglyI would not be made wholeI willed not to be a Believer, I willed to be impenitent. I heard the Gospel, I had it put before me, but I deliberately willed to put it behind me and to remain what I am. I find now I am dying unforgiven and unholy, and that of choice.   
Remember, no spiritually unsound man can enter Heaven. He must be made whole, or be shut out of Glory. We cannot stand in the most holy place until we are made perfect. Then you, O unhealed soul, remaining as you are, will never stand in Gods Presenceand you choose, you deliberately choose never to be admitted to the courts of Paradise! Furthermore, and oh, how this will strike you in a short time (how short I know not, nor do you)there being no entrance into Heaven for you, you having elected not to enter Heaventhere will remain but one other thing, namely, for you to be driven from His Presence into the eternal burnings of His wrath!   
This will surely be one of the stings of Hell, that you perish of your own accord. How will you cry, I chose this, I chose this! Fool that I was, I willed this! For what is Hell? It is sin full-blown. Sin is evil in the conception, Hell is sin in its development. What thoughts will be yours in Hell? I chose that which has involved me in a misery from which there never can be any escape. In a death out of which there can be no deliverance. I must die to God, to holiness, to happiness, and exist forever in that everlasting death, that eternal punishment, and all because I would have it so, and as the result of my own free will.   
Do look that in the face, I pray you. It seems to me to be the most dreadful element about the whole of the lost sinners case. If I could, when cast into Hell, say, I am here because of Gods decree, and for no other reason, I could find something with which to harden my spirit to endure the misery of my lost condition. But if I shall be compelled in Hell to feel that my ruin is of myself altogether and only, and that I perish for my own sinmy personal rejection of Christthen is Hell, Hell indeed. These flames, are they of my own kindling? This prison house, is it my own building? That door so fast as never to open, is it my own barring? Then the last relic of consolation is taken away from my soul forever.   
But, my dear Hearer, I hope you say, I do desire to be made whole. Then let me again remind you that the place to find the fulfillment of that desire is at the foot of the Cross. Stand there and hope in the great Redeemer for there is some life in you already, the dying Savior will increase it! Stand at the foot of the Cross where falls the precious drops of blood view the flowing of His soul-redeeming blood, and hope, no, BELIEVE that He shed that blood for you, and you are saved! Go your way, you who would be made whole, for Jesus says, I will, be you clean.

Adapted from The C.H. Spurgeon Collection, Version 1.0, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307 Sermon #1211 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

THE HOSPITAL OF WAITERS VISITED WITH THE GOSPEL   
NO. 1211

DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.   
Jesus said unto him, Rise, take up your bed, and walk. John 5:8.

IT was the Sabbath! Where would Jesus spend that day and how? He would not spend it, we are quite sure, in any unhallowed manner or in any trifling sort. What would He do? He would do good, for it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath. Where would He do good? He knew that there was one sight in Jerusalem which was particularly painfulthe sight of a number of poor persons, blind, lame and crippled, who were lying round a pool of water, waiting for a blessing which seldom came. He thought He would go and do good there, for there good was most needed. Would to God that all Christs servants felt that the most urgent necessity has the greatest claim upon themthat where there is the most need, there they ought to exercise the most kindnessand that no way of spending the Sabbath could be better than that of bearing the Gospel of Salvation to those who are most in need of it.

But it was a feast day as well. It was a great festival of the Jews and Jesus had come up to Jerusalem to keep the feast. Where will He feast? Has someone asked Him to his house? There were Mary and Martha and Lazarus down at Bethany. Would they ask Him? Sometimes even Pharisees and Publicans would open their houses and make a banquet for Him. Where would He go? Was it a singular choice for Him to say to Himself, My feast shall be kept among the blind and the crippled and the lame? No, it was not singular, for He had said to one who had invited Him to his house, When you make a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: and you shall be blessed; for they cannot recompense you: for you shall be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.

What He urged others to do, He would be sure to do Himself. It was just like He to say, I shall spend My feast in an hospital. I will use this day, sacred both to joy and rest, by going where the sick lie thickly clustered together, for to Me to be merciful is to be gladto bless men is to find rest for My heart. Christ never feasts more joyfully than when He is doing good to others. And the greater the act of His liberalitythe higher the deed of power which is worked by His lovethe more is His blessed Nature filled with rest and joy. See you, then, the Savior going down to the pool of Bethesda, determining that in the spot where sorrow and disease reigned supreme, He would exercise His mercy and overcome evil.

I shall ask you to go with me, and with the Savior, down to Bethesdas pool. I shall call it THE HOSPITAL OF WAITERS. While we are there we shall notice that Jesus Christ fixes His eyes upon the most helpless person among that waiting company. And then, thirdly, we shall have to note with joy how our Lord dealt with the man after a Gospel fashion.

I. First of all, I said we would go down to the POOL OF BETHESDA with its five porches, which I have called the hospital of the waitersfor all those people who were there were doing one thingthey were waiting. They were waiting for the moving of the waters. There was nothing else they could do. They were lying sick, with anxious eyes gazing upon the little pool, hoping to see it bubble upto see a widening circle coming upon its placid surfacewaiting to plunge in immediately, for whoever plunged in first would receive a miracleone and no more.

Said I not truly that it was an hospital of waiters? Too easily may we find a large company of waiters now-a-days. I wish it were not so, but great numbers are always waiting. I think I know enough to fill all the five porches. Some are waiting for a more convenient season and they have a notion, perhaps, that this more convenient season will come to them on a sick bed. Possibly, they even think, upon a dying bed. It is a great mistake! They have heard the Gospel and they believe it to be free though they have not accepted it. They go to a place of worship, continually, and they say to themselves, We hope that one of these days we shall be able to lay hold of Christ, and shall be healed of the disease of sin, but not now.

How many years have you been waiting, some of you, for the convenient seasonfive, six, eight, ten, twenty? I know some who have been waiting 20 or more years! I remember speaking to them about their souls and they said, then, that they did not intend to neglect the matter. They were waiting and the time had not quite come. They did not exactly explain what stood in the way, but it was a something that was to be gone in a few monthsmaybe even weeks. But it has not gone and they are still waiting! And I fear that they will wait until the Judgment Day will come and find them unsaved! They always reckon upon a good tomorrow, but tomorrow is a day which you will not find in the almanacit is found nowhere but in the fools calendar.

The wise man lives today. What his hand finds to do, he does at once with all his might. Today is Gods time and whenever we are saved it will be our time. But, alas, many lie waiting till their joints stiffen, their eyes fail, their ears are heavy and their hearts more and more insensible. O you simple ones, will it be so, forever? Will you wait till you are cast into Hell? On a second porch, a crowd of waiters are waiting for dreams and visions. You, perhaps, think these are very few, but they are not so few as you imagine. And they have a notion that perhaps one of these nights they will have such a vivid dream of judgment that they will wake up alarmedor such a bright vision of Heaven that they will wake up fascinated by it!

They have been reading in somebodys biography that he saw something in the air, or heard a voice, or had a text of Scripture laid home to him (as it is called). They are waiting, I say, till the same signs and wonders shall happen to them. I bear them witness that they are very anxious to have this thing happen. But their mistake is that they want it, or expect it to happen at all, and lie there by the Pool of Bethesda waiting, and waiting, and waiting, as though they cannot believe God, but they can believe in a dreamthey cannot confide in the teaching of Holy Scripture, but they can believe in a voice which they imagine to be sounding in their ears, though it might be the chirp of a bird, or might be nothing at all.

They could trust their imagination, but they cannot trust the Word of God as it is written in the Inspired Volume! They want something over and above the sure Word of Testimony. The witness of God is not enough for them. They demand the witness of fancy, or the witness of feelingand they are waiting on the porch by the pool till that comes. What is this but an insulting unbelief? Is not the Lord to be believed until a sign or a wonder shall corroborate His Testimony? Such waiting provokes the Most High!

A third porch full of people will be found waiting for a sort of compulsion. They have heard that those who come to Christ are drawn by the Spirit of God. They believe the Doctrines of Grace and I am glad they do, for they are true. But they misconstrue those doctrines. They suppose the Spirit of God makes men do this or that altogether against their wills, by exercising force. Their notion seems to be that men are taken to Heaven by their ears, or dragged by force and, because we speak of cords of love and bands of a man, they pick out the imagery and mistranslate it.

Now, believe me, the Spirit of God never acts by the human heart as you and I might act by a box of which we have lost the key. He does not wrench it and break it open. According to the laws of our nature, He acts with men as men. He draws with cords, but they are cords of lovewith bands, but they are bands of a man. It is by enlightening the judgment that He influences the will. He leads us to see things in a different light by the instruction which He gives us and by that clearer light He influences the understanding and the heart. The things we love, we see to be evil, and we hate them. And the things we once hated, we see to be good, and we choose them.

These persons fancy that they will be made to repent whether they will or notmade to believe in Jesus Christ whether they will or not! But it is not so that the Holy Spirit acts. Let me warn you of the great sin and of putting the Holy Spirit into contrast or rivalry with Jesus Christ. Now, the Gospel is, Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved. But for you to say, I am waiting for the Holy Spirit, is to set up Jesus in a kind of opposition with the Holy Spiritwhereas the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit agree in Oneno, They are One, and the testimony of Jesus is the testimony of the Holy Spirit! And when the Holy Spirit works in men, He works with the things of Christ, not with any new things. He takes of the things of Christ and shows them unto us.

If a man rejects the Gospel which says, Believe and live, he rejects the Holy Spirit who will not bring any other Gospel, but leaves him shut up to believe in Jesus or to die in his sins. You must have Christ, or perish! And if you refuse to obey His Gospel Word, neither will God the Father nor

God the Spirit interpose to deliver you. Jesus Christ has the Spirit to bear witness of Him and when He comes, He convinces men of sin because they believe not on Christ! And then He leads them, not to trust in some work over and above the work of Jesus, but to rest simply and alone on the Atonement which Christ has furnished. Woe to those who linger anywhere short of this!

A fourth porch is attractive to many people, especially at this peculiar time. They are waiting for a revival. We have heard glad tidings, in which we rejoice, of great revivals in different parts of England, Scotland and Ireland. And there are some who say, Oh, if a revival would come here, I would be converted. Or it runs thus, If the two honored servants of God were to come here and hold services, then, surely, we would be converted. They look to

men and excitements. I thank God for every genuine revival and, whenever He works, I rejoice in it. But for any man to suppose that the Gospel command is suspended for a time until a revival comes, is to suppose a lie!

The Gospel says, Repent and be baptized, every one of you. So said Peter on the day of Pentecost. Or, in other words, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved. The Gospel call is, Today, if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts. It does not say, Wait, wait, wait till times of refreshing! Wait till a revival. I am inclined to think that even if a revival should come, persons who are now making it an excuse for delay would be in a very unlikely state to get a blessing from it. Or if they thought they got a blessing it would, in all probability, be a mistake, for they could be depending upon men, or upon fleshly excitement, and not looking away to Jesus Christ, who is as able to save them now as He will be in a revival! And He is just as able to save them by my voice, now, or by no voice at all, as He would be by any other man, however useful he may have been. I fear there are many waiting on that porch.

Many are waiting on the porch of expected impressions. They want an impression and they wish the minister to preach a very alarming sermon. They want him to be very warm-hearted and earnest, as he ought to be, but they want him to fix themto shoot the arrow into their flesh, that they may be pierced in the heartfor this they are waiting! They come here every Sunday. They have been touched a great deal and rendered very uneasy. They have felt as if they could hardly sit through the sermon, but they have managed to do itand they have managed to waitand wait. When shall I reach you? In what way am I to preach?

Surely, if I knew in what way I could bring you to Jesus, it would be my delight to follow it! But I cannot preach any other Gospel than the one I preach! And I cannot do it more plainly. Neither do I think I can do it more earnestly, for I desire the salvation of sinners with my whole soul. Many may preach it better, but none more from the heart. If you are looking for me to do something more, you will look in vain, for I have nothing better to bring. I have pointed you to a Saviors flowing wounds and bid you look to Him and live. If you will not accept His salvation, then I have no other hope to set before you. If you will not trust my Lord, not even an angel from Heaven, if he should come, could give you any other hope. If men will not hear the Gospel which I have preached, neither could they be converted though one rose from the dead.

Thus I have shown you five porches of waiters. I will tell you why I am sure they are wrong in waiting. I will set before you their theory. Those people were waiting because an angel would come and stir the waterand whoever stepped in first would get healed. That was their idea. They were not looking to Jesus, any of them! Had they not heard that Jesus was healing the sick? Had they never heard of the woman who came behind Him in the crowd and touched His garment and had the issue of blood stopped? Had they never heard of a noblemans son who was on the point of dying, and was made to live? Had they never heard of all this? I do not know, but certain it is they never tried to get to Jesus, nor did they cry to Him.

They trusted wholly to the pool and the angel, and the stirring of the water. Ah, I think had they been wise, they would have said, This is uncertain and only happens now and then. But Jesus says, Him that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out, and He is able to save to the uttermost them that come unto God by Him. Had we not better crawl as best we can to those dear feet and look up into His face and say, You, Son of David, have mercy upon us? And so there is the theorythe opposition theory to the Gospel! I want to smash it to pieces, if God the Holy Spirit will help methe waiting theory, the theory of looking for something, but not looking to Christ and to Him alone!

These people attached great importance to the place. They stayed at the pool of Bethesda. There was the place. If ever they got any good, they would get it there. And so I find waiters often attach great importance to the place of worshipthey expect to find salvation only there. Do you not know that Jesus can save your souls tomorrow morning in the tankard, quite as well as next Sunday in the Tabernacle? Do you not know that Jesus is just as much a Savior on a Saturday as on a Sunday? Do you not know that when you are walking in the streets, in Cheapside or in the Borough, if you breathe a prayer to Him, He is just as mighty to save you as He would be if you were on your knees, or at home, or sitting here and listening to the Gospel?

He is wherever there is a heart that needs Him! Wherever there is an eye that desires to look to Him with the glance of faith, there is Jesus! There are no pools of Bethesda nowno places set apart to monopolize the dispensation of Divine Mercy

*Where ever we seek Him, He is found,*

*And every place is hallowed ground.*   
Oh, get to Him, then, in these pews, for this is a place where He is! And if you were lying on your sick beds, I would tell you He was there! And if you were at a carpenters bench driving the plane, or out in the fields driving the plow, I would have nothing more to say to you but this, The Word is near you, even in your mouth and in your heart, that if you shall confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus, and shall believe in your heart that God

has raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved. This theory that we are to wait at the pool of ordinances is antichrists Gospel! Christs Gospel is, Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved.

Then they say that they are to wait for signs and wonders. Those who waited at Bethesda waited for an angel. I do not know whether they ever did see an angel, or whether the water was stirred mysteriously by an invisible wing. But they waited for an angela mystery. People like a mystery, but the craving is evil, for albeit that the Gospel is, in one respect, the mystery of godliness, yet as far as you sinners are concerned, it is the plainest thing in all the world! It is this, Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved. He has God set forth to be a Propitiation for sin. The blood of Jesus is a substitutionary offering to Gods Justice, instead of our death. And whoever trusts Christ to stand instead of him and so accepts Christ to be his Substitute, is a saved man!

Priests try to make a mystery out of everything, now-a-days, and this is that word which is written upon the forehead of the whore of Babylon, according to the Book of RevelationMystery, Mother of Harlots! Her mass is a mystery and her ceremonies are all mysteries! The Latin tongue is used to make the service a mystery! The priest, himself, is a mystery! Baptism is a mystery. Now, in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the essential Truth of God is as plain as a pikestaff. Legible only by the light they give, stand the soul-quickening wordsBelieve and live. A man who is almost an idiot may understand this! Trust Christ! Accept Christ to be your Substitute before God and you are saved on the spotsaved in an instant! But no, they wait for a mystery! They pine for a mystery. They even suppose that the Holy Spirit, Himself, is to come upon them to confuse the Gospel, whereas, what He does is to make the Gospel yet more plain to us! And when He comes, He tears the mystery away, removes the scales from our eyes, and makes us see that it is a simple matter to receive Jesus and become the sons of God!

Again, these waiters who attach so much importance to place and are waiting for mysteries, appear to be waiting, also, for an influence which is intermittent. It was only at a certain season that the angel stirred the pool. So they seem to fancy that there are certain times and seasons when Christ is willing to receive sinnersand occasional intervals when they may hope to find salvation. Whereas the mercy of my God is not like the pool of Bethesda, stirred now and then! It is a well of water always springing up and whoever believes in Jesus, whether it is 16 minutes to eight, or whether it is eight oclock, shall find that Christ is ready to receive sinners.

All things are ready, come unto the supper, is one of the Gospel proclamations. Ready, and ready now, not sometimes, but at all timesnot now and then, not occasionally, on Sundays and high days and revival days, butToday, if you will hear His voice. Today is the accepted time; today is the day of salvation. Therefore, because these people think that there is a certain intermittent influence, they believe that all they have to do is to wait for it in a very singular way. Oh, if I were to be hanged tomorrow morning and I knew that an application had been made for pardon, I would wait for the resultbut how do you think I would wait? Suppose I had no hope of Heaven and knew I would be hanged tomorrow, but I had a bare hope that perhaps a pardon might come, I would wait for it but how would I wait?

Would I go to sleep tonight? Would I make a feast and make myself drunk with the drunken? Oh no, my life, my life, my life is in jeopardy! I cannot trifle! How do sailors on the wreck wait for the lifeboat? Are they idle, do you think? No, they are straining their eyes with looking and bursting themselves with their signals of distress, imploring help! Do they go to sleep on the wreck and say, If we are to be saved we shall be saved. Let us go to sleep? No, they are waiting, but if there should come a rocket to the ship with a rope, they would be ready to lay hold of it in a minute and wait no more! It is a lie, nine times out of ten, when men say they are waiting for Christ, because they have not that awful anxiety, that dolorous uneasiness of mind which goes with true waiting. It is only a make-believe waiting, a mere excuse. Whatever sort of waiting it is, it is clean opposite to the Gospel which never says a word about waiting, but which commands men to believe and live!

Besides, these people are waiting for an influence supposed to be very limited. Only one person was healed at a time at Bethesda, and he was the first who plunged in. And so when the waiters hear of anyone being saved they think that he was in more favorable circumstances than themselves, that he was placed in a better position for obtaining salvation. They seem to be in the rear of the ranks and unable to get to this wonderful pool of theirs. It is all a mistake! Jesus Christ is as near to one seeker as another! If a man has been moral, the Gospel says to him, believe. If a man has been immoral, the Gospel cries to him, believe. If a man is a king, the Gospel commands him to believe. If he is a beggar, it bids him, also, believe. If a man is full of self-righteousness, the Gospel points him to Christ and tells him to give up his righteousness. And if a man is full of vice and rotten with sin, it points him to Christ and bids him give up his sin and look to Jesus!

The footing upon which the Gospel addresses sinners is the same at all times. It has neither less nor more to say to the child of the harlot than to the child of the Christian matron. It presents the same pardon to the great sinner and the little sinner, (if such there is), and comes with the same rich blessing to the chief of sinners as it does to the children of godly parents. Do not get false notions in your head. The same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon Him. Like faith obtains a like blessing. There is a limit, for, the Lord knows them that are His, but in the preaching of the Gospel we are not bound by the decree which is secret, but by our marching orders, Go you into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature; he that believes and is baptized shall be saved. He who bade me preach to every creature did not bid me exempt one soul from my message!

Thus I have tried to show why so many wait and I will add but one thing more on this point. Some of these people who are waiting put a good deal of reliance on other people even as this poor man said, I have no one to put me in the pool. I have letters every week from persons in distress of mind who ask me to pray for them, which I very cheerfully do. But as a general rule, I say to them, My dear Friends, I beseech you do not try to quiet your mind by asking me to pray for you. That is not your hope. Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved, whether prayed for or not. I try to get them away from all reliance in anybodys prayers and to look to Jesus alone.

O, do not say, I will ask my friends to pray for me, and then be easy. You may say it if you like, but do not rest in that, I pray you! Remember Jesus Christ is to be looked tonot the best peoples prayers! If you look to Jesus you shall have immediate salvation. But if the whole Church of God were to go down on its knees at once and stay there for the next 50 years praying for you, you would be damned to a certainty if you did not believe in Jesus! If you pray for yourself and look alone to Jesus, you shall most assuredly be saved! Is not this enough about that dreary hospital full of waiters?

II. Now a few minutes on the second head. Jesus Christ has entered the hospital and He looks about Him. And He picks out THE MOST HELPLESS MAN IN THE WHOLE WORLD. I was pleased to notice on the bill of the services at the theatres a line which says, The poorest people are the most welcome. That is a Gospel sentence. Even thus is it with Christ. He always loves to give His mercy to those who need it most. There lay that man and he did not think of Christ, but Christ stood and looked at him. He did not know Jesus Christ, but Jesus Christ knew him and He knew that he had been a long time in that condition.

He knew that he had been sick 38 years! He knew all thatand He knew before the man told himthat he had often been disappointed and, indeed, that poor wretch had been. He had often tried, as well as his paralyzed body would enable him, to get into the water. But somebody, even some blind man who had managed to get nearer the edge and had the use of his limbs, plunged in first and came up with his eyes openwhile this poor nervous creature could not get into the water at any time. He had seen a great many others cured and that had made the disease more painful to him. But it had not encouraged him, but rather made him the more sad. He was the most irresolute, soft kind of a man that you ever met with.

Read the story of the man whose eyes were opened by Christ, who said, One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see. There is a fine hard-headed fellow! He might have been a Scotchman! But this man was all irresolution, shiftless, weak in mind. You know some such people perhaps you have such in your family. You cannot help them. If you set them up in business they are sure to fail. Whatever they do, it never succeeds. They are a poor, weak, childish sort of people who need to be put in a basket and carried on somebody elses back all through the world. There are people of this sort as to religionand this man was a type of them. He sorely longed to be healed but he did not hardly say that, for when Jesus said to him, Will you be made whole? he did not say O Lord, I desire it with all my heart, but he went on with a rambling story, saying, I have no man to put me into the water, and so on.

When our Lord did heal him, it you notice, he did not ask Christ His name, and, when he found that out afterwards, he went like a stupid to the Pharisees and told them directly who his Benefactor was, and so got the Lord into trouble. There are still people about of this kind. They scarcely know their own mind. They know they need to be saved, but they hardly say as much as that. They are rightly impressed, but they get impressed the other way almost as easily. They are irresolute and unstable.

Now, my Lord and Master picked out this very man to be the subject of His healing energy. To God belong wonders of Grace! Did Jesus not say, Himself, I thank You, O Father, Lord of Heaven and earth, because You have hid these things from the wise and prudent, and have revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight? God has chosen the foolish things of the world to confuse the wise. And God has chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, has God chosen, yes, and things which are not, to bring to nothing things that are. This poor, hapless, helpless paralyzed manalmost as paralyzed in his brains as he was in his bodywas pitied by our gracious Lord!

Now who is the most helpless man in this place? Who is the most helpless woman in this place? I know you are saying, some of you, I am afraid that is myself. I have good news for you! You are just the sort my Lord loves to begin with! Do not be offended at the description but be willing to take it home to yourself. Very probably, looking back upon your past life, you are compelled to say, Well, that is really what I have been. I have plenty of wits about me in my business. I am sharp enough there. But when it comes to religion I fear I am just that kind of fool. I have no resolution. I have no fixed determination. I am always being pulled by the ear by a temptation, or drawn the wrong way by evil companions.

Now, my poor Friend, lie down before Jesus Christ in all your helplessness, in all your stupidityand pray the Lord to look upon you. A Brother once said to me, My dear Sir, I wish you would never speak to anybody but sensible sinners. I said, Well, I am very glad to preach to sensible sinners when they come to hear me, but so many stupid sinners come along with them that I am bound to preach to them, as well. And I do. I put the Gospel to those that feel themselves to be insensible and stupid in everythingand who write themselves down among the fools. Jesus has come to seek and save poor lost, ruined, dead sinners, and I pray Him to look on you at this time!

III. Now, the third point is HOW JESUS CHRIST DEALT WITH HIM. If Jesus Christ had belonged to a certain class of ministers, He would have said, Right, my Man, you are lying at the pool of ordinances and there you had better lie. He did not belong to that persuasion and, therefore, He did not say anything of the sort! Neither did He say, as some Brethren do, My dear Friend, you should pray. Very proper advice in some respects, you know, but Jesus did not give itHe knew better. He did not say, Now, you must begin to pray and wait before the Lord. That is a very good thing to say to some people, but it is not the Gospel for sinners. Jesus Christ did not say to His disciples, Go you into all the world, and tell people to pray. No. Preach the Gospel to every creature; he that believes and is baptized shall be saved.

Well, what did Jesus Christ do to him? He gave him a command. Rise, take up your bed, and walk. The words sounded like three thunderclaps. But he cannot! But he cannot! He is paralyzed, good Sir! He is paralyzed! Yes, but the Gospel is a command, for we read of some who disobey the Gospel. Now, a man cannot disobey what is not a command! He cannot be disobedient unless, first of all, there is a command. Jesus Christ brought the Gospel blessing of healing to him as a command. Rise, He said, take up your bed, and walk. It was a command which implied faith, because the man could not rise and could not take up his bedand could not walk of himself. But if he believed in Jesus Christ, he could rise and could take up his bedand could walk! So it was really a command to exercise faith in Jesus and to prove it by practical works.

But the man could not do it. That has nothing to do with it! The power is not in the sinner, but in the command! He could not rise, but Jesus Christ could make him do so. And when I, or any other minister of the Lord Jesus, in the power of the Holy Spirit, address you, chosen Sinner, and say to you, Trust Jesus Christ, we do not do so because we believe there is any strength in

you, any more than there was in the paralyzed man, but because we speak in the name of Jesus of Nazareth who has sent us to say to you, Rise up and walk. I trust my Lord to send His power with the Gospel! I know right well that I have no power of my own, but He that sent me will bless His own message as He pleases. If you are to get salvation, you will get it by believing in Jesus and rising, at once, out of the state in which you now are! By His power, through the simple act of believing in Him, you will be made whole!

The man believed in Jesus. That was all he did. Soft simpleton as he was. Irresolute, and all that, he had enough sense, and God gave him Grace enough to simply believe in Jesus. He resolved that he would try his legs and to his surpriseoh, how astonished he must have beenthose poor legs worked! He stood and found he could stoop and, rolling up his mattress, he took it up and walked away with it. What joy went through his frame! You have been ill, but the Lord has restored you and you have got up and found yourself able to walk! Was it not a delight to you? I know the sensation well. What must it be to be paralyzed 38 years? And then to be able to stoop and roll up a bed, and put it on your back, and walk away! It must have been a delight to feel new life leaping through his nerves and sinews and veins.

Now, if a sinner says, Well, I never did try it before, but by the Grace of God I will trust my soul in the hands of Jesus

*I do believe, I will believe,   
That Jesus died for me,   
And on the Cross He shed His blood   
For sin, to set me free,*

Sinner, you will rise up and walk directly. You will be surprised, yourself, to find the mighty change which God is working in you by His blessed Spirit through that simple act of faith! And you will go down those Tabernacle steps hardly knowing where you are, singing for joy because the Lord has taken you out of the hospital of waiters and put you among the Believers! Has He not said, Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert?

Jesus Christ treated this man in a Gospel way, for the way in which faith came into that man is very remarkable. The man did not know Jesus Christwhy was it he believed in Him? Why, it was thishe did not know who He was, but he knew He was somebody very wonderful! There was a look about Him, a majestic gleam about those eyes, a wonderful force in the tone of that voice, a power in the lifting up of that finger which was very different from what the man had ever seen before. He knew not who He was and did not know His nameyet somehow confidence was born in his soul! How much more, then, may faith come to you who know that Jesus Christ is the Son of God? You know that He died and made a full Atonement for sin. You know that He has risen from the dead and that He sits on the right hand of God, even the Fatherthat all power is given unto Him in Heaven and in earth, and thatHe is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever lives to make intercession for them.

Do not say, I will try and get faith. That is not the way. If I want to believe a statement, how do I go to work? Why, I hear it and faith comes by hearing. If I have any doubt about it, I hear it again and ask to have it repeated to me more fully and, when I have heard it again, conviction flashes upon me. So Jesus, in the Gospel, says, Incline your ear, and come unto Me: hear and your soul shall live; and I will make an Everlasting Covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David. Hear Me. Believe Methis is, in brief, the Gospel which Jesus preaches to mens hearts.

Now God gives His witness concerning Christ that He is His Son, for out of Heaven He spoke and said, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Will you not believe Him? The Spirit, the water and the blood are always bearing witness, and these three agree in one. Believe Jesus Christ! The evidence is strong, yield up your soul to it and you shall find joy, peace and eternal life! The mans belief in Jesus, actively proved by his rising, settled the matter! A very different case is that from lying and waiting. Why, I should think this man, if he had wits enough, would go back and say to others lying and waiting, What? Still lying and waiting? Why, I was lying and waiting for 38 years and I got, by lying and waiting, nothing! Neither will you!

Simple as he was, he would have said, I will tell you what is better than lying and waiting. There is a Man among us, even Jesus Christ, the

Son of God, and if we trust Him, He will heal us, for He heals all manner of diseases. If you cannot go to Him, send a messenger to Him, for He healed a noblemans son many miles away. Only believe Him and virtue will go out of Him, for it is not possible that any should trust Him and not be healed. I think I should like to have been that man, simpleton as I might have been, to have gone to tell those poor souls who were lying and waiting, the difference between lying and waiting and immediately believing!

I would put it in the simplest way I could, for I was, myself, waiting when I was a child. I heard much preaching that led me to waitand I think I should have kept on waiting had I not heard that poor Primitive Methodist Brother cry, Look, young man, look now! I did look, then and there, and I found salvation on the spotand I have never lost it. I have nothing else to say to you, but, There is life in a look at the Crucified One, and every man that looks shall have it here, now and at once. O, that many would look!

Do you understand it? Christ bore the wrath of God instead of those who trust Him! Jesus Christ took the sins of all who trust Him and was punished in the place of every Believer, so that God will not punish a Believer because He has punished Christ for him! Christ died for the man who believes in Him, so that it would be injustice on the part of God to punish that man, for how shall He punish twice for the same offense? Faith is the seal and evidence that you were redeemed 1,900 years ago upon the bloody tree of Calvary! And you are justified and who shall lay anything to your charge?

It is God that justifies you: who is he that condemns you? It is Christ that died; yes, rather, that is risen again. This is the Gospel of your salvation! Oh, but I do not feel. Did I say anything about feeling? You shall have feeling after you have faith. But I am not right. I do not care what you are or are not! Jesus says, Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believes in Me has everlasting life. Oh, but Away with your buts. Here is the GospelWhoever will, let him come and take of the Water of Life freely. The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And what both the Spirit and the bride of Christ say, surely I may say and do say! And may God bless the saying of it! And may you accept it, you waiting ones! May you look, believe and live, for Jesus sake! Amen.

**PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMONJohn 4:46; 5:1-16.** HYMNS FROM OUR OWN HYMN BOOK538, 505, 516. Adapted from The C.H. Spurgeon Collection, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307.  
Sermon #2568 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

SABBATH-WORK   
NO. 2568

A SERMON   
INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS-DAY, MAY 1, 1898.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, FEBRUARY 18, 1883.

**And on the same day was the Sabbath.   
John 5:9.**

OUR Divine Master healed men every day of the week. From the first day even to the close of the seventh day, He went about doing good and healing all manner of diseases. The healing virtue did not flow from Him occasionally, but perpetually. It was not like that famous pool which was only now and then touched with the angels wing and so made salutary to the sick folk lying aroundbut whoever stepped into the pool of Christs mercy found healing at any hour of the day or night!

Still, it is worthy of notice that the Lord Jesus frequently made the Sabbath to be a high day of Grace and blessing. There was, I suppose, something about that day that led Him more especially to display His great power, or, perhaps, He felt bound to meet the superstition of the Pharisees, and He met it by a flood-tide of mercy upon that day to the sons of men. I have read to you the records of six notable miracles which were worked by our Lord on the Sabbath. [See EXPOSITION at end of sermon.] I need not read them, again, but I will just remind you that those miracles comprised the casting from a devil in the synagogue, the healing of a man whose hand was withered, the lifting up of a woman who had been bound by infirmity for 18 years, the instantaneous cure of the dread disease of dropsy, the recovering of a man who had been afflicted with palsy for 38 years so that he could not stir and the opening of the eyes of one who was born blindsix notable miracles to render the Sabbath most famous as a day of the display of Christs power!

The Sabbath was a day of rest and Christ did not break His rest by His miracles, for He was God, so it was rest to Him to do good. You remember how, when He spoke to the woman of Samaria at the well of Sychar, He told His disciples that it was His meat and drink to be dealing out mercy to her. He was refreshed by what, to others, might have been wearisome and, assuredly, whenever the Lord Jesus worked a deed of mercy, it was rest to His heart. And, moreover, it was giving rest to others. To those who had been afflicted so long, what rest His miracles brought! To that poor daughter of Abraham who had been bound 18 yearswhat rest it was, once more, to straighten herself and to stand upright, and to glorify God for the marvelous miracle that had been worked! And the man who had been bedridden for 38 yearswhat a time of merciful rest that Sabbath was for him! To take up his bed and walk was to be made truly to rest! Not for all that long period had he enjoyed such rest as he did on that memorable Sabbath when Christ healed him!

So, then, viewing the Lord Jesus Christ as Divine, I say that He committed no breach of the rest of God. He first enjoyed it, Himself, by working the miracle, and then He spread the influence of that rest upon those who were helped by Him. Viewing Him, also, in His condescending capacity as the God-Man, in the form of the Servant of men, He did not break the day of rest, for His healing was a form of holy ministry. He was preaching sermons while He was healing the sickand the best sort of sermons, toosermons that must strike and be remembered, for men could see them with their eyes as well as hear them with their ears! His cures are acted discourses. Whenever we try to interpret any of the miracles, I am sure you feel that we do not put the Truth of God into them, but that the Truth of God is already there! There is much precious teaching in every miracle that He worked.

The ruler of the synagogue might just as well have confessed that he broke the Sabbath when he read a chapter of the Scriptures as have said that Christ broke the Sabbath by healing anyone. They were really both doing the same thing, only the mere official was doing it in a much poorer and more perfunctory manner. Christ was grandly teaching while He was healing the sick, for what is the Sabbath? Is it not a day set apart for the Glory of God, for the reverencing of His most holy name? And, my Brothers and Sisters, what could bring God more Glory than for the Lord Jesus Christ to be working these miracles which caused men to glorify Him? She who had been bound for 18 yearsthe first thing she did when she stood upright was to glorify God! And others in the synagogue, of nobler spirit than Pharisees and lawyers, when they saw what God was doing by Him whom they thought to be a Prophet, glorified God. Although Jesus, in a measure, worked, He was all the while doing Sabbath-work the very service for which the day was set apart, that God might be honored among the sons of men. Fools and slow of heartno, foul of heart, were they, to bring the charge of breaking the Sabbath against our blessed Master for what He did.

I am going, very briefly, to refer to these cures of Christ in the fond hope that He will transfer from the seventh to the first day of the week the Glory which He put upon His ancient Sabbath. I need not say in the hope that He will do it, as though it were a new thing, for He has done it all through the Christian era! I suppose that there have been more souls born to God on the last day of the week than on all the other days of the week. Certainly, this day, on which Christ rose from the grave, has been the time of the resurrection of ten thousands times ten thousands and when we have met together, on this first day of the week, to sing hymns and to pray in the name of Jesusand to talk of His great love and of all that came of it, He has been especially present with us, and He has worked wondrous miracles of mercy many and many a time. May He do so among us now!   
I. First, then, concerning Christs Sabbath cures, I make this observationTHESE CURES MEET MANY CASESand we may expect that Christ, who worked such cures in the past, will continue to meet similar cases of need to-day.

The first was a man under Satanic influence. Christ spoke the Word and the devil came out of him. There may be such persons here. I have known many children of God in that sad condition. Ah, poor creatures! They have been assailed with blasphemous thoughts which they have hated and loathed, and yet the thoughts would come. They could not stop them. And if it so happens to Gods people, much more will it happen to those who, as yet, have never fled to Christ! I believe that there are some men who are transported in wickedness far beyond themselves and who both say and do things which would not have entered into their hearts, bad as they are, if it were not for Satan taking possession of them and bearing them beyond themselves. Just as I am sure that the Spirit of God often works in gracious men things which would not come, even of their renewed nature, carrying them from themselves by a holy ecstasy and a divine enthusiasm, so does Satan, on the other hand, work in ungodly men beyond themselves, bearing them into a kind of frenzy and fanaticism of iniquity. Well, if I am addressing any suchif it is a lucid interval with some poor wretchif the drunk is sober to-nightif the man who plunges into vice is hereyes, even if the devilish spirit is still within him, I am glad that he is here, for my Master can rebuke that spirit and cast it from the man to never return! He will need more done to him than that, but that will be a grand beginning. Oh, that, in His infinite mercy, Jesus, the enthroned King, would manifest His Divinity by casting out the spirit of darkness from the stronghold which He has made for Himself in the hearts of men! That case, then, was met by Christ on the Sabbath.

The next case was that of a man conscious of a very grievous inability. He had an arm which hung helplessly by his side. He could not earn bread for his children. He could do nothing to help himself. His arm was witheredit was not merely dislocated, so that he could not lift it, but it had gradually dried up. The sinews had shrunk, the flesh had gone, the arm had become a mummified useless object. There are spiritual inabilities in all unregenerate men, but there are some inabilities of which they are conscious. I cannot pray, says one, oh, that I could! I cannot believe, says another, would God that I could! I cannot do this, and I cannot do that. Dear Friend, whatever your inability may be, the Lord Jesus Christ is able to give you, even now, that power of which you lament the absence. He can say, Stretch out your withered hand and if you are but obedient to His gracious command, you shall stretch it out! You shall pray. You shall believe. You shall at once quit the sin that now holds you spellbound. Oh, blessed be His name, though the power to do these things is not in you, it is in Him! All that is needed to meet the sinners case is in Christ, for all power is given unto Him in Heaven and in earth. Look up, then, you with the withered hands, for Christ is still present and able to heal, now, just as of old.

The third case was that of a woman who had been afflicted, I suppose, by spinal disease, till she was bent double. She could not lift herself up. It was something more than a more stoopit was evidently a very painful doubling of herself up so that her face looked rather to the earth than, as it should look, towards Heaven. Poor creature! Eighteen years she had suffered from this grievous bend, but the Lord Jesus lifted her up and made her straight in one single minute! There may be, here, some very desponding and even despairing soul, but the Lord can lift up that soul. Last Thursday morning I preached over in the City Temple and I had my wages for preaching as soon as the sermon was done, for when I came from the pulpit there met me a brother minister, and he said, Sir, I cannot tell you now, but I will write tomorrowmy wife is set at liberty! He wrote to tell me how she had been in despair and what sorrow she had had, and what a grief it had been to him. But while I preached upon, Cast not away your confidence, which has great recompense of reward, she was brought from bondage. Oh, how I praised and blessed God and thought that I would like to preach day and night if I might but be the channel of such blessing again and again! It was the Master who made that poor crooked woman straight and if there is another here who is like she is, He can work a similar miracle for that poor soul! I know that many of you belong to the Despondency family. Miss Much-Afraid, down there, you think there is nobody so bad as you, so lost as you are. But my Lord and Master can lay His hand upon you and you shall be straightened at once! Oh, what a blessed thought this isJesus worked this miracle on the Sabbath! Oh, that He would work others like it on this Sabbath!

The fourth case was that of the man with the dropsy, an inward complaint which would soon have ended his life if Christ had not cured him. Last Wednesday I saw a dear man of God who was afflicted with dropsy and I bade him farewell. He said that, in the night, when he slept a little, the water seemed to rise almost to his heart, and he knew that he must soon die. And when I called just now, I found that he was gone. I may be addressing someone who has an inward fatal complaintI do not mean bodily, but spirituallyand you feel that it must soon be all over with you and that you must perish forever. But, dear Friend, you need not perishif you come within range of my Masters hand, you shall live, for He is able to pluck men from the jaws of destruction! As it is said of this man, that He took him and healed him and bade him go his way, so can He do with you. God grant that He may!

The next case was that of a man paralyzed. I believe that the man, after being so afflicted for 38 years, had become paralyzed in his mind as well as in his body. He was a poor feeble creature who said to Christ, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool. So the Lord Jesus Christ said to him, Will you be made whole?as if He would see whether the paralysis had penetrated even into his will and when the man said that he had hardly any hope about it, but only described his sad case, the Master said at once, Rise, take up your bed, and walk. And the man did so. Now, if you have been long a trembling seeker, not so much in earnest as you ought to have been, and have now come to be spiritually paralyzed so that you do not seem to have any energy left, yet still my Lord can give you energy and speak the healing words so that you shall rise and take up your bed and walk!

The last case was that of the man who was born blind. I know that he is represented here. Plenty of you were born blind. No, morethere is not one of you who was not born spiritually blindand, since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind. Perhaps it was not heard till that day, but on that blessed Sabbath, Christ opened that blind mans eyes! Oh, that He would take away the scales of prejudice that are blinding so many tonight! Oh, that He would remove the natural opposition to the Gospel which blinds so many eyes and heartsand give men to see tonight! He can do it. Oh, that He may! I think that I have proved my assertion that these Sabbath cures meet many cases. They certainly meet the cases of many who are here. Christ is still, able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever lives to make intercession for them.

II. I shall only be able to say a little upon my second point which is that THESE CURES REPRESENT VARIOUS PROCESSES OF GRACE. The way in which Christ healed, then, shows how He heals now.

The first man He healed with a word. That word was not spoken to the man, but to the devil in the man. The devil in the man made a disturbance in the congregation. He cried, Let me alone. Christ said, Hold your peace and come from him. And I believe that the Lord Jesus Christ still deals with the devil in that way. He never gives him a word more than is necessary. Oh, that He would say, Come from him, to some drunk who is here, and who has the drink devil in him, or to some swearer or some other great sinner who is here! That man under Satanic influence was healed by a word and Christ can do the same thing with a word now!

The man with a withered hand was healed by a personal word. The Lord Jesus Christ said to him, Rise up and stand forth in the midst. That he could do, for he had not withered feet and there he stood. It is a grand thing when the Gospel message picks a man out from his fellows and he feels that the preacher is speaking specially to him. Have you ever felt that? It is one of the ways in which Christ saves men. I am preaching to the whole congregation, but Christ is notHe is preaching to you, my Friendif He means to bless you and you feel as if you were stood out to be shot at. After Christ had given the man a personal pointed word, He said to him, Stretch forth your hand. It was done at once at the word of command and now He says to you, poor guilty Sinner, Believe! Believe in Me and you shall be saved. Oh, that Christ might speak that word of command straight into your soul, for, as the Lord lives, if you believe in Him, you shall not perish, but you shall have everlasting life! In this mans case it was a personal word that worked the healing he needed.

In the next case, there was a touch as well as a word. The woman was in the crowd in the synagogue, bent double, and, perhaps, could not even see the Christ. But He said to her, Woman, you are loosed from your infirmity, and He laid His hands on herand with that word and that touch she was loosed in a minute! She was called upon to do nothing except to believe that it was all doneand so she lifted herself up. The Lord Jesus Christ gave her the strength to rise and she did rise! There are many conversions like that. All of a sudden a man finds that all has been done for himChrist has saved him, he is forgiven and so he rises and stands upright. Now, poor woman over yonder, do that! Believe that Christ has loved you and given Himself for you. Oh, may His Spirit enable you to do so! Now you are upright, are you not? You feel as if you could stand up and shout, Hallelujah! The Lord has done it! He has broken my bonds and set His child at liberty. It was a word and a touch in that poor womans case.

In the next casethat of the man afflicted with the dropsythere was healing without a word. I do not think that there was even a word spoken to him. Christ saw the man swollen as He stood before him and it is written, He took him, and healed him, and let him go. And I have known the Lord save some souls without any spoken word. His own secret power has done it all. The man has been sitting at his work, or walking about and, suddenlyhe knew not howhe felt his heart become soft, his spirit inclined to his Savior, he looked to Him and was lightened and his face was not ashamed.

In the case of the paralytic, there was not only a word, there were two words. The first was an enquiring word, meant to arouse him. Will you be made whole? This was spoken to wake him up and make him think and hope. And then came the commanding word, Take up your bed and walk. The Lord sometimes brings men into a state of spiritual health by two words instead of one. For a little while, He seems to ask them whether they really will be saved, whether they have any wish to be savedand when earnest desires after salvation are excited, then comes the Gospel precept, Believe and liveand they do believe and live!

In the last casethat of the blind man Christ used means as well as words, but the means were very poor ones, as we think. He spat and made clay of the spittleand then put the clay on the mans eyes. More likely to blind him, you say, than to give him sight. And I have known a sermon, of which I have thought when I went home, I wish I had never gone into the pulpit. I have been ready to cry my eyes out about it. The Lord could not bless itso I thoughtbut He did. It was from His own mouth, after all! Though I was but the clay, He put that clay on the mans eyeseven my poor rough statement of the Truth of God which seemed as if it would blind the man from seeing Him, but it did notit opened his eyes. The Lord can use very strange meansand He does. I have known Him use means in mens conversion which I thought He could not use. And it makes one speak with bated breath about some people who seem to use very odd means to bring men to Christ. If the Lord brings them, the end may not justify the means, but, at the same time, it makes us very aware of what we say, lest we fight against God. If the Lord chooses to spit, let Him spit. And if He chooses to use clay and that seems a very strange thing to put on blind eyes, it is better than the best ointment if Christ ordains it! So let Him do things after His own fashion, for He always does them right.

Now, which shall be the way in which He will heal you? Well, it will not matter, dear Friend, what means are usedso long as your cure is effected, God shall have the glory of it!

III. I want you to notice now, in the third place, very briefly, indeed, that THESE CURES ON THE SABBATH WERE WORKED BOTH IN AND OUT OF THE SYNAGOGUE.

The first was the man who was misbehaving himself in the synagogue. I do not say to any, Come, and misbehave yourselves in the House of God, but I do say, Come anyway you can to the place where prayer is known to be made. I would rather that a man should come to ridicule the Gospel than not come to hear it at all! Here is a man, with the devil in him, disturbing the worship in the synagogue by crying out to Jesus, Let me alone. Yet it was a blessing for him to be there and a great blessing for him that the devil was not quiet that morning! The devil is very crafty, but he is often a great fool and he made a huge mistake when he took to bawling out that Sabbath. Whenever I hear a man swear, I always pray for him and, I have sometimes thought, when I have heard an oath, it has been a warning bell ringing to let me know that it was time for me to pray. It is a horrible thing that men should blaspheme, curse and swear, but I believe that there would be less of these evils if all Christians prayed whenever they heard an oath, for the devil would see that it would not pay him, for, fool though he is, he has some sense left. At all events, this man was in the synagogue making a disturbance.

The next person was the man with a withered hand. He could not do any work and, beside that, it seems that he had some love for the House of God and there Christ picked him out and blessed him. The woman who was bent double was also there. I like the idea of her going to the synagogue. No doubt it was a trouble for her to walk and she was a very pitiable objectyet she loved the place. I believe she was a gracious woman, for it was said of her as it is not said of others, she glorified God when she was made straight. Never mind what your infirmity is, dear Friends, be sure to come to the House of God. There was a dear Sister who used to sit on my left hand, here, and who did not hear a word I said, for she was deaf. But she always came because, she said, she thought it was a good example to those who were round about her to come and sit here. Besides, she said, somebody told her what hymn we were singing and she could join in that. And so, to the day of her death, she was still here. Yes, we love the place where God deigns to meet with His people and we hope to get a blessing there, somehow or other, as this poor woman did.

But the other three people healed in these Sabbath miracles were not in the synagogue. The man with the dropsy was cured after synagogue hours. The Lord Jesus Christ had gone to eat bread with a certain Pharisee and it was then that He saw this poor man. O dear Friends, may the Lord bless you after the service is over, if He does not bless you while the service is going on! May He bless you at your meal! You who love the Lord, pray Him to bless men and women when they are sitting at their supper, tonight, after the sermon is over, and they have gone home and have not, perhaps, felt the power of the Word. God can bless them even there, as this poor dropsied man received his cure when the Sabbath services were over and he had gone to his evening meal!

The next case, I think, was early in the morning, before the service. Whether it was or not, does not matter, for it was the case of a man who could not go to the synagogue. He had the palsy, he could not even step into the healing bath, so I know that he could not go to the synagogue yet the Lord came and healed him. Pray, dear Friends, for the sick folk at home and, when you are, yourselves, ill, do not think that you are shut out from Christ because you are shut out from the public means of Grace! The Lord can come and bless you wherever you are! Oh, what a Savior my Master is! If you cannot come to His House, He can come to your house! If you cannot go to the synagogue, He can come and make a temple of your little chamber and save you there!

As for the blind man, he was not in the synagogue, but he used to go, for we read that they cast him from the synagogue, so he must have been formerly in it. But on that occasion he was not there. I wonder whether the reason was because he was too poor. His neighbors asked, Is not this he that sat and begged? Perhaps he did not like to go because he had not fit clothes to go in. I always think it is a very sad thing that people should make that excuse. I do not care what clothes you come in the only clothes that are unfit to wear are those that you have not paid for! Let our clothes be ever so poor, or ever so mean, do not stay away from the House of God on that account, but come and listen to the Gospel. But if it really is the case that you cannot come, what a mercy it is that God can bless the poor who do not come to His Housefor He can go to them.

Perhaps He means somebody who is here tonightsome dear child of Histo call in, on the road home, to see some poor person who has not come because he says that he has not fit clothes. Knock at his door and say, Our minister was saying, this evening, that some people did not come to Gods House because they thought they had not fit clothes, and his words brought you to my mind. He said that God could bless them at home. I thought that, perhaps, the Lord might bless you through me. Let me tell you about Jesus Christ for a few minutes. I wont tire you. Then let me pray with you before I go. Why, who knows? Perhaps, this very night, you may be a messenger of mercy to some poor creature of that kind.

IV. Now I close with what might have been the whole of my sermon, for there is enough in this last division to preach from for a month. It is a very singular thing that all these Sabbath cures were cures of PERSONS WHO DID NOT ASK TO BE HEALED. They were all instances of free, Sovereign Grace giving blessing to those who did not crave it.

The first one did not ask for it, but entreated Christ to leave him alone, yet he was healed. The next, the man with the withered hand, I suppose did not even think of it till Christ said, Stand forth. And then he stood forth and his hand was restored. The next, the poor woman who had been bent double for 18 years, I should think that she did not hope for such a thing. Certainly, she did not say a word about it, but, to her astonishment, mercy burst upon her with these words, Woman, you are loosed from your infirmity. What a surprise it was to her, as the Grace of God often is when it dispels mans despair! The dropsied man did not ask for healing, but Christ took him and healed him, and sent him on his way. As for the paralytic man, he had not nerve enough left to ask. Christ had to ask him, Will you be made whole? And then the blind man, he also, perhaps, had never dreamed of such a thing, for he expressed his own astonishmentSince the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind. They did not ask for the blessing, yet they received it.

Well, what is the inference from all that I have been saying? Why, that you who ask for the blessing shall receive it, for if Christ goes to those who do not ask, you who have been askingasking for days and perhaps for months, may well pluck up courage and expect His mercyand you shall have it. Why, if a man in the street gives alms to a poor beggar who did not ask anything of him, the boy at the crossing will be touching his hat to him, I am sure, and following him all across the road, for he is sure of getting something! He says, He gave to that fellow who did not ask. Surely he will give to me if I do ask Oh, believe that it must be so with you if you ask of the Lord Jesus Christ! Surely you seekers shall be finders.

The next inference I draw is this. What a mercy that we are able, sometimes, to bring into the House of God some who have never asked God to bless them. Have you brought in any tonight? If you have not, you know that you ought to do it, for it is the duty of Christians to be constantly bringing in outsiders where God gives a blessing. Some of you have brought others. Well, then, if the Lord Jesus Christ spontaneously blessed those people who seemed to be there by accident, much more will He bless those whom you have brought to His House and for whom you are now praying that He would bless them. Do not say, It is of no use to bring in such-and-such, he is not at all seriously inclined. That is the very person to bring in! Those who are seriously inclined will come of themselvesyou are to bring those who do not have any desire to come! It is grand work to be plowing virgin soil that has never been broken up before. It is a great mercy to speak into an ear that has not been stopped up with Gospel wax, an ear that listens to the Gospel as a thing that is fresh and new, and which comes with startling novelty to the soul. Bring in people of that sort! Remember that we do not trust in their willour trust is in the will of God! We do not trust in their powerour trust is in the power of Almighty Grace! We do not trust in their coming here to seek Christour trust is in the fact that the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost!

As for you who have never trusted the Savior, all you have to do is to cast yourselves, with all your weight of sin, upon the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ, and I solemnly charge you to take heed that you do not neglect it. Beware lest while you are thinking about it, the moments should steal away and hope should steal away with the moments. Some of you have come here a good many Sabbath nights hoping to lay hold on Christleave your hoping and lay hold on Jesus! May the blessed Spirit now bid you stretch out that withered hand and grasp eternal life! It is within reach of everyone who desires to have itit may be yours, now, if you trust Him who brings it to you. But do not, I pray you, continue longer in unbelief. If you do, I think I know what will happen to you. You will begin to say, There is no hope for me. And then you will leave off coming to hear the Gospel and then what is likely to become of you?

As I look at some of my hearers, I might well settle my countenance, as Elisha did when he looked on Hazael. He could not bear to think of all that the man would doand when the man himself heard the prophecy, he said, Is your servant a dog, that he should do this great thing? Yes, he was dog enough to do even that! A Friend was speaking to me of an unhappy man whose life has been one of licentiousness and crimeand who has gone away from his countryhe used to sit by his wifes side in this house and he said that he would one day turn over a new leaf. But then he did not yield himself to Christ. So, when he did turn over a new leaf, it was a blacker one than he had ever turned over, before, and, unless you repent, some of you will do the same as that man did. God bless and save you, dear Friends, for Jesus Christs sake! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **LUKE 4:33-36; 6:6-11; 13:10-17; 14:1-6; JOHN 5:1-9; 9:1-14.**

We are going to read the Inspired records of several of our Saviors Sabbath cures, for they are very instructive.   
Luke 4:33-36. And in the synagogue there was a man which had a spirit of an unclean devil, and cried out with a loud voice, saying, Let us alone! What have we to do with You, You of Nazareth? Have You come to destroy us? I know You, who You are: the Holy One of God. And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold your peace and come from him. And when the devil had thrown him in the midst, he came from him, and hurt him not. And they were all amazed, and spoke among themselves, saying, What a word is this! For with authority and power He commands the unclean spirits, and they come out. This was a very remarkable cure worked by the Lord Jesus Christ on the Sabbath. Now let us turn to another, which is recorded in the sixth chapter of this same Gospel.   
Luke 6:6-10. And it came to pass also on another Sabbath, that He entered into the synagogue and taught: and there was a man whose right hand was withered. And the scribes and Pharisees watched Him, whether He would heal on the Sabbath; that they might find an accusation against Him. But He knew their thoughts, and said to the man which had the withered hand, Rise up, and stand forth in the midst. And he arose and stood forth. Then said Jesus unto them, I will ask you one thing. Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good, or to do evil? To save life, or to destroy it? And looking round about upon them all. I think I see that piercing glance which read their very hearts, and condemned the wickedness it saw thereLooking round about upon them all   
10, 11. He said unto the man, Stretch forth your hand. And he did so and his hand was restored whole as the other. And they were filled with madness and communed one, with another, what they might do to Jesus. This was a second miracle worked by our Lord on the Sabbath and it, also, was a very notable one. Follow on in the same Gospel until you come to the 13th Chapter, at the 10th verse.   
Luke 13:10-17. And He was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath. And, behold, there was a woman which had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bowed together, and could in no wise lift up herself. And when Jesus saw her, He called her to Him, and said unto her, Woman, you are loosed from your infirmity. And He laid His hands on her: and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God. And the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because that Jesus had healed on the Sabbath, and said unto the people, There are six days in which men ought to work: in them, therefore, come and be healed, but not on the Sabbath. The Lord then answered him, and said, You hypocrite, does not each one of you on the Sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the stall, and lead him away to watering? And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has bound, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath? And when He had said these things, all His adversaries were ashamed: and all the people rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by Him. His adversaries might well be ashamed and the people might well rejoice at such a display of His power and mercy! But the point I want you to notice is that the poor woman was set at liberty by the Lord Jesus on the Sabbath. There is another Sabbath miracle recorded in the next chapter.   
Luke 14:1-6. And it came to pass, as He went into the house of one of the chief Pharisees to eat bread on the Sabbath, that they watched Him. And, behold, there was a certain man before Him which had the dropsy. And Jesus answering spoke unto the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath? And they held their peace. And He took him, and healed him, and let him go; and answered them, saying, Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the Sabbath? And they could not answer Him again to these things. Christs question was unanswerable unless they wished to condemn themselves. Now I want you to kindly turn to the next Evangelist, in whose Gospel you will find the record of the fifth miracle which our Savior worked on the Sabbath.

John 5:1-9. After this there was a feast of the Jews; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep market, a pool which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches. In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water. For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: whoever, then, after the troubling of the water, first stepped in, was made whole of whatever disease he had. And a certain man was there which had an infirmity thirty and eight years. When Jesus saw him and knew that he had been now a long time in that case, He said unto him, Will you be made whole? The impotent man answered Him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steps down before me. Jesus said unto him, Rise, take up your bed, and walk. And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and on the same day was the Sabbath. I hope to speak on these miracles in my discourse, so only briefly refer to them now, but this Sabbath afforded another memorable instance of our Lords healing power. In the ninth chapter of Johns Gospel you have the remarkable story of the man born blind.   
John 9:1-3. And as Jesus passed by, He saw a man which was blind from his birth. And His disciples asked Him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind? Jesus answered, Neither has this man sinned, nor his parents. That is to say, their sin was not the cause of his blindness.   
3-14. But that the works of God should be made manifest in him. I must work the works of Him that sent Me, while it is day: the night comes, when no man can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the Light of the world. When He had thus spoken, He spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay, and said unto him, Go, wash in the Pool of Siloam, (which is, by interpretation, Sent). He went his way, therefore, and washed, and came seeing. The neighbors, therefore, and they which before had seen him that he was blind, said, Is not this he that sat and begged? Some said, This is he: others said, he is like he: but he said, I am he. Therefore said they unto him, How were your eyes opened? He answered and said, A man that is called Jesus made clay and anointed my eyes, and said unto me, Go to the pool of Siloam, and wash: and I went and washed, and I received sight. Then said they unto him, Where is he? He said, I know not. They brought him to the Pharisees that before was blind. And it was the Sabbath when Jesus made the clay and opened his eyes. This gracious act of Christ was made another occasion of complaint on the part of the Phariseesand it is the sixth instance in which we are very specially and definitely informed that our Lord Jesus Christ worked miracles of healing on the Sabbath. Oh, that He would do similar works in our midst even now in a spiritual sense, if not literally!

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THE WORK OF GRACE THE WARRANT FOR OBEDIENCE   
NO. 1479

**DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, JUNE 15, 1879, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

(On behalf of the Mansion House Fund for the Hospitals of London).

**He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up your bed and walk.   
John 5:11.**

JUST a few observations upon the narrative itself. It was a feast day and Jesus Christ came up to Jerusalem to find opportunities for doing good among the crowds of His countrymen. I see all the city glad; I hear the voice of rejoicing in every house as they hold high festival and eat the fat and drink the sweet. But where does Jesus keep the feast? How does He spend His holiday? He walks among the poor, whom He loves so well. Behold Him in the hospital! There was one notable Bethesda or house of mercy in Jerusalemit was a poor provision for the citys abounding sickness, but such as it was, it was greatly prized. There was a pool which every now and then was stirred by an angels wing and worked an occasional cure. Around it charitable persons had built five porches and there, on the cold stone steps, a number of blind and crippled and withered folk were lying, each one upon his own wretched pallet, waiting for the moving of the waters.

There were the weary children of pain, fainting, while others were feasting. They were racked with pain amid general rejoicing. They were sighing amid universal singing! Our Lord was at home amid this mercy, for here was room for His tender heart and powerful hands. He feasted His soul by doing good. Let us learn this lesson, dear Friends, that in the times of our brightest joys we should remember the sorrowful and find a still higher joy in doing them good. It well becomes us in proportion as a day is gladsome to ourselves, to make it so to the sick and poor around us. Let us keep the feast by sending portions to those for whom nothing is prepared, for, otherwise, the famishing may bring a curse upon our feasting.

When we are prospered in business, let us set aside a portion for the poor. When we are full of health and strength, let us remember those to whom these privileges are denied and aid those who minister to them. Blessed shall they be who, like the Lord Jesus, visit the sick and care for them. Coming into the hospital, our Lord noticed a certain man whose case was a very sad one. There were many painful cases there, but He singled out this man and it would seem that the reason for His choice was that the poor creature was in the worst plight of all. If misery has a claim on pity, then the greater the sufferer the more is mercy attracted towards him. This poor victim of rheumatism or paralysis had been bound 38 years by his infirmity!   
Let us hope there was no worse case on all Bethesdas porches! Thirtyeight years is more than half the appointed period of human life! One year of pain or paralysis has a weary length of torture about it, but think of thirty-eight! We may well pity the man who endures the pangs of rheumatism even for an hourbut how shall we sufficiently pity him who has not been free from it for hard on 40 years? Even if the case were not one of pain, but of paralysis, the inability to work and the consequent poverty of so many years were, by no means, a small evil. Our Lord, then, selects the worst case to be dealt with by His curing hands as a type of what He often does in the kingdom of Graceand as a lesson of prudence to us instructing us to give our first aid to those who are first in point of need.

The man whom Jesus healed was by no means an attractive character. Our Savior said to him, when he was healed, Sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto you, from which it is not an improbable inference that his first infirmity had come upon him by deed of vice or course if excess. In some way or other he had been guilty of that which brought upon his body the suffering which he was enduring. Now, it is considered generally to be a point beyond all dispute that we should help the worthy but should refuse the worthlessthat when a man brings a calamity upon himself by wrong doingwe are justified in letting him suffer that he may reap what he has sown.

This cold Pharisaic idea is very congenial to minds which are bent upon saving their coins! It springs up in many hearts, or rather in places where hearts ought to be, and it is generally regarded as if it were a rule of prudence which it would be sinful to disputean infallible and universal axiom. Now, I venture to say that our Savior never taught us to confine our alms to the deserving! He would never have bestowed the grand alms of Grace on any one of us if He had carried out that rule! And if you and I had received no more at the hands of God than we deserved, we should not have been in this house of prayer! We cannot afford to cramp our charity into a sort of petty justice and sour our almsgiving into a miniature law court. When a man is suffering let us pity him, however the suffering has come.

When a man had been in misery so long as 38 years, it was time that his infirmity should be more considered than his iniquity and that his present sorrow should be thought upon more than his former folly. So Jesus thought and, therefore, He came to the sinner, not with reproach, but with restoration! He saw his disease rather than his depravity and gave him pity instead of punishment. Our God is kind to the unthankful and to the evilbe you, therefore, merciful as your Father, also, is merciful. Remember how our Lord said, Pray for them that despitefully use you, that you may be the children of your Father which is in Heaven; for He makes His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.

Let us imitate Him in this and wherever there is pain and sorrow let it be our joy to relieve it. In addition to the supposition that this man had, at some time, been grossly guilty, it seems pretty clear from the text that he was a poor, shiftless, discouraged, inanimate, stupid sort of person. He had never managed to get into the pool, though others had done so who were as infirm as himself. He had never been able to win a friend or secure a helper, though from the extreme length of his infirmity one would have thought that at some period or another he might have found a man to place him in the pool when the angel gave it the mystic stir.

The Saviors asking him, Do you want to be made whole? leads us to think that he had fallen into such a listless, despairing, heart-sick condition that though he was daily at the edge of the pool as a matter of habit, he had not only ceased to hope, but had almost ceased to wish! Our Lord touched the chord which was most likely to respond, namely, his will and desire to be made wholebut the response was a very feeble one. His answer shows what a poor creature he was, for there is not a beam of hope in it, or even of desireit is a wail, a hopeless dirge, a grievous complaintI have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool and while I am coming, another steps down before me.

But the utter imbecility and lack of brains of the poor creature is most seen in the fact that like a simpleton he went to Christs enemies and told them that it was Jesus that had made him whole! I am sure there was no malice in his thus informing our Lords enemies, for if there had been, he would have said, It was Jesus who bade me take up my bed, whereas he worded it thus, It was Jesus which had made him whole. I hardly dare, however, to hope, as some do, that there was much gratitude about this testimony, though, doubtless, the poor soul was grateful. I conceive that his long endurance of pain, acting upon a weak mind, had brought him to an almost imbecile state of mind, so that he spoke without thought.

Our Lord did not, therefore, require much of him. He did not even ask for a distinct acknowledgement of faith from him, but only for that small measure of it which might be implied in his answering the question, Do you want to be made whole? This poor man evinced none of the shrewdness of the man born blind who answered the Pharisees so keenlyhe was of quite another type and could do no more than state his own case to Jesus. Thank God, even that was enough for our Lord to work with! The Lord Jesus saves people of all sorts. He has among His disciples men of quick and ready wit who can baffle their opponents, but quite as often

*He takes the fool and makes him know   
The wonders of His dying love:   
To bring aspiring wisdom low,   
And all its pride reprove.*

So here He chose this poor simpleton of a creature and worked a great marvel upon him, to the exceeding praise of His condescending Grace. Note well that this mans mind, though there was not much of it, was all engrossed and filled up with the fact that he had been made whole. Jesus, to him, was, He that made me whole. Of the person of Jesus he knew next to nothing, for he had only seen Him for an instant and then he didnt know that it was Jesus. His one idea of Jesus was, He that made me whole.

Now, beloved Brothers and Sisters, this was natural in his case and it will be equally natural in our own. Even when the saved ones are more intelligent and of larger mind than this poor paralytic, they must still chiefly think of the Son of God as their Savioras He that made them whole. If I do not know much about the Lord, yet I do know that He has saved me! I was burdened with guilt and full of woes and could not rest day nor night until He gave me peace. If I cannot tell anything much concerning the

glory of His Person, His attributes, His relationships, His offices, or His work, yet I can say, one thing I know, whereas I was blinded by error, now I see! Whereas I was paralyzed by sin, I am now able to stand upright and walk in His ways.

This poor soul knew the Lord experimentally and that is the best way of knowing Him. Actual contact with Him yields a surer knowledge and a truer knowledge than all the reading in the world. In the kingdom of Christ wonderful facts transpire, such as conversion and finding peace with Godand happy are they to whom these facts are personal experiences! When men are turned from the error of their ways and when their heart finds rest and peace in Christ, great deeds are done by the Lord Jesus. And if you are acquainted with these two things, even though you should be ignorant of a great deal else, be not afraid of exaggerating their importance, but set your mind on them and call Jesus by that nameHe that made me whole.

Think of Him under that aspect and you will have a very valuable and influential idea of Him. You shall see greater things than these, but for the present let these happy and sure facts be much upon your mind, even as his being made whole was upon this mans mind. As for the quibbling Pharisees, you observe that they took no notice of the glorious fact of the mans curethey willfully ignored what Christ had done and they fell full swoop upon that little insignificant circumstance that it had been done on the Sabbath! And then they spent all their thoughts and emotions upon that side issue. They say nothing of the mans being restored, but they rage because he carried his bed on the Sabbath!

It is much the same with the men of the world in this day. They habitually ignore the fact of conversion. If they do not deny it, they look upon it as being a triflea matter not worth caring about. Though they see the harlot made chaste, the thief made honest, the profane made devout, the despairing made joyful and other moral and spiritual changes of the utmost practical value, they forget all this and they attack some peculiar point of doctrine, or mode of speech, or diversity of manner and raise a storm concerning these!

Is it because the facts, themselves, if fairly looked at, would establish what they do not care to believe? The fact that Christianity is doing marvels in the world, such as nothing else ever did, they persistently forget. But that fact is just what you and I must as persistently remember! We must dwell upon what Christ has, by His Holy Spirit, worked within our nature by renewing us in the spirit of our minds. And we must make this work of Grace a fountain of argument which shall establish our faith and justify our conduct. This poor man did so! He did not know much else, but that he had been made whole he did knowand from that fact he justified himself in what he had done.

He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up your bed and walk. This is the Truth of God which I want to enlarge upon this morningfirst, by saying that the work of Christ furnishes us with a justification for our obedience to His commandsHe that made me whole, the same said unto methat is our complete justification for what we do! In the second place, the work of Jesus Christ throws upon us an obligation to do what He bids usif He that made me whole says to me, Take up your bed and walk, I am bound to do it and I ought to feel the obligation of His goodness pressing upon me. And, in the third place, it is not only a justification and an obligation, but the deed of Grace becomes a constraint to obedienceHe that said unto me, rise, and so made me whole, by that same word of power made me take up my bed and walk!

The power which saves us also moves us to obey our Savior. Not with our own might do we fulfill the will of our Lord, but with power which the Healer gives us in the same hour. You see the drift, therefore, of our discourse. May the Holy Spirit lead us into the power of this Truth, for I am persuaded that a sense of the Lords work within us is a great force and should be excited and applied to the highest ends.

I. First, then, this is our JUSTIFICATION for what we do when we obey Christ. This poor man could not defend the action of taking up his bed and walking, for his enemies were learned in the Law and he was not. You and I could defend it very easily, for it seems to us a very proper thing to do under the circumstances. The weight of his bed was not much more than that of an ordinary great coat, it was a simple rug or mat upon which he was lyingthere really was no violation of Gods Law of the Sabbath and, therefore, there was nothing to excuse.

But the Rabbis laid down rules of which I will give you but one specimenIt is unlawful to carry a handkerchief loose in the pocketbut if you pin it to your pocket or tie it round your waist as a belt, you may carry it anywhere because it becomes a part of your dress. To my unsophisticated mind it would have seemed that the pin increased the ponderous burden and so there was the weight of the pin more than was necessary! This was quite a weighty business according to Rabbinical estimates. The most of the Rabbinical regulations with regard to the Sabbath were absolutely ludicrous, but this poor man was not in a position to say so or even to think so, for, like the rest of his countrymen, he stood in awe of the scribes and doctors.

These learned Pharisees and priests were too much reverenced for this poor creature to answer them in their own manner, so he did what you and I must always do when we are at all puzzledhe hid behind the Lord Jesus and pleaded, He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up your bed. That was quite enough for him and he quoted it as if he felt that it ought to be enough for those who questioned him. Truly it ought to have been so! I may not be able to find in my own knowledge and ability an authority equal to the authority of learned unbelievers, but my personal experience of the power of Grace will stand me in as good a stead as this mans cure was to him. He argued that there must be in the man who made him whole enough authority to match the greatest possible rabbi that ever lived!

Even his poor feeble mind could grasp that and, surely, you and I may do the samewe can defend ourselves behind the breastwork of our Saviors gracious workand the consequent authority which belongs to Him. There are certain ordinances to which a Christian man is bound to attend, about which the world raises a storm of questions. The world does not take notice that this man was once a drunk and has, through Divine Grace, become sober and so has become a good father, a good husband and a good citizen. It lets that miracle pass by unheededbut if he is going to be baptized, they at once object to the ordinance!

Or if he is going to join a Christian Church they straightway jeer at him as a Presbyterian, or a Methodistas if it matters what sort of name they give himso long as he is a better man than themselves, is redeemed from sin, taught to be upright, chaste and pure in the sight of God. The work of Grace counts for nothing with them, but just the peculiarity of sect, or the peculiarity of religious rite is made a world of. Blind creatures to despise the medicine which heals because of the bottle which contains it, or the label by which it is named! However, our answer is, He that made us whole, the same gave us a command and by that command we will abide. We seek no justification but thisthat He who worked a miracle of Grace upon us bade us do it.

What if I am about to be baptized as a Believer? The same that said, Believe, said, Be baptized. He who gave me salvation, the same said, He that believes and is baptized, shall be saved. Over against all objections we set the Divine authority of Jesus Christ! He by whose blood we are cleansed and by whose Spirit we are renewed is Lord and Lawgiver to us! His precept is our sufficient guarantee. If we go to the Communion Table and revilers say, What is the use of eating a piece of bread and drinking a drop of wine? Why think so solemnly of so small a matter? We reply, He that made us whole, the same said, Do this in remembrance of Me. We renounce what He has not ordained, but we cling to His statutes.

If He had commanded a rite still more trivial, or a ceremony still more open to objection in the eyes of carnal man, we would make no further apology than thisHe who has created us anew, given us a hope of Heaven and led us to seek after perfect holinessHe has bid us do it. This is our final reply and although we could find other justifications, they would be superfluous. This stands for our defensethe Savior commands it! The same apology applies to all the doctrines of the Gospel. I say again, ungodly men will not admit, or if they admit it they ignore it, that the Gospel works a marvelous change in mens hearts. If they need proof, we can find them instances by the hundreds and by the thousands of the reclaiming, elevating and purifying power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ!

The Gospel is daily working spiritual miracles, but this they forgetand they go on to find fault with its peculiar doctrines. Justification by faith they frequently quarrel with. Well now, they say, that is a shocking doctrine! If you teach men that they are to be saved by faith, alone, and not by their works, of course they will lead loose lives! If you continually declare that salvation is of Grace, alone, and not of merit, the inevitable result will be that men will sin that Grace may abound. We find a complete answer to this calumny in the fact that Believers in justification by faith and in the Doctrines of Grace are among the best and purest of menand in fact these Truths work holiness!

But we do not care to argue thus. We prefer to remind our adversaries that He who has caused us to be regenerate men, Himself taught us that whoever believes in Him shall be saved and expressly declared that he that believes in Him has everlasting life. By the mouth of His servant, Paul, He has said that by Grace are men saved through faith and that not of themselves, it is the gift of God! He has also told us that by the works of the Law shall no flesh be justified and He has bid us declare that the just shall live by faith. He who is daily, by His Gospel, turning men from sin to holiness has given this for the sum total of the Gospel we are to preachLook unto Me and be you saved, all the ends of the earth.

If this Gospel does not make men better and change their evil natures, you may question it if you like, and we do not wonder that you should but while it continues its purifying work we shall not blush or stammer when we declare the doctrines which are its essence and life! Our regeneration proves to us our Lords authority and upon that we are prepared to base our creed. To us the best of evidence is His work within us and in that evidence we place implicit faith. The same applies to all the precepts which the Christian is called upon to obey. For instance, if he is true to his colors, he keeps himself aloof from all the sinful pleasures, practices and policies of the world in which others take delight and, consequently, the ungodly world says that he is peculiar, precise and self-opinionated.

This is the answer for all ChristiansHe that made us whole, the same said to us. You are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Come you out from among them and be you separate, touch not the unclean thing and I will receive you. If you follow the precepts of the Lord Jesus Christ you may meet all charges of peculiarity by urging the supremacy of the Savior whose power has made you a new creature! Where His Word is, there is a power to which we bow at once! It is not ours to question our Savior, but to obey Him! We are cleansed by His blood! We are redeemed by His death! We live by His life and, therefore, are not ashamed to take up His Cross and follow Him. This apology ought to suffice even those who oppose us, for if they felt as grateful as we do, they would also obey. They ought, at any rate, to say, We cannot blame these men for doing as Jesus bids them because He has done so much for them.

Surely the poor man who had been paralyzed 38 years could not be blamed for obeying the command of One who, in a moment, restored him to health and strength! If he became His servant for life, who would censure him? Who would say that he too tamely submitted? Should not such a Benefactor exert a boundless influence over him? What could be more natural and proper?

Now, you unconverted people must excuse us, if we, in obedience to our Lord Jesus, do many things which, to you, seem very peculiar, for though we would not needlessly offend, we cannot please you at the risk of displeasing our Lord. We do not owe so much to you as we owe to Him! We do not owe so much to the whole world as we owe to the Lord Jesus! In fact, truth to tell, we do not feel that we owe anything to the world! The time past suffices us to have worked the will of the Gentiles, for when we are asked the question, What fruit had you, then, in those things whereof you are now ashamed? We have to confess that we had no fruit, except the sour grapes which set our teeth on edge. Like the shipmen who put out to sea against Pauls advice, our only gain has been loss and damage!

In serving the world, we found the labor wearisome and the wages death. But as for our Lord Jesus, we owe Him everything and so you must excuse us if we try to follow Him in everything. It seems to us that this is an excuse which you ought to accept from us as covering the whole groundbut if you refuse it we are not at all dismayed, for it quite suffices us, yes, more than suffices usit makes us glory in what we do! Does Jesus command? Then it is ours to obey! Objectors may say, concerning one of His ordinances, it is unsuitable to the climate, it is indecent, it is needless, it is I do not know whatall this is no concern of oursif Jesus bade us do it, His command stands for us in the place of reasoning! He who made us whole, gives us sufficient excuse for obedience in that very fact.

Oh, but it is contrary to what the fathers teach and to what the Church teaches. We care not the snap of our finger for all the fathers and all the churches under Heaven if they go contrary to what our Lord teachesfor they did not make us whole and we are not under obligation to them as we are to Him! The authority of Jesus is supreme because it is from His lips that we received the Word which healed the sickness of our sin. This satisfies our conscience, now, and it will do so amid the solemnities of death! How can we make a mistake if we follow the Words of Jesus in all things? My Brethren, we can plead His precepts as our guarantee at the Last Great Day before the Judge of the quick and the dead! What better plea can we have than this, You did make us whole and You did bid us do this?

Such a justification of our conduct will make our death pillow soft and our resurrection bright with joy! Instead of admitting that this is not an ample justification, let us go further, still, in the strength of it! If the world has accounted us vile for obeying our Lord, let us be still viler! And, inasmuch as He that made us whole said, Go you into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature, let us endeavor to spread abroad everywhere the savor of His name, consecrating ourselves body, soul and spirit to the extension of His Kingdom! He who made us whole will yet make the world whole by His own wondrous power! Have we not abundantly shown that our Lords command is a solid justification of our conduct?

II. And now, secondly, the cure brought forth AN OBLIGATIONHe that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up your bed, and walk. The argument takes this formfirst, if He made me whole, He is Divine, or He could not do this miracle. Or, to say the least, He must be divinely authorizedand if He is Divine, or divinely authorized, I am bound to obey the orders which He issues. Is not that a plain argument which even the poor, simple mind of the paralytic man was able to grasp and wield?

Let us try and feel the force of that argument ourselves. Jesus who has saved us is our Godshall we not obey Him? Since He is clothed with Divine power and majesty, shall we not scrupulously endeavor to know His will and zealously endeavor to carry it out in every point as His Spirit shall enable us? In addition to the Divine Character which the miracle proved and displayed, there was the goodness which shone in the deed of power and touched the poor mans heart. His argument wasI must do what my great Deliverer bids me. How can you think otherwise? Did He not make me whole? Would you have me, whom He has thus graciously restored, refuse to fulfill His desire? Must I not take up my bed the moment He gives me strength to do it?

How can I do otherwise? Is this to be the recompense I pay to my good Physicianto refuse to do what He asks of me? Do you not see that I am under an obligation which it would be shameful to deny? He restored these limbs and I am bound to do with them what He orders me do with them. He says, walk, and since these once withered feet have been restored, shall I not walk? He bids me roll up my bed and since I could not have used my hands till just now, His Word gave them lifeshall I not use them to roll up my bed at His bidding? These poor shoulders of mine were bent with weakness, but He has made me stand upright! And since He now bids me carry my bed, shall I not throw the rug on my shoulders and bear the easy load which He lays upon me?

There was no answering such reasoning. Whatever might have been the claim of Jesus upon others, He clearly had an indisputable right to the loyal obedience of one whom He had made perfectly whole! Follow me briefly in this, Brothers and Sisters. If you have been saved by the Grace of God, your salvation has put you under obligation to do what Jesus bids you. Are you redeemed? Then you are not your ownyou are bought with a price! Have you been, in consequence of what the Lord has done for you, rescued from Satanic slavery and adopted into the Divine family? Then it clearly follows that because you are sons and daughters, you should be obedient to the Law of the householdfor is not this a first element of sonshipthat you should reverence the great Father of the family?

The Lord has been pleased to put away your sin. You are forgivenbut does not pardon demand amendment? Shall we go back to the old sins from which we have been cleansed? Shall we live in the iniquities from which we have been washed by the blood of our Lord Jesus? That were horrible to think of! It would be nothing less than devilish for a man to say, I have been forgiven and, therefore, I will sin again. There is no remission where there is no repentance! The guilt of sin remains on that man in whom the love of sin still remains. Let us practically feel the force of this and follow after purity and righteousness!

Brothers and Sisters upon whom Christ has worked His great work, you have experienced the love of God and, therefore, if God has so loved you, you are bound to love Him in return! If God has so loved you, you must also love your brother. Do not love of God and love of man spring up as a sure consequence of the love of God shed abroad in the heart? Does not everyone see the necessity which calls for the one love to follow the other? And love is the mother of obediencethus everything connected with our Lord lays us under obligation to obey Him! There is not a single blessing of the Covenant but what necessarily entails its corresponding dutyand here I scarcely like to say dutyfor these blessings of the Covenant make duty to be our privilege and holiness to be our delight!

Therefore, redeemed from sin, we would live no longer in sin! Therefore, made heirs of Heaven, we endeavor to lead the heavenly life so that even while we are below, our conversation may be in Heaven from where we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. Brethren, He that made you whole has commanded this and that to be done by you! I counsel you to keep the Kings Commandments. As Mary said to the waiters at the wedding at Cana, so I say to youWhatever He says unto you, do it. Does

He bid you pray, then pray without ceasing! Does He bid you watch as well as pray? Then guard every act, thought and word!

Does He bid you love your Brethren? Then love them with a pure heart! Does He bid you serve them and humble yourself for His sake? Then do so and become the servant of all! Has He said, Be you holy, for I am holy? Then aim at this by His Holy Spirit! Has He said, Be you perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect? Then strive after perfection, for He that made you whole has a right to direct your ways and it will be both your safety and your happiness to submit yourselves to His commands!

III. Enough, however, upon that. We now call your attention, in the third place, to the text under the sense of CONSTRAINTHe that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up your bed and walk. He made him whole by saying, Rise, take up your bed. The carrying of the bed was part and parcel of the cure. The first part of the healing word was rise, but the second was, take up your bed. Now, it was not an ordinary word which Jesus spoke to that mana mere word of advice, warning, or commandit was a word full of power like that which created light out of darkness. When the Lord said to the poor man, Rise, he rose.

A thrill went through himthose stagnant blood vessels felt the lifeblood stir and flowthose dormant nerves were awakened to sensations of health! Those withered sinews and muscles braced themselves for energetic action, for Omnipotence had visited the impotent man and restored him. Oh it must have been a wondrous joy to the long enervated, nerveless, powerless frame, to be capable of healthy motionto be equal to bearing a happy burden! The joyful man rolled up his bed, threw it on his back and marched abroad with the best of them! The bed-carrying was part of the cure and proof of the cure.

The paralytic had not been called upon to deliberate as to whether he should rise or not, but Jesus said, Rise, and he stood upright! The same word said, Take up your bed. The bed was up at once and, according, to the last word, walk, the man walked with delight! It was all done by the power of the one thrilling sentence which tarried not to be questioned, but accomplished the end for which the Lord had sent it. Not unwillingly did the restored man carry his bed, yet he did it of constraint, for the same power which made him whole made him obedient. Before the Divine energy had touched him, he seemed scarcely to have any will at all. The Lord had to hunt to find a will in him, saying, Do you want to be made whole?

But now he cheerfully wills obedience to his Benefactor and in the force of the command, he carried out the Lords behest. I say that his taking up his bed and walking was done by Christs enabling and done by Christs constrainingand I pray that you may know by experience what this means. What I want you to feel is thisI cannot help obeying Christ, for by His Holy Spirit He has spoken me into a life which will never die and never be vanquished! He has spoken a Word in me which has a continuous force over me and thrills me through and through constantly. I can no more help seeking to obey Christ than this man could help carrying his bed when the Lord, by a Word of power, had bid him do so.

Brothers and Sisters, look at this and be instructed and warned. Do you feel reluctant, this morning, to enter upon your Lords service because of conscious weakness? Has the devil tempted you to draw back from obedience because of your unfitness? Do you hesitate? Do you tremble? Surely you need to draw near to the Lord, again, and hear His voice anew! Take your Bibles and let Him speak to you, again, out of the Word and may the same thrill which awoke you out of your death-sleep wake you out of your present lethargy! There is need that the Living Word of God should come home to your inmost soul with that same miraculous power which dwelt in it at first. Lord, quicken me, is Davids prayer, but it suits me every day and I think most of Gods people would do well to use it daily.

Lord, speak life unto me now as You did at first. Speak power, speak spiritual force into me. The love of Christ constrains us, says the Apostle. This constraint is what we need to feel more and more. We need Divine Life perpetually to bear us forward to acts of obedience! We do not need to destroy willinghood, but we would have it quickened into entire subservience to the will of the Lord! Like Noahs ark on dry land, the will keeps its place by its own dead weightO for a flood of Grace to move, to lift, to bear it upto carry it away by a mighty current! We would be borne before the love of Christ as a tiny piece of wood is drifted by the Gulf stream, or as one of the specks which dance in the sunbeam would be carried by a rushing wind.

As the impulse which began with Jesus found the poor man passive because utterly unable to be otherwise and then impelled him on to active movements as with a rush of power, so may it always be with us throughout life. May we forever yield to the Divine impulse! To be passive in the Lords hands is a good desire, but to be what I would call actively passive, to be cheerfully submissive, willing to give up our willthis is a higher spiritual mood! We must live and yet not we, but Christ in us! We must act and yet we must say, He that made me whole bade me do this holy deed and I do it because His power moves me to do it! If I have done well, I lay the honor at His feet. If I hope to do well in the future, it is because I hope for strength from Him to do well, believing that He will work in me by that same power which converted me at the first! Beloved, endeavor to abide under this influence. May the Holy Spirit bring you there!

My last word is a practical lesson. The Church of God on earth at this present time anxiously desires to spread her influence over the world. For Christs sake we wish to have the Truths of God we preach acknowledged and the precepts which we deliver obeyed. But mark, no Church will ever have power over the masses of this or any other land except in proportion as she does them good. The day has long since passed in which any Church may hope to prevail on the plea of history. Look at what we were, is a vain appealmen only care for what we are.

The sect which glorifies itself with the faded laurels of past centuries and is content to be inactive today is very near to its inglorious end. In the race of usefulness, men nowadays care less about the pedigree of the horse and more about the rate at which it can run. The history of a congregation or a sect is of small account compared with the practical good which it is doing. Now, if any Church under Heaven can show that it is making men honest, temperate, pure, moral, holythat it is seeking out the ignorant and instructing them, that it is seeking out the fallen and reclaiming them, that, in fact, it is turning moral wastes into gardens and

taking the weeds and briars of the wilderness and transforming them into precious fruit-bearing treesthen the world will be ready to hear its claims and consider them.

If a Church cannot prove its usefulness, the source of its moral strength will have gone and, indeed, something worse than this will have happened, for its spiritual strength will have gone, too! A barren church is manifestly without the fruitful Spirit of God. Brothers and Sisters, you may, if you will, dignify your minister by the name of bishop. You may give to your deacons and elders grand official titles. You may call your place of worship a cathedral. You may worship, if you will, with all the grandeur of pompous ceremonies and the adornments of music and incense and the likebut you shall have only the semblance of power over human minds unless you have something more than these!

If you have a Church, no matter by what name it is called, that is devout, that is holy, that is living unto God, that does good in its neighborhood, that, by the lives of its members, spreads holiness and righteousnessin a word, if you have a Church that is really making the world whole in the name of Jesusyou shall, in the long run, find that even the most carnal and thoughtless will say, The Church which is doing this good is worthy of respect. Therefore let us hear what it has to say. Living usefulness will not screen us from persecution, but it will save us from contempt! A holy Church goes with authority to the world in the name of Jesus Christ, its Lord, and this force, the Holy Spirit uses to bring human hearts into subjection to the Truth of God!

Oh, that the Church of God would believe in Jesus power to heal sick souls! Remember that this man who was sick for 38 years, had been ill longer than Christ had lived on earth! He had been afflicted seven years before Christ was born! And even so this poor world has been long afflicted. Years before the Pentecost, or the birth of the present visible Church, the poor sinful world lay at the pool and could not move. We must not be hopeless about it, for the Lord will yet cast sin out of it. Let us go, in Jesus Christs name, and proclaim the everlasting Gospel and say, Rise, take up your bed and walk, and it shall be done and God shall be glorified and we shall be blessed!

**PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMONJohn 5:1-23.** HYMNS FROM OUR OWN HYMN BOOK909, 331, 787.

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VERILY, VERILY   
NO. 1642

**DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, JANUARY 29, 1882, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that hears My Word, and believes on Him that sent Me, has everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation but is passed from death unto life. John 5:24.**

**Verily, Verily, I say unto you, he that believes   
on Me has everlasting life.   
John 6:47.**

THE words Verily, verily, as they were solemnly used by our Divine Lord, indicate an utterance of special importance. If Jesus says, Verily, verily, there is something coming to which we should attend with all our hearts! The subject which He thus introduces is our possession of eternal life and our being delivered from condemnation by faith in Himself. Can any theme be more important? Many questions may be asked, but they can all afford to wait till we get the answer to that first enquiry, What must I do to be saved? What shall it profit a man if he gains the whole world of knowledge and knows not the way of life? If he wins a world in this life, what will that matter to him if he misses life everlasting?

It is very considerate on our Lords part to call us with such great solemnity to think about our souls and eternal life. Let us attend to His appeal. Come here, dear Hearer, and bend over the words which Jesus commends to you with a double emphasis, saying, Verily, verily. Our Lord used this, Verily, verily, to denote a clear and certain Revelation. There must be an end to all doubt when Jesus says, Verily, verily. His ordinary word is true, for nothing but the Truth of God can come from Him who is The Truth. But when He uses His strongest exhortation, Verily, verily, then we must regard the statement with special reverence if we are, indeed, His loyal subjects.

When Jesus says, Verily, verily, we see two armies of truth gathered around His royal standard. His declaration is to be accepted as the indisputable, immutable, infallible Truth of God. Do you not agree to this? Carefully notice where this certainty liesit rests solely upon the Word of JesusI say unto you. In the matter of our salvation, carnal reason never arrives at certainty. Mere argument can never bring a troubled heart to a sure anchorage. The certainty which Christ sets before us rests upon His own solemn assertion. Instead of proof, the Incarnate Son of God gives us Verily, verily, I say unto you. If you are His disciples, and would enjoy the benefits of His salvation, you must accept your Lords statement without question. Doubts and reason must lie down at His feet and it must be enough that Jesus says it.

The ipse dixit of a mere man is not enough, but those of us who adore the Lord Jesus as the Son of God desire no better assurance than the Word of His lips! Here is our ultimate ground of faith, our main argument with mankind, our final answer to Satan and the eternal quietus of every misgivingJesus says it! We shall never arrive at certainty as to everlasting life except by a conviction that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is Infallible in everything that He says. I had rather have one word from Jesus than volumes of human reason, however conclusive they may appear! Our judgment has often deceived useven our senses play us false and our emotions are no more to be depended on than the winds and wavesbut here is a rocky foundation, firm as the pillars of Heaven! Verily, verily, I say unto you.

It is clear that the teaching of this present verse must be accepted by all Christians. They must either believe it or reject their Lord, for He does, as it were, stake His own Character for Truth upon this utterance by prefacing it with, I say unto you. Jesus does not leave the way of life a moot point, but decides it with all authority, states it in plain terms and sets it forth, formally, in a declaration for which He will be forever responsible. If you reject this teaching, you must reject the Teacher, Himself! Nothing of authority remains to Jesus if you take liberty to question this point, for He does not put it as a matter of report, or inference, but as a Truth of God to be accepted on His own authorityVerily, verily, I say unto you.

I have heard some who call themselves Christians talk about the Doctrine of Salvation through faith in Christ as if it were a mere theory of what they are pleased to call the Evangelical Schoolbut is it so? Is it not our Lords own teaching? Our opponents have full liberty to canvass the peculiar tenets of a partyand the more they do so the betterbut this teaching is not ours! It is the teaching of Him whom these critics call Master and Lord! Is this their reverence for the Son of God? Do they challenge Him to His face and question that which He asserts with a double verily and certifies by the dignity of His Person and the veracity of His Character?

I am equally at issue with those who admit the Doctrine of Justification by Faith and then add that it is to be guardedly stated and cautiously presented! Does Jesus teach dangerous doctrine? This Truth of God is constantly assailed by the carnally wise, but is that a reason for mistrusting it when Jesus puts it forward in such a form? Understand clearly that if you reject the doctrine of life through believing, you reject the authority of Jesus! It is useless to talk about being a Christian if you are not prepared to believe what Jesus Christ asserts, for one of the first requisites for a true disciple is faith in his Master!

What kind of follower can he be who takes liberty to question when his Master stands erect in all the dignity of His glorious perfection and cries, Verily, verily, I say unto you? Are any of you such hypocrites as to call yourselves Christians and give Christ the lie? Dare you treat Him as if He were one of yourselves, to be disputed with and criticized at pleasure? This is not reverence, but rejection! I might justly call it blasphemy! Note well the verse which precedes the textThat all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He that honors not the Son honors not the Father which has sent Him.

On the heels of that claim comes this assertion of everlasting life through hearing His Word and believing on Him that sent Himas much as to say, Believe what I am now about to say, even as if the Father spoke, for implicit faith is due to Me. If you would honor Me, believe in Me. But if you refuse what I say, you do Me the greatest dishonor. Jesus regards this point as being so vital that He pledges His own Character for veracity as a guarantee for the doctrine! He does as good as say, If you would honor Me, believe this Truth of God which I now declare upon My own authority.

I feel, this morning, great restfulness of heart as to what I have to say. I shall not speak at haphazard upon a matter of opinion, speculation, or probabilitynor shall I beg your consent and agreement as a matter of favor! I stand fair and square before you and I demand the assent of all who profess and call themselves Christians upon a point which Jesus has set at rest forever by the solemn declaration, Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believes in Me has everlasting life. Such as are prepared to reject the authority of the Lord Jesus may do so. To them I have no message this morning. But to all such as acknowledge His Messiahship and Deity, I present the doctrine of the text as worthy of all acceptation.

May the Holy Spirit help me to set it out with clearness and enable you to receive it into your inmost souls. Our Savior is speaking of a great blessing and our first head is the person to whom this blessing comes He that hears My Word and believes on Him that sent Me has everlasting life. We shall speak, secondly, upon the blessing itself He has everlasting life and shall not come into condemnation but is passed from death unto life. And thirdly, and this will be the point I shall lay most stress uponthe singular assurance with which it is stated, the wonderful firmness and distinctness with which it is asserted by the Masterand backed up with, Verily, verily, I say unto you.

I. First, then, THE PERSON TO WHOM THIS BLESSING COMES. Read the passage and you notice, first, that the privileged individual is a hearer who is also a Believer. He that hears My Word, and believes on Him that sent Me, has everlasting life. It does not appear, from our text, that everlasting life is communicated by drops of water, or in any other ceremonial mannerthe command is, Hear, and your soul shall live. Men are not expected to believe that which they have never heard. They are not to take the articles of the church rolled up, as it were, into a pill, silver-coated, and to swallow them, be they what they may, without instruction.

We are to act towards saving Truth as we do in reference to other informationwe are to hear it with attention and so receive it. Those who find everlasting life, first hear of Jesus, His mission, His Person, His work, His sufferings, His offices, His power and the blessings He has come to communicate. Listening to all this, they are grateful for being permitted to hear things which kings and prophets desired to hear but heard not! Do not expect that you can be saved if you shut your ears to the Gospel! Do not reckon that the same blessing will come to you if you carelessly walk the streets on the Sabbath as might come to you if you were diligent in listening to the Word of the Redeemer! Hear what the Lord says and let your whole heart yield itself to the Truths of God!

But these people, while they are hearers to begin with, do not stop therethey become Believers. They believe that Jesus is the appointed Savior and they accept Him as such for themselves. They believe that His blood cleanses men from sin and, therefore, they trust in His blood to cleanse them and are cleansed by it. Since His righteousness justifies, they are glad to accept that righteousness and to be justified. Theirs is not a dreamy, inactive hearingwhen they know the Truth, they practice what they know! They not only know that the brazen serpent will heal, but they look to it and are healed. I am talking to some of the best hearers in the world, and yet I fear that many of you come short because you are only hearers and not doers of that Word of God which says, Believe and live.

Note again, these favored persons are Believers who remain hearers in the fullest sense. These persons believe in God who has sent the Lord Jesus into the world and, consequently, they believe that what Jesus says must be true. And then they hear His voice with a discerning, spiritual ear. Our Lord uses the word, hear, in a special sense when He says, My sheep hear My voice. They hear their Shepherd, but they know not the voice of strangers. Blessed are the people that know the joyful sound. They shall walk, O Lord, in the light of Your Countenance. Believers are taught of the Lord to perceive the difference between Truth and error, between the teachings of mere legalists and the voice of the Gospel of Grace! Of others it is said, their ears are dull of hearing, but upon these, a miracle of Grace has been worked so that they hear the voice of the Son of God!

Dear Friend, is this your case? Is the name of Jesus sweet to you? Is a promise pronounced by His voice most comforting to your soul? Then be of good cheer, for you have everlasting life and come not under condemnation! You are resting upon the faithful promise of the Father, brought to you by the Word of His own Son! And because of this, you are quickened and justified! Jesus declares it is so. Do not doubt Him, lest you do despite to that blessed, Verily, verily, with which He prefaces the Word of God.

The quickened ones are described in our second text as Believers in the Lord Jesus. He that believes in Me has everlasting life. They have a personal faith in a personal Savior. They believe that God must punish sin; that God has punished sin in the Person of Jesus and that He has, therefore, set forth His Son, Jesus Christ, to be a Propitiation for sin, that whoever believes in Him might not perish, but have everlasting life. This they believe and on this they lean the full weight of their souls! Jesus says, Come unto Me, all you that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. And they come to Him for rest and receive rest. This is the main point in the character of those who have everlasting lifethey are not here said to do anything, or achieve anythingbut they believe in Jesus, the Christ!

The saved are also described as believers in Jesus because of the witness of the Father. He that hears My Word, and believes on Him that sent Me. Why do I believe that Jesus Christ is my Savior? Because the Father has sent Him and borne witness to Him. I am sure that He can save me, for He is divinely commissioned, divinely furnished and the pleasure of the Lord must prosper in His hands. I believe today that He who came to the waters of Jordan to be baptized was the Son of God, for the Father said, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

I believe that He who went up to the mountain and was transfigured in the presence of His three disciples was the Son of God, for once again, the Father said in an audible voice, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear you Him. I believe that Jesus Christ can save me, for when He prayed, a voice was heard from Heaven bearing witness that He was heard of the Father. The people that stood by knew not the meaning, but said that it thunderedyet there were some that heard that voice and knew it to be the witness of the Lord! Those who have everlasting life believe in Jesus as the Christ of God because the Father has given witness to Him in many waysby an audible voice, by miracles, by the gift of the Holy Spirit and by constantly fulfilling, in the ministry of Christs Word, the promises which He made unto us in connection therewith. This faith in God our Father and in our Lord Jesus Christ saves the soul!

But notice that our Lord has spoken these words of every such BelieverHe that hears My Word, and believes on Him that sent Me, has everlasting life. Whatever else he may have or may not have, this is the vital point. But, Lord, he is full of fault and imperfection. There is no exception made on that grounds, for, by Him all that believe are justified from all things. But the believing man makes many mistakes in points of theology. Nothing is said in the text as to errors upon other points, but the text positively says, Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that hears My Word, and believes on Him that sent Me, has everlasting life. If there is genuine faith in Jesus, there will be a sincere desire to understand all His teachings and a readiness to believe them. But as for ignorance and mistakes, they are covered with all our other sins by the great Atonement which is received by faith!

But, Lord, he is, himself, afraid that he has not attained to everlasting life. He trembles lest he should be found lacking when put into the balances. No exception is made on account of timidity and diffidence! If any man believes in Christ Jesus, the statement is made absolutely of him and of everyone like he, that he has everlasting life. Old or young, rich or poor, learned or illiterate, talented or obscure, there is no difference! All Believers have everlasting life! But, mark you, there is no statement made as to the salvation of any other sort of person! Nothing is said about the baptized person who is not a Believer.

He has been made a member of Christ, an heir of God and an inheritor of the kingdom of Heaven in Baptism, according to the Prayer Bookbut is it true? Our text says nothing about the baptized, confirmed and sacramental unbeliever having everlasting life! There is not a word that says it from Genesis to Revelation! Other books may say what they will, but this Book of God makes no account of any man who is devoid of faith. Did you tell me that such a one has been a professor of religion for many years and his outward life has been most commendable? So far, so good! But that is not all. Indeed, it is beside the mark as to the teaching now before us, for the text says absolutely nothing about outward morality and correctness of conduct!

These things are sure to be found where faith is found, but alone and by themselves, they answer not to the qualification laid down by our Lord. If a man believe not on Christ there is no cheering word for him, be he what he may. No one is left without eternal life that believes in Jesus and no unbeliever is blessed with that life. What says the Scriptures? He that believes on the Son has everlasting life: and he that believes not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abides on him. We now know the persons to whom the blessings of salvation have come. I hope that many of us are numbered with them.

II. Very briefly let us notice THE BLESSINGS WHICH BELONG TO BELIEVING. First, our Lord asserts that the Believer has everlasting life. He was condemned to die and reckoned as a dead man, but he is now acquitted and his life is granted him. He was spiritually dead, but the fact that he believes in Jesus is sufficient evidence that he has received spiritual life. John tells us in his Epistle, These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that you may know that you have eternal life.

This spiritual life is not a thing of time onlyit is expressly called everlasting. Those who in these days make out that everlasting does not mean unending, will, I dare say, squeeze the life-blood out of our text. But the most of us take the word to mean what it says and to signify life which will never end. If I have received life in Jesus Christ, I have received a life which will endure as long as the Everlasting Covenant, as long as everlasting love, as long as the Everlasting God! According to a certain theology, a man may have life in Christ one day and lose it the nexthow, then, is it everlasting life? If a man has lost his life, that life could not have been everlastingthat is clear. That which comes to an end could not have been everlasting.

But we teach with the authority of Christ that the man that believes on Christ has, at this moment, within him a life that can never expire! The man may die after the flesh, but he can never die after the Spirit. There is for him no second death possible, unless the Bible expression is a mere trifling with language. The Believer has within him a life which is derived from Christ Himself I in themand this life depends upon the life of Christ, even as He has put it, Because I live, you shall live also. The Believer has this everlasting life now, for it is not said, shall have, but, has everlasting life. What a gift this is! To be born in the image of God! To be a partaker of His Nature! To be placed beyond all reach of the second death! Glory be to God for this!

Notice, next, that the Believer is in a condition of non-condemnation. He shall not come into condemnation. The translation would be more accurate if it were put, and comes not into judgmentthat is to say, as soon as a man has believed in Christ he receives the benefit of Christs Substitution and is no longer under judgment, much less condemnation. In Christ, the Believer has been judged, condemned and punished and is, therefore, clear of the Law and all its penalties. If we have, by our Surety, answered all the demands of Justice, what has the Law to do with us? How can it bring us into judgment? How can it cause us to know condemnation? But will not the righteous be present in the judgment of the Last Day? Undoubtedly we shall all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christbut the judgment of that day will not be a judgment to us in the dreadful sense of the term.

When a man is perfectly clear and called into court on purpose to be publicly acquitted, it is no judgment to him! The Lord shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that He may judge His people. And this is our joy, that our God shall come and shall not keep silent. It will be no penalty, but a great delight, to stand before the great King and hear Him say, Come, you blessed of My Father, enter the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

Our text has another sentence of privilegehe has passed from death unto life. Notice where judgment is. Look, here is death! Yonder is life and resurrection! Judgment, as it were, stands between the two. We have passed from death to life and so we have passed by the judgment! There is a doctrinal error which cannot be too much condemned, that the resurrection is already pastbut there is a blessed spiritual Truth of God that cannot be too firmly graspedthat Believers are already the children of the resurrection by having received quickening as to their spirits. In regeneration lies the essence and major portion of resurrection! We have already passed from the kingdom of Death into the kingdom of Life and so have passed by the judgment, since Jesus was judged for us, condemned for us and made to die in our place.

Abraham was called a Hebrew, or passer-over, and we, too, are Hebrews, having passed from one kingdom to another, being delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of Gods dear Son! Christ, our Passover, is sacrificed for us and through Him we live. If Christ has suffered in our place, we cannot suffer for sin! Justice demands that we go free. What a miracle of mercy is this, that everyone that has believed in Jesus has left death behind him, never to return to it! He has entered the realm of life, never to be banished from it! And he has, on the road, passed under the rod of judgment and the sword of condemnation so that neither of these can further afflict him in time or in eternity!

Did I hear someone object, You make too much of so small a matter as believing. You make out that simply by trusting in Jesus Christ there is a difference made between one man and another of a most extraordinary kindand that it is made at once? Yes, I do say that! Exactly that and, as far as I am concerned, I do not care how much you quarrel with it, I shall not tone down the statementHe that believes and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believes not shall be damned. I hear you mutter, I think you are very uncharitable. Say so if you please. I shall prove my charitableness by bearing it.

But look! Here is a person standing right in the middle of a railway track and I say to him, My dear Fellow, if you do not come off that track, you will be smashed to atoms within the next five minutes, for an express train is thundering along the line. He laughs and answers, Do you mean to say that my shifting the position of my body a couple of feet will make all that difference? Do you tell me that if I move, I shall be safe, and that if I stand here I shall be cut to pieces? Yes, I do say it and say it with tears, begging you to believe me and get off the track. Then, he says, you are very uncharitable. Yes, I reply, and you are very insane! What more can I say? It is never uncharitable to speak the truth for the good of the person concerned. A small matter may suffice to shape the destiny of an immortal soul!

In those evil times, when there were slaves across the Atlantic, a lady went down to one of our ships, accompanied by her Negro servant. The lady remarked to the captain that it she were to go to England and take this black woman with her, she would become free as soon as she landed. The captain replied, Madam, she is free already. The moment she came on board a British vessel she was free. When the Negro woman knew this, do you think she went on shore with her mistress? By no means! She chose to keep her liberty. But what made her rise from a slave to a free woman? Why, only a few inches of separation from the shore!

I do not know how far the ship was from landthe distance may have been very littlestill it made all the difference in the world! She was free on board and a slave on land. How slight the change of place, but how great the difference involved. Marvel not that faith involves such great things! I heard a grumbler say, We do not need this doctrine. What we need is morality and honesty. Just so. You remind me of a poor little child. His father planted bulbs to come up in the spring and make the garden gay with golden flowers. But the boy said, We dont need bulbs; we need crocus cups and daffodils. The child forgot that flowers never grow without roots. You, too, good Sir, forget that holy lives cannot grow without a causeand faith is the root of virtue!

Flowers stuck into the ground without roots are babes follies. And good works without faith are childish vanities. We preach faith in order that good works may followand they do followand are the fruits of that eternal life which men receive by faith. Are you not willing to get the flowers through the roots? Go, silly children, and grow wiser!

III. I close with my last head, which is THE ASSURANCE WITH WHICH THIS DOCTRINE IS STATED in my text. It was that which attracted me to it. First, the doctrine of this text is certified to us by the terms in which our Lord utters it. I have already told you this, but I mean to go over it again. Our Lord Jesus, whose name is Faithful and True, here pledges His honor as God, His veracity as Man, upon the certainty of this doctrine. He says, Verily, verily. These two words sound to me like great guns leveled against unbelief! Like the two brazen pillars called Joachim and Boaz, these two verities stand in the porch of Mercys temple and show us where there is establishment and strength in the Word of the Son of Man!

Our Lord then adds, I say unto you. Then it must be so, or else the Lord speaks in errorand none think that for a moment, for He is Wisdom itself! Is He not the only wise God, our Savior? Do you dream that these words may mean less then they say? That were to charge the Lord with insincerity, mocking poor souls with great words and small meanings! No, you would count it profane to imagine such a thing! He that believes in Me has everlasting life must, then, mean what it says. Christ knows what is everlasting life and who has it, for there is no eye like His that can discern life, wherever it may be, and discriminate between the false and the true. Others might be mistaken and deceived, but Christ knows what is the true life, being, Himself, the living and true God.

Jesus also knows whether we shall be judged and condemned or not, for He is, Himself, the Judge. The Father has committed all judgment unto the Son and if your Judge, Himself, says that we shall never come into condemnation, we can have no cause for fear. Who is he that condemns? Christ that died, who, sitting at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us? Impossible! Our Lord Jesus also knows the futureit is before Him as if it were present. He foresees everything that can possibly happen and so if He testifies of yon Believer, he shall never come into condemnation, then depend upon it, the fact is sure! If a Prophet speaks, you believe himshall you not much more believe the Son of God? The Believer has everlasting lifeit is trueit is most surely true!

The question may be raised, Why does our Lord like to put it so very, very positively? Did I hear any of you grumbling in your hearts, just now, at my going over the same ground? I did it on purpose because it is with such great difficulty that you can get men to accept this humbling Truth of God. Human nature revolts against it. As for the unconverted, even when they begin to feel their need of a Savior they cannot think it true that by believing in Jesus Christ they will pass from death to life! Salvation must be by faith that it may be of Graceand it must be of Grace or not at all! But proud souls will not have it so. A man must be driven to self-despair before he will agree to be saved by faith in Christ.

You who deal much with souls know how they try to escape their own mercy and avoid the loving kindness of the Lord. Even you that have believed and are saved are not half as sure as you ought to be. Are there not times with you when you say, I do not feel as I wish and, therefore, I am not saved? What argument is there in that? Can your

feelings make Christ a liar? Remember, the evidence of yours being saved as a Believer lies wholly in that, I say unto you. Perhaps you are not sure that you have everlasting life and yet you are sure that you are a Believer in Jesus. How is this? This is questioning Christs veracity! His strongest affirmation is, Verily, verily. Is He not to be believed on this? You, as His dear disciple, lover and friend, would be very indignant if anyone cast a suspicion upon His truthfulnesswhy will you do it yourself? Accept the truth heartily! Never doubt it, but let it stand as a fact most sure and steadfast that your faith has saved you!

It is, then, if you are a Believer, absolutely certain that you shall never be condemned, but have passed from death unto lifethe Lord puts it so positively that we may be right positive about it. Why are you not, as a Believer, absolutely certain of yours possession of eternal life? The Master, who knew our unbelief, has put the matter so straight and plain that nobody can get over it without rejecting His Word. It is certain that he that believes in Him has everlasting lifecertain, then, that we are saved if we are Believers. We must not be afraid to believe this with great confidence and to rejoice because of it! Someone says, Ah, but it might be presumption. Presumption to believe that Jesus speaks the Truth? I will tell you what is presumptionto question anything that our Lord has said! Is He your Master and Lord? If He is not, say so! But if He is, will you venture to sit upon the throne and judge the sayings of yours own Lord and say, This may be true and that may be false?

Another objector cries, But I think a person may be too certain. A person may be a great deal too certain if the argument is based upon inference. But if a statement is based upon the personal testimony of the Lord Jesus, we cannot be too certain of it! Circumstantial evidence is often very powerful and, to some minds, irresistible. Yet the inference drawn from it may be false. But your witness of a person who cannot err is worth all the circumstantial evidence in the world! Jesus Christ cannot be suspected of falsehood or error either in His Divine Character or in His perfect Human Character and, therefore, the basis of our confidence cannot be shaken. Our rest must be found entirely in that grand Word of God, I say unto you. The weight of yours doubt, if you have any, must fall upon His personal Character and there, also, the stress of yours faith must be fixed.

If Jesus speak the Truth of God, then the Believer has everlasting life. If the Believer questions whether he has life or not, he questions the veracity of Christ. We are bound by our discipleship to be at rest. Happiness becomes a duty and peace a matter of obligation. Happy are the men who are under bonds to be joyful! We are partakers of eternal life! We come not into condemnation! What delight, what peace flows through our spirits if it is, indeed so, that we have commenced the same life which is to be developed in eternal glory! Then what gratitude ought to fill us and how that gratitude should urge us to holiness and to perfect obedience to Him who has given us this inestimable blessing!

Come, let us not play with these things, but act as it behooves us to act, seeing that these things are, indeed, so. If they were mere myths or dreams, we might treat them carelessly. But accepting them as true, let us feel the force of their truth and let us rejoice this day in Him who has called us with so high a calling! One thing I want you to notice, and that is that our Lord does not desire us to keep this doctrine in the background. This doctrine that, whoever believes in Him has everlasting life, is not only for our own private comfortit is to be proclaimed upon our housetops!

Those Jews in Christs day were a company of cross-grained faultfinders who picked holes in Him about everything and nothing. Very harpies were theyfull of spite at His excellence. They had just been finding fault with His healing a man on the Sabbath and He had answered them out straight without reserve. And when He had their ear, He told them a Truth of God which would cut them to the quick. It was not a wanton casting of pearls before swine and yet they were not worthy to hear so Divine a Truth!

Jesus tells it to them that we may tell it to all. Never let us conceal what Jesus thus unveiled. There stands the precious Master and He says, Verily, verily, I say unto you, you quarrelsome Jews whose groveling minds cannot comprehend Me, that he that believes in Me has everlasting life. Your hands even now are near the ground seeking for stones to hurl at Me, but I say it to you as a thing I mean you to know, even if you gnash your teeth over it, that he that believes in Me has everlasting life. Oh, my Brothers and Sisters, let that be our answer to the present critical age! Let us turn the bulls-eye of our lantern full in its face! Let us cry again and again, Believe in Jesus and live!

They will reply to you with philosophical deduction and learned quibbleand they will dig all sorts of pits for you, hoping to entrap you. Never mind their pits, or their quibbles, or their deductions! Just go on telling out the Truth of God that, whoever believes in Jesus has everlasting life. But why tell it to these Jews that were so angry with Him? Perhaps some of them would be converted by it! Tell it to all men with this view, for the Gospel often begets faith in violent opposers. But if they were not converted, they would be left without excuse and this is something. Whatever may come of it, this Truth of God is meant to be written across the brow of Heaven! It is to be published throughout all nations, that all may know it!

One of our ministers, years ago, traveling by coach, asked an erroneous preacher who was on the same coach this questionHow is a sinner justified in the sight of God? This gentleman replied, Ah, I know you! If I were to let you know my views, you would put them in your sermon and spread them all over England. Ah, cried our friend, you are ashamed of yours notions, are you? Well, I will give you the answer and I will be very glad if you will put it in all your lectures and publish it all the world overman is justified in the sight of God by faith in the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ. Our doctrine is not special truth for the elite and initiated to be dubiously taught in a back room among a handful of students! It is the everlasting Gospel and we wish to have it proclaimed in markets and streetsbefore learned Brahmins and ignorant Hottentots! We would have it told out in the back slums of London and preached before lords and ladies and royalty itself! It does not matter wheresalvation by faith is never out of place. This is a doctrine never to be covered up, nor veiled, nor qualified. He that believes in Him has everlasting life! Out with it and hesitate not!

It is a pretty thing which is told of the father of Mr. Newman Hall and the author of, The Sinners Friend, that his common seal that he always delighted to use was a crown with an anchor fixed into it, with just these words, Other refuge have I none. Well, if you do not use that seal; if you do not write the words over the door of yours house, yet take care that you bear their meaning in your hearts! Have my text written in your hearts by the Spirit of God so that you are sure and certain of it beyond all doubt! And also do so glory over it that you never hesitate on any occasion to confess that you are saved by faith in Christ Jesus!

Dear Hearers, do you really know this Truth of God in your own souls? Have you believed in Jesus, or have you not? Are any of you trying to establish a righteousness of yours own? Are you laboring as in the very fire to get peace where you will never find it? Oh, come away from your ceremonies and your sacraments! Come away from your feelings! Come away, even, from your prayers and your almsgiving! Come away from everything upon which you rely and believe in Jesus, the appointed Savior! Come away, even, from your own faith, for you must not rely upon it! Come and trust only in Jesus, who, being very God of very God, made Himself of no reputation and took upon Himself the form of a Servant and in that Servant form bled, even, to the death in the sinners place, that whoever will trust Him may be justified in the sight of God!

Rest there, one and all of you. Oh may God help you at this very moment to do so and then we will meet in Heaven, all of us! If there is no exception to the believing, there shall be no exception in the salvation, for, He that believes in Him has everlasting life.

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THE SOULS AWAKENING   
NO. 3389

A SERMON   
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, JANUARY 15, 1914. DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE NEWINGTON.

**Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live. John 5:25.**

I suppose that when a pearl-fisher is at the bottom of the sea and has gathered his bag full of oysters, he will sometimes see other oysters lying about which he would be very very glad to take up if he could. And I can imagine that when he has been safely taken into his boat and has put away what he gathered the first time, he will be rather anxious to descend again somewhere near that same spot to bring up those which he left behind. This, at least, is much like my own case. While reading the Chapter and preparing the sermon for this morning, I thought there were so many pearls in the text I could not say much about this particular verse so I felt inclined to return to the same spot at once to see if we might not fetch up some fresh gems!

Those of you who were present this morning will remember that we saw in the Chapter a three-fold gradation of life-giving in the Person of Christ. As here and there in the Old Testament dispensation, God had raised up some persons from the dead, so Christ, also, in the days of His flesh, had quickened whom He wouldpersons naturally dead He had restored to natural life. This is the first and, indeed, a very wonderful prerogative of live-giving for Christ to exercise to be able to raise Lazarus from the grave or to raise the young daughter of the ruler or to restore to the widow her departed son. The second form of life-giving is that described in the verse before us. He was constantly giving through His voice spiritual life to those who were spiritually dead. The third kind of life-giving we spoke of is that of the universal resurrection when all that are in the grave shall hear the voice of the Son of God and shall rise to judgment. It is to the second that we propose to direct our attention this eveninga form of life-giving which is going on nownot a matter of the past as was the raising of a few in Christs day. Not a matter of the future as the coming resurrection is, but a matter of the presentnot so apparent to the eye and to the ear as either of those mysteries, in so much that it is to a great extent invisible except to the man who is a participator in it, but just as real, just as miraculous and, in many senses, even more marvelous and Divine! Christ is constantly raising the spiritually dead and giving them life. Oh that we may be enabled by Gods Spirit to open up this Truth of God to your understanding and may it be applied to your hearts! Our first endeavor shall be to describe

I. WHAT IT IS TO BE SPIRITUALLY DEAD.   
The hour is coming, says the Savior, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God and they that hear shall live. What is it to be spiritually dead? You all know what it is for the body to be physically dead. The soul has departed and has left the body incapable, insensible, unable to preserve itself. The soul was like salt to itthat being gone, it soon becomes putrid and obnoxious. Poor dead body! A most terrible and humiliating spectacle to seeespecially to look upon it after it has been lying for a while in the grave. We have, most of us, heard what it is to be morally dead. It does not happen, I hope, to very many, but there are some who seem to be dead to all moral feeling of right and wrong between their fellow menthat is what I mean just now by morality. They have been so inured to theft, uncleanness, drunkenness and, some few even to murder, that when they have been arrested, convicted, imprisonednothing seemed to move them to repentance! Even the dread of the last terrible penalty of the law has not sufficed to- bring from some of them any kind of emotion. Those who have been most earnest to arouse their conscience have felt the most painful conviction that their moral faculties were totally defunct. They have become callous, seared as with a hot iron. It is an awful spectacle to see a man morally deadblind to reason, deaf to warning, numb to shamethus morally dead. His passions raging without control, he becomes like some wild wolf of whom all the district is afraid! Like a raging lion going about in quest of prey whom every man dreads to encounter and whom some think it only right to slay. May none of us ever fall into such infamy! Alas, it might be! Step by step, little by little, men have become outcasts from society and found their lodging in the very lairs of corruption though they were born in better circumstances and trained with brighter prospects! May God grant we may never come to it ourselves!   
But to be spiritually deadwhat is that? It is something like these two, but I think it is somewhat different. I must describe spiritual death not in its essence, for that I cannot do, but in its outward signs. Now observe a spiritually dead man. He is not dead in any other respect. He walks abroad and sees the fields full of abundant harvests. At night-fall he looks up to the skies and marks the glorious scenery of night. By day he climbs the mountains, beholds the valleys beneath in all their smiling beauty and gazes upward at the golden sun above. God is to be seen in all theseGod manifestly the Creator, Preserver and Benefactor of mankindbut this man does not perceive Him. He sees no God. Perhaps he can stand like Byron under the shadow of Mont Blanc and write himself, Atheos, without God where God is everywhere! Where God is in every breath of air, where God is in every flower beneath his feet, he sees not the footprints of the Almighty! He believes not in His secret Presence. Is the Great Eternal First Cause defunct, then, or is there no God? No, Sirs, the mans perception of God is all gone and that is all that is gone! His power to realize spiritual things has failed or else his ears would hear the voice of God in the sounding tops of the pines! His eyes would see the name of God written in golden letters in the midnight sky! His every sense would perceive God and his inmost soul drink deep of Godbut he is dead and, therefore, he cannot! Watch that man in the common events of Providence. Many mercies have come to his storethere are happy children climbing his knee, his wife is in strong health and full of happinessthey have no need to look from where the next meal shall come. The stream of mercy flows hard by their door and this has been continued many years! They have long enjoyed uninterrupted prosperity! Now, all this comes from God, and health and strength are peculiarly His gifts. The power to get and the power to enjoy our earthly goods must both proceed from Him. But this man never sees God in it at all! He sometimes talks of luck and thinks himself a fortunate fellow. Luck, chance and fortunethese seem to be his deity! Though the hand of God, wide open and full of bounty, is so spread out that one might think a bat or an owl might see it, yet this man perceives it not! The man is dead to the perception of spiritual things that the great Master-Spirit, Himself, is not perceived when He comes near loaded with favors!  
As it is in Nature and as it is with the gifts of Providence, so especially it is in anything like outward religion. The man attends a place of worshipit may be he repeats his creed, joins in a form of prayer, or possibly he drops in where simpler worship is adopted and what does he do? He sings as others sing! He bows his head as others do in prayer. He listens as others do to the preaching of the Word, but it is a heavy dull monotonous service to him! He wishes it were over. He sees nothing in it. If he had his way and custom did not bind him at all, he would never he found wasting his time in such unprofitable proceedings as he thinks them to be! He is like the mouse in Church that thinks the Bibles and Prayer Books dry nibbling! He would rather be in the common ale-house, or at home reading novels, or walking out in the fields, or anywhere than in the place of worship! Yet others sitting by his side have found the most profound pleasure in those sacred engagements which have only brought weariness to him! Unlike him, they have been carried as on eagles wings up to Heaven! Their souls have been filled with joy and peace and they have said as they have retired, Surely God was in this place and it was good to be here. Why is this? The things ministered and the man who ministered them were the same. Ah, the one was dead while the others lived! How shall the dead derive comfort? How shall the dead be charmed? How shall the dead be fed and instructed? God was in the sermon but the carnally-minded man, being dead, perceived Him not!   
Nor, my dear Friends, is this spiritual death merely a failure to recognize the Being of Godit is equally seen in reference to the moral obligations it involves. Man, by nature, is dead to the right and to the true, to the commandments of the Lord which enlighten the eyes and to the testimony of the Lord which makes wise the simple. He is probably alive to his obligations to his fellow men because he has a clear understanding of their obligations to him. He generally keeps himself within the bounds of law and decency, but his greater obligations to his Creatorthese cross not his mindyet it is the very essence of rectitude and truth that He who made all things should be served by those He made and that He who sustains life in all His creatures should have honor from those creatures who owe their continued existence to Him! Why does the ungodly man not think of this? How is it he can live for 30 or 40 years sustained by God and yet never give to God the service of his heartscarcely thinking about his God at all? How is it? Why, because the man is dead to spiritual obligations! It must be so or else he would lament that he had not met those obligations and begin to repent that he had transgressed the bounds that his Maker set. The man is dead, Sirsdead!  
Further the natural man is dead to eternal things. How quick-eared he is to the things of timehow swift to perceive their value and in what haste to grasp them if he can! But ah, the eternal realities which God has revealed in Scripture the man neither cares to hear about them nor, hearing them, do they excite any desires within his spirit! Alas, my Hearers, we have sometimes had to warn you of the judgment to come. We have had to take down the shrill-sounding trumpet and blow an alarm! We have had to tell you that there is a dreadful Hell into which the wicked, dying impenitent, must be cast! How is it that men are not stirred by a theme so truthful and so dreadful? Because they are dead! They would be awake enough if they were afraid that their house should be on fire and that they, themselves, might be burned with the natural element! Yet the spiritual danger far more to be apprehended arouses them notbecause they are dead to it. At other times it has been our delight to speak of Heaven, to picture the pearly-gated city with all its azure brightness, with its bejeweled foundations and to talk of its inhabitants, all blessed forever, who walk in the light of their glorious King! And surely it were enough to make the cold marble heart glow with warmth! But no, the thing moved not men. Some little joy of earth would whet their appetite far more quickly! It is because to the spiritual Heaven revealed in Scripture men are altogether dead and care not for it! Oh Sirs, tis sad, tis sad, tis very sad that to the fleeting shadows we should be wide awake but to that substantial Truth of God we should be sound asleep that after the poor gewgaws and childs bubbles of this mortal state, we should be all agogbut as to the solid joys and lasting pleasures of an eternal world, we show no desire! This again is a mark of spiritual death!  
I must hurry on to mark a few more indications of this spiritual death. Prayer is one of the most blessed engagements and occupations of men while they are out of Heavento ask of the All-Bountiful One the mercies which they need. But there are some here tonight who never praywho never really ask of God what they require. They take the attitude of supplicants, perhaps as a matter of habit, but there they are like kneeling corpses! They do not praythey are dead to prayer. Open this Book, this holy Bible, before them. There was never such anotherno angel ever gazed upon a page more rich with glory than this! This Book it is that opens to us immortality and gives us the news of eternal love! Set the natural man down before it. It is to him a mere history or a dry book of dogmatic matters! He sees nothing in it that can charm him, nothing that can interest his spirit. The man is dead, Sir! To the sightless eyeballs, the brightest jewels flash back no radiance. He is dead! Yes, to Christ, Himself, the man is dead for when He is preachedChrist, the Fathers Son, the virgins Child, the condescending Savior, the ascending Conqueror, the exalted King crowned with Glorywhy the people of God delight to hear of Him! To them the savor of Jesus name is like ointment poured forth! But exhibit this Savior to the natural man and he perceives nothing! How could he? He is deaddead in trespasses and sins! All the outward phenomena that you will discern in the best natural man indicate that whatever kind of light there may be in him, the Light of God that deals with God, with the spirit-world, the world to come, is not there! He is unconscious of these! He has no fellowship with them. He is dead and a prey to corruption! When we have paused a minute we shall endeavor to describe

II. THE WORD WHICH JESUS BRINGS TO THE DEAD.  
The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God. Our Lord Jesus Christ is, in Scripture, especially in the Gospel of John, called, the Word. Here His voice is spoken of but what is a voice apart from the person that utters it? What is the Word which Jesus speaks by which dead men are quickened? Is not Jesus Christ, Himself, the Word of God to man? The distinct articulate manifestation of Deity is Jesus Christ! Now, let me show you this. Jesus Christ came, once upon a time, from Heaven. He condescended to become a Baby, to be nursed in a manger, to hang on a womans breast. He was God! What did that saythat Child, that BabyHuman, yet Divine? Why, it said this, God has pity upon man and has not left him. He is about to establish an intimate relationship between Himself, the great and the glorious, and man, the weak and the pitiablea union not at first between God and fully developed man, but between God and the Baby, as if it should be said the weakest and feeblest of all that bear the name of manhood may take comfort, for God has come down and taken a Babys form into union with Himself! That meant pity! It meant mercy! It meant fellowship and it meant hope to the race of man! To this end Jesus passed a life in the midst of all our sorrows, infirmities and took upon Himself our sickness!   
And what did that mean? Why it meant compassion. A beautiful word, thatcompassiona united passion, a fellow-feeling, a kindred suffering! It seemed to say, God is not indifferent to your woes. Oh, sons of men! You have fallen through your sins, but God pities you! God feels for you! He is no flinty-hearted Jupiter who sits serenely on his throne amidst the pains and agonies and eternal death of his creatures! No, but He has come down to you! He has taken upon Himself, Manhood, that He may suffer with man and let man see that He has not left him, but that He feels for him! And after He had lived a life of holiness which was, indeed, comparatively but a small part of His work, our Lord Jesus Christ gave Himself up to die! Into the Garden He went and there the wrath of God was laid upon Him till that precious cluster was so crushed in the awful press of the Divine Wrath that great red drops of bloody sweat were distilled from every pore like the red juice from the cluster! He went to Pilates Hall, to Herods tribunal, to be mocked and scourged and spat upon and, at last, in extreme agony He offered up His life on the accursed tree! What did He say to us then? He said thisGod is just. I come down to you poor mortal men and, taking upon Myself your nature and taking also your sins as your Substitute, I have to suffer. Christ Jesus suffering is a loud word from God to this effect, I pity you men, but your sins I must punish. I cannot pass them by. If they are laid upon My Son, I must prostrate My Son beneath their load. I cannot wink at sin though it is laid upon the perfect Substitute, for even there I must hunt it to the death! It is an accursed thing and must not be tolerated. I must stamp it out of My universe.   
This is Gods Word. He says, Justice as well as compassion. Pity but pity consistent with severity. Moreover Jesus rose again from the dead and now He ever lives at the right hand of God and His Holy Spirit has come and animates, at this time, the preaching of the Word with Divine energy! Christ now declares to us Gods Word after this fashion, Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God. Whoever will trust in the Incarnate Son of God and fully rely upon the merits of His wondrous suffering shall be saved. God wills not the death of the sinner, but had rather that he should turn unto Him and live! And everyone that will turn unto the living God and trust His Son to make propitiation, shall be saved from the damning power of sin and have everlasting life. Christ, the Living One, is Gods Word to us that we shall be delivered from the wrath to come if we trust in Him, even as He, Himself, was delivered when He rose again from the dead and ascended into Glory!   
My dear Friends, the Gospel which I preach again, tonight, is that which I have always preached and always will preach until I have a fear lest I should preach till you are almost nauseated with the repetition! Yet if it were so, I could not help it, for no other name do I dare to preach, nor is there any other foundation that I dare to lay and bid you build on it but this! Jesus Christ, the Son of God has come! Here on earth He lived and died and suffered for the sake of mankind. God is a God of Love, but He is also a God of Justice. There is a way in which He can be just and yet tender to you. If you trust His dear Son, your sins shall not destroy you! Christs sufferings shall stand instead of yours and you shall live! If you will now accept Christ. If you now will lean fully on Jesus. If you now will fling away both your love of sin and your love of your own righteousness and come and rest where God would have you rest, God shall be reconciled to you and you shall be His child and you shall live forever and ever! I must now close with third point   
III. THE MODE BY WHICH THIS WORD IS APPLIED.   
The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear. I have told you what they will hear. They will hear the Word of God! But who will speak it? Who is it that alone can speak it to purpose? WhyWhen the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, they that hear shall live. Whenever any dead soul lives, it is through the Word, but it is not through the voice of the preacher. That is but an instrument and nothing more! The real voice that makes dead souls live is the voice of Christ Jesus! What, is it so? Does He actually speak to every soul that is saved? He does! I do not mean in fancy as though you heard voices in the air, but I mean that this Word which I have just now preached to you must come home to your heart and your conscience and be applied by the Holy Spirit so that you prove its power and feel its energy. Through the Holy Spirit, it is that the voice of Christ is heard in the soul! But while I speak to you thus, some will say, What, then, can we do with sinners as we have not the voice that can raise them? Why you can pluck your Master by the skirt and say to Him, Good Lord, speak the Word! Speak the Word! When I come into this pulpit, the prayer that rises to my heart alwaysI hope I can always say without guileis this, Lord be here to speak, Yourself, through me. I am persuaded that though I preach to dead sinners ten thousand years, never will one be saved by my voice. Why, then, do I preach to sinners knowing them to be dead? Because I am simply the instrument of Christ and He speaks through His voice with His own Spirit, which is as His voice, and the dead do hear and they are made to livenot without the instrumentality, not through the instrumentality, alone, but by the voice of Jesus Christ! I ask you, then, dear Brothers and Sisters who are alive to God, to pray that Jesus would speak while the preacher speaks. Be lifting up your hearts and silently crying   
*Oh, let the dead now hear Your voice!   
Bid, Lord Your banished ones rejoice!   
Their beauty this their glorious dress   
Jesus the Lord our righteousness!*   
What encouragement there is in this for you, my Brothers and Sisters! However feeble you may be in yourselves, yet if it is the voice of Christ you have to rely upon, what power there is in that! You may go to your class and say, I cannot teach these troublesome boys and these inattentive girls! How can I hope to see them saved? Ah but your Master can speak through you and He can do what you cannot! Though it is true that old Adam is too strong for young Melancthon, he is not too strong for the mighty Savior whose voice does not merely speak to the living, but to the deadand all who hear that voice shall live! Bend your ear, then, and bow down your heart! Attend to the voice of Christ seeing that thereby, alone, the dormant faculties can be quickened and a lively interest excited!  
Yet while Christ speaks to the dead, power is communicated to them that they may have it and use it, call it their own and exercise it. The dead shall hear, and do notice, They that hear shall live. You must not imagine that man is passive in the matter. What does it say, Draw us, and we will be drawn? No, but, Draw us and we will run after You. There comes an activity. I have heard some speak of faith and repentance as the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Most truly so they are, but why speak of these gifts as though the sinner had nothing to do to repent and to believe? Always remember that it is you who must repent and believe. The Holy Spirit will not repent for you! What would He repent about? He never did wrong. And the Holy Spirit will not believe for you. What would He believe for? He is God, Himself! The fact is that the Apostle has expressed it exactly when he says, Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that works in you to will and to do of His own good pleasure. Christ gives the voice but the man hears. There is something donethere is a something to be received. It is no great act to hear a sound when it is made. It is no great act to receive mercy when it is presented. Yet the hearing is a miracle, for the dead hear! And the receiving by faith is a miracle, for none do this but those to whom it is given yet it is done by man. Faith and repentance are gifts of Godthe voice that saves is the voice of Christ but the point of personal salvation is reached when the man actively hears and receives the Truth of God!   
I pray you, then, my dear Hearers, if you would be saved, be diligent in hearing the Gospel! I would urge you to frequent those places of worship most where there is most of Christ preached. Do not seek after eloquence, oratory, gaudy periods or grotesque observations that might amuse you. You have something else to do on the Lords Day besides being amused and having your ears tickled! There is a soul in you that will either be saved or lostand this day is given you peculiarly that you may listen to the Gospel which saves you! Hunt out the Gospel in your locality! Follow it wherever you may hear it preached. I entreat you to hear it, but do not think that the mere hearing it with your outward ears will be enough! Alas, such a hearing may involve responsibility and bring you no blessing. I pray you ask the Lord as you go up to the House of Prayer to open your inward ears to quicken you from your spiritual death and give you to derive profit. I do believe, my dear Friends, that few will miss a blessing who hear a Gospel minister anxiously desiring to get a blessing. In these waters, men shall catch what they fish for! And if you seek earnestly after Gods blessing, you shall find it! Thirst for it! Pant for it! Long for it! You already have the beginning of it, for to desire Grace is an evidence that you have Grace in a measure! And to earnestly seek Christ is already to have something from Christa foretaste of the feast they enjoy who find Him!

Ah, my dear Friends, we keep on preaching and you keep on coming and going, Sunday after Sunday, but how is it with you? Are you saved or not? A man opens a shop for the sale of medicines and I will suppose them to have great medicinal virtue. There is a plague in the district and he asks himself, Are these drugs, after all, what they profess to be? If men keep on dying, he will, as an honest man, begin to get anxious and to enquire. And if he meets with persons who are talking of other things, he will say, Nonsense! Put them aside a bit. I want to ask you about something of more importance. Are these drugs of mine true shots with which to do battle with the plague? Are these the weapons with which to chase away this horrible disease and avert the threat? Is the plague increasing in your street or is it dying out? Oh I want to push these questions home to you tonight! I know I preach the Word of Christ. I am sure I have told you the Gospel of His salvation. The voice of Christ I cannot imitate nor would I if I could. Tis His to use His own voice. His tongue and His tongue, only, is like a two-edged sword which can cut and cure, kill and heal at the same time! How is it with you? Are you saved? Are you awakened? Are you seeking? Are you finding? Or are you, after all, just hearing and hearing and hearing again and again to no purpose? Ah, I would to God that I were not the preacher to such as you and that you were not my hearers, for I cannot bear that I should be adding to your condemnation! That I should be hardening youfor so it must be hardening your hearts with the very Truth of God that ought to soften them! I pray the Master bring you into a different state and give you to lay hold on these things, for if they are not true, it is time I had done preaching them! But if they are true, it is time you had received them! If they are not true, it is time that these services were given over, for they are awful farces! But if this Book is true and Christs Gospel is true, it is time that you did not make farces of them but that you turned unto God with full purpose of heart!   
The Lord save you for Jesus sake. Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **EPHESIANS 2; MATTHEW 11:1-6.**

Verse 1. And you has He quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins. What a great change, then, has taken place in the people of God! It is described as being similar to the resurrection of the dead. And do you suppose that this took place without a mans knowing it? Do you think that we are wrong in stating a wide difference between the quickened ones and the dead? I think not. In fact, those addresses made to congregations in which there is no distinction made between the living and the dead in Zion are deceptive. And prayers that are meant to suit congregations of mingled characterwhere some are dead in sin and others alive unto Godare, on the very face of them, an attempt at an impossibility! As great as is the distinction between the dead in their graves and living men that walk the streets, so great is the difference between the regenerate and unregenerate! Do you think that in reading this verse, dear Friends, you could apply it to yourself, and you, and you, and you, has He quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins?

2. Wherein in time past you walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now works in the children of disobedience. Those who are not saved have a life of evil. They are dead towards God, but they are alive towards Satan. An unregenerate mans heart is Satans workshop in which he forges divers devices of evilthe spirit that works in the children of disobedience!

3. Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath even as others. No difference by nature between the brightest saint in the Church of God and the blackest sinner of the camp of Satanall fallen, all desperately depraved at our very original! What wonders of Grace are those who are saved! Let them taken care that they never fail in praising that Grace of God!

4-7. But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, has quickened us together with Christ (by Grace you are saved). And has raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. That in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His Grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. Gods great objective is to display His Graceto let all the universe know what a gracious God He istherefore did He pitch upon us who were dead in sin even as others! Therefore does He quicken us and, therefore, having quickened us, does He go on to raise us up from one point to another until He makes us sit with Christ upon His Throne! Oh Beloved, if all the ages are to learn the Grace of God from His dealings towards us, let us learn it and let us talk much of it and exult much in it! Who is a gracious God like unto our God?

8. For by Grace are you saved. Not by your own merits! Not by priestcraft! Not by your own free will. By Grace are you saved. This is the great summary of the Gospel! Let this Doctrine be preached and we shall soon see the errors of Rome fly before it! By Grace are you saved.

8. Through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God. Neither the faith nor the salvation are of ourselves. They are both the gifts of Divine Loveboth worked in us by the Divine Spirit. It is the gift of God!

9, 10. Not of works lest any man should boast. For we are His workmanship. No good man can boast of his works because those works are the work of God. Without Him, we could not perform good works! So that even when we possess them, we are His workmanship. Shall the vessel on the wheel exalt itself as if it made itself? No, the potter must have the credit for all the skill of the making of the vessel. And if, therefore, there shall be in our character marks and lines of Grace and Truthunto God be the glory for them, for we are His workmanship!

10-12. Created in Christ Jesus unto good works which God has before ordained that we should walk in them. Therefore remember that you, being in time past, Gentiles in the flesh who are called Uncircumcision by those who are called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands. That at the time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise having no hope and without God in the world. This is where our fathers were. This is where we are by nature! We have not got even as far as the Jew who had a Covenant according to the flesh to plead and had received the sign of it while yet a child! But wewe were altogether foreigners and aliens from the Most High!

13. But now in Christ Jesus you who sometimes were far off are made near by the blood of Christ. Oh, rejoice in this! You far-off ones made near, lift up your hearts in thankfulness for what the Lord Jesus has done for you by His blood made near by the blood of Christ!

14. For He is our peace who has made both one and has broken down the middle wall of partition between us. Christ is peace between Jew and Gentilepeace between both of them and their God. I have heard of a poor bricklayer who when at work on a scaffold, fell from a great height and was taken up and was dying. They sent for a minister of the Gospel who began addressing him in such terms as this, My dear man, you are evidently near to die and therefore I exhort you to make your peace with God. He knew but very little of it compared with what the poor bricklayer knew, for opening his eyes, he said, Make my peace with God, Sir? That I could not do, but I thank God it was made for me in the Everlasting Covenant of Grace in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ 1,800 years ago! I have no peace to make! It is peace already made! And we have but to accept it, for He is our peace who has made both one and broken down the middle wall of partition between us!

15, 16 . Having abolished in His flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in Himself of two, one new man so making peace. And that He might reconcile both unto God in one body by the Cross having slain the enmity thereby. No enmity now should exist between Jew and Gentile. None does exist between the Believer and his God. The enmity is dead forever, for Christ has died.

17, 18. And came and preached peace to you which were afar of and to them that were near. For through Him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. In this verse you have the whole Trinity and all the Trinity in unity are necessary for prayer. Through Him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.

19. Now therefore you are no more strangers and foreigners but fellow citizens with the saints and of the household of God. How blessedly Grace annihilates all national distinction! Cowper spoke of nations which, like kindred drops, would have melted into one if they had not been divided by a range of mountains or intersected by a narrower faith. But in the Gospel of Grace we do melt into one! Whoever loves the Lord is a copatriot with all who love Him! Distinctions of nationality sweetly sink when we come to know the Savior. We are fellow citizens with the saints and of the household of God!

**MATTHEW 11:1-6.**   
Verses 1-5. And it came to pass when Jesus had made an end of commanding His twelve disciples, He departed thence to teach and preach in their cities. Now when John had heard in the prison, the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples. And they said unto Him, Are You He that should come or do we look for another? Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and show John again those things which you do hear and see: The blind receive their sight and the lame walk. The lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear. The dead are raised up and the poor have the Gospel preached to them. These were Christs seals and proofsJohn needed not to seek others. These were the very works of which prophecy had said would be the marks of the Messiah! If, then these marks were found in Him, He left John and his disciples to draw the inference that He was, indeed, the One who was to come! Christ is always best known by His works and, especially in His people, He is seen in their lives. There are two great precepts for the conquest of the world for Christthe first is preach the Gospelbut the second is live the Gospel and if we do not live the Gospel, we shall not succeed in preaching the Gospel! In fact, those members of our churches who do not

live the Gospel, undo through all the week what the preacher of the Gospel endeavors to do on the Lords Day! It is a fine thing to preach with your mouth, but the best thing in the world is to preach with your feet and with your handsin your walk and in your work! And if you are enabled to do this, the people will be able to say very little against the preaching of the Gospel when they see the result of it in those who accept it! God grant that we may be all preachers in some way or another!

6. And blessed is he who is not offended because of Me.   
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THE COMING RESURRECTION   
NO. 896

A SERMON BY C. H. SPURGEON,   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

***Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice and shall come forththey that have done good,   
unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil,***

***unto the resurrection of damnation.   
John 5:28, 29.***

THE doctrine of the Resurrection of the dead is peculiarly a Christian belief. With natural reason, assisted by some little light lingering in tradition, or borrowed from the Jews, a few philosophers spelled out the immortality of the soul. But that the body should rise againthat there should be another life for this corporeal framewas a hope which is brought to light by the Revelation of Christ Jesus. Men could not have imagined so great a wonder, and they prove their powerlessness to have invented it by the fact that still, as at Athens, when they hear of it for the first time, they fall to mocking. Can these dry bones live? is still the unbelievers sneer!

The doctrine of the Resurrection is a lamp kindled by the hands which once were pierced. It is, indeed, in some respects, the keystone of the Christian arch. It is linked in our holy faith with the Person of Jesus Christ and is one of the brightest gems in His crown. What if I call it the signet on His finger, the seal by which He has proven to a demonstration that He has the Kings authority and has come forth from God? The doctrine of Resurrection ought to be preached much more commonly than it is as vital to the Gospel. Listen to the Apostle Paul as he describes the Gospel which he preached, and by which true Believers were savedI delivered unto you, says he, first of all that which I received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures. And that He was buried and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.

From the Resurrection of Christ he argues that of all the dead and insists upon it, that if Christ is not risen, both their faith and his preaching were vain. The doctrine of the Resurrection in the early Church was the main battle-ax and weapon of war of the preacher. Wherever the first missionaries went they made this prominentthat there would be a judgment and that the dead should rise again to be judged by the Man Christ Jesus, according to their Gospel. If we would honor Christ Jesus the Risen One, we must give prominence to this Truth of God. Moreover, the doctrine is continually blessed of God to arouse the minds of men. When we fancy that our actions are confined to this present life, we are careless of them. But when we discover that they are far-reaching, and that they cast influences for good or evil across an eternal destiny, then we regard them more seriously.

What trumpet call can be more startling? What arousing voice can be more awakening than this news to the careless sinner that there is a life hereafter? That men must stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ to be judged for the things done in their bodies whether they were good or evil? Such doctrine I shall try to preach this morning for just such endsfor the honoring of Christ and for the awakening of the careless. God send us good speed and abundance of the desired results. We shall first expound the text and then, secondly, endeavor to learn its lessons.

I. First we shall EXPOUND THE TEXT. No exposition will be more instructive than a verbal one. We will take each word and weigh its meaning. Observe then, first, in the text there is a forbidding to marvel. Marvel not at this. Our Savior had been speaking of two forms of life-giving which belonged to Himself as the Son of Man. The first was the power to raise the dead from their graves to a renewed natural life. He proved this on one or two occasions in His lifetime, at the gates of Nain, in the chamber of the daughter of Jairus and again at the tomb of the almost rotting Lazarus.

Jesus had power when He was on earth and has power still, if so He should will it, to speak to those who have departed and bid them return again to this mortal state and reassume the joys and sorrows and duties of life. As the Father raises up the dead and quickens them; even so the Son quickens whom He wills. After our Lord had dwelt upon that form of His life-giving prerogative, He passed on to a second display of it and testified that the time was then present when His voice was heard to the quickening of the spiritually dead. The spiritually deadthe men who are dead to holiness and dead to faithdead to God and dead to Divine Grace.

The spiritually dead are the men that lie enshrouded in the grave clothes of evil habits, rotting in the coffins of their depravity. They are deep down in the graves of their transgressions. These men, when Jesus speaks in the Gospel, are made to live! A spiritual life is given to them. Their dead souls are raised out of their long and horrible sleep and they are enlivened with the life of God. Now, both of these forms of quickening are worthy to be marveled at. The resurrection of the natural man to natural life is a great wonderwho would not go a thousand miles to see such a thing performed? The raising up of the dead spirit to spiritual life, this is a greater wonder by far! But albeit that these are wonders and things which it is legitimate to wonder at by way of admiration, yet there is a marveling of mistrustful unbelief which is insulting to the Lord and is, therefore, forbidden.

Our gentle Master, as if to overwhelm the gainsayers who were astonished at His claims, addressed them to this effect: You need not marvel at these two claims of Mine. I claim another power of quickening which will much more amaze you. There will happen before long an event which to you, at any rate, will be more marvelous, still, than anything which you have seen Me do, or which I claim to perform. There will come a time when all the dead that are in their graves, multitudes upon multitudes in the valleys of death, shall all at once, at My voice, start up to life and stand before My Judgment Throne.

To you, dear Brothers and Sisters in the faith, the quickening of the dead is not so great a marvel as the saving of dead souls. And, indeed, the raising of a corpse from the grave is by no means so great a marvel as the raising up of a dead soul from the sleep of sin. For in the raising up of a dead body there is no opposition to the fiat of Omnipotence. God speaks and it is done. But in the saving of a dead soul, the elements of death within are potent and these resist the life-giving power of Divine Grace so that regeneration is a victory as well as a creationa complicated miraclea glorious display both of Grace and power. Nevertheless, to the few and to all who are still ruled by the carnal mind, to the mere outward eye, the resurrection of the body seems a greater marvel for several reasons.

Comparatively few in our Saviors day were quickened spiritually, but the resurrection shall consist of the quickening of all the dead bodies of men that have ever existed! Great marvel, this, if you consider the hosts of the sons of Adam who have fattened the soil and glutted the worms and yet shall everyone of them rise again! Souls were quickened in our Saviors day as in ours, one by onehere one and there one. Long years roll on. The whole history of manhood interposes before the regeneration of all the elect is accomplishedbut the resurrection of the dead will take place at once! At the sound of the archangels trumpet the righteous will rise to their glory! And after them the ungodly will rise to their shame. The resurrection will not be a gradual uprising, a slow developmentfor all at once the myriads shall swarm on land and sea!

Conceive, then, what a marvel this must be to a mere natural mind! A graveyard suddenly enlivened into an assembly! A battlefield, where tens of thousands had fallen, suddenly disgorging all its slain! The suddenness of it would amaze and startle the most carnal mind and make the miracle appear great beyond comparison. Moreover, my Brethren, the resurrection of the dead is a thing that such men as the Jews could appreciate, because it had to do with materialism, had to do with bodies. There was something to be seen, to be touched, to be handledsomething which the unspiritual call a matter of fact. To you and to me the spiritual resurrection, if we are spiritual, is the greater marvel, but to them the resurrection seemed to be the more wonderful because they could comprehend it and form some notion of it in their unspiritual minds.

So the Savior tells them that if the two former things made them wonder and made them doubt, what would this doctrine dothat all the dead should be raised again in a moment by the voice of Christ? Beloved, let us humbly learn one lesson from this. We are, ourselves, by nature very like the Jews. We wonder mistrustfully. We unbelievingly wonder when we see or hear of fresh displays of the greatness of our Lord Jesus Christ. So narrow are our hearts that we cannot receive His Glory in its fullness. Ah, we love Him and we trust Him and we believe Him to be the fairest and the greatest and the best and the mightiest, but if we had a fuller view of what He can do the probabilities are that our amazement would be mingled with no small portion of doubt.

As yet we have but slender ideas of our Lords Glory and power. We hold the doctrine of His Deity. We are orthodox enough, but we have not thoroughly realized the fact that He is Lord God Almighty. Does not it sometimes seem to you to be impossible that such-and-such a grievously ungodly man could be converted? But why impossible with Him who can raise the dead? Does it not seem impossible that you could ever be supported through your present trouble? But how impossible with Him who shall make the dry bones live and cause the sepulcher to disgorge? It appears improbable at times that your corruptions should ever be cleansed away and that you should be perfect and without spot. But why so? He who is able to present, before His Throne, tens of thousands of bodies which have long slept in the sepulcher and molded into dustwhat can He not accomplish within His people?

O doubt no more and let not even the greatest wonders of His love, His Grace, His power or His Glory cause you to marvel unbelievingly, but rather say as each new prodigy of His Divine power rises before you, I expected this of such a One as He is. I gathered that He could achieve this, for I understood that He was able to subdue all things to Himself. I knew that He fashioned the world and built the heavens and guided the stars and that by Him all things consist. I am not, therefore, astounded though I behold the greatest marvels of His power. The first words of the text, then, urge us to faith and rebuke all unbelieving amazement.

To the second sentence I now call your attention. The coming hour. The hour is coming, says Christ. I suppose He calls it an hour to intimate how very near it is in His esteem, since we do not begin to look at the exact hour of an event when it is extremely remote. An event which will not occur for hundreds of years is at first looked for and noted by the year. And only when we are reasonably near it do men talk of the day of the monthand we are coming very near it when we look for the precise hour. Christ intimates to us, that whether we think so or not, in Gods thought the day of Resurrection is very near. And though it may be a thousand years off even now, yet still, to God, it is but one day and He would have us endeavor to think Gods thought about it, not reckon any time to be long, since if it is time at all it must be short and will be so regarded by us when it is past and the day has arrived.

This is practical wisdomto bring close up to us that which is inevitable and to act towards it as though it were but tomorrow morning when the trumpet should sound and we should be judged. The hour is coming, says the Savior. He here teaches us the certainty of that judgment. There are some events which may or may not be. Emperors may live or die, their sons may ascend their throne, or their throne may be broken into dust and scattered to the winds of Heaven. Dynasties may stand or they may wither like autumn leaves. The greatest events which we supposed to be inevitable may never occur. Another wheel, which has not yet been seen by us in the great machinery of Providence, may make events revolve in quite another fashion from what our puny wisdom would foretell. But the hour of Resurrection is certain, whatever else may be contingent or doubtful.

The hour comes. It assuredly comes. In the Divine decree this is the day for which all other days were made. And if it were possible that any determination of the Almighty could be changed, yet this never shall be for He has appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He has ordained. Therefore He has given assurance unto all men, in that He has raised Him from the dead. The hour comes. Reflect, my Brethren, that most solemn hour comes every moment. Every second brings it nearer. While you have been sitting still in this House, you have been borne onwards towards that great event! As the pendulum of yonder clock continues unceasingly to beat like the heart of time. As morning dawn gives place to evening shade and the seasons follow in constant cycle, we are drifted along the river of time nearer to the ocean of eternity! Borne as on the wings of some mighty angel who never pauses in his matchless flight, we are carried onward in our journey towards the judgment bar of God!

My Brethren, by that same flight are you also hurried on. Look to the Resurrection, then, as a thing that always comes, silently drawing nearer and nearer hour by hour. Such contemplations will be of the utmost service to you. Our Lords Words read as if the one hour of which He spoke completely drove into the shade all other eventsas if the hour, the one hour, the last hour, THE hour par excellence, the master hour, the royal hourwas of all hours the only hour that was coming that was worth mentioning as being inevitable and important! Like Aarons rod, the judgment hour swallows up every other hour!

We hear of hours that have been big with the fate of nations. Hours in which the welfare of millions trembled in the balances. Hours in which for peace or war the die must be cast. Hours that have been called crises of historyand we are apt to think that frequently periods such as this occur in the worlds history. But here is the culminating crisis of all! Here is the iron hour of severity, the golden hour of truth, the clear sapphire hour of manifestations! In that august hour there shall be proclamation made of the impartial decisions of the Lord Christ with regard to all the souls and bodies of men. Oh, what an hour is this which comes on apace!

My dear Brothers and Sisters, now and then I covet the tongue of the eloquent and now I do so that I might on such a theme as this fire your imaginations and inflame your hearts! But let me pray you assist me now for a moment and since this hour comes, try to think it very very near. Suppose it should come, now, while we are here assembled. Suppose that even now the dead should risethat in an instant this assembly should be melted into the infinitely greater one and that no eye should be fixed upon the forgotten preacherbut all fixed upon the great descending Judge, sitting in majesty upon His Great White Throne! I pray you think yourselves as though the curtain were lifted at this moment. Anticipate the sentence which will come forth to you from the Throne of Righteousness! Consider as though at this precise moment it were pronounced upon you! Oh now, I pray you examine yourselves as though the testing days were here, for such an examination will be to your souls benefit if you are saved. And it may be to your souls warning if you are unconverted.

But we must pass on. Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves. Notice this very carefully, all that are in the graves, by which term is meant not only all whose bodies are actually in the grave at this time, but all who were ever buried even though they may have been disinterred and their bones may have mingled with the elements, been scattered by the winds, dissolved in the waves, or merged into vegetable forms. All who have lived and died shall certainly rise again. All! Compute, then, the numberless number! Count, now, the countless! How many lived before the deluge? It has been believed, and I think accurately, that the inhabitants of this world were more numerous at the time of the deluge than they probably are now. Owing to the enormous length of human life, mens numbers were not so terribly thinned by death as they are now.

Think, if you will, from the times of the deluge onward, of all Adams progeny. From Tarshish to Sahara men covered the lands. Nineveh, Babylon, Chaldea, Persia, Greece, Rome were vast empires of men. The Parthians, Scythians and Tartar hordes, who shall reckon up? As for those northern swarms of Goths and Huns and Vandalsthese were continually streaming as from a teeming hive in the middle ages and Frank and Saxon and Celt multiplied in their measure. Yet these nations were but types of a numerous band of nations even more multitudinous! Think of Ethiopia and the whole continent of Africa! Remember India and Japan and the land of the setting sunin all lands great tribes of men have come and have gone to rest in their sepulchers. What millions upon millions must lie buried in China and Burma! What innumerable hosts are slumbering in the land of the pyramids and the mummy pits! Everyone, both great and small, embalmed of old in Egyptwho shall compute the number?

Hear you, then and believeout of all who have ever lived of woman born, not one shall be left in the tomb! All, all shall rise! I may well say as the Psalmist did of another matter, Such knowledge is too wonderful for me. It is high, I cannot attain unto it. How has God marked all these bodies? How has He tracked the form of each corporeal frame? How shall Jesus Christ be able to raise all these? I know not, but He shall do it, for so He declares and so has God purposed. All that are in the graves shall hear His voice. All the righteous, all the wicked, all that were engulfed in the sea, all that slumber on the top of earthall the great ones, all the multitudes of the sons of toil, all the wise and all the foolish, all the beloved and all the despisedthere shall not be one single individual omitted!

My dear Friend, it may be best for you to look at the question in a more personal lightyou will not be forgottenyour separated spirit shall have its appointed place and that body which once contained it shall have its watcher to guard it till, by the power of God, it shall be restored to your spirit, again, at the sounding of the last trumpet. You, my Hearer, shall rise again! As surely as you sit here this morning, you shall stand before the once crucified Son of Man! It is not possible that you should be forgotten. You shall not be permitted to rot away into annihilation, to be left in the darkness of obscurity. You must, you shall rise, each and every one without a solitary exception. It is a wondrous Truth of God and yet we may not marvel at it so as to doubt it, though we may marvel at it and admire the Lord who shall bring it to pass.

Pass on. All that are in the graves shall hear His voice. Hear! Why, the ear has gone! A thousand years ago a man was buried, and his earthere is not the slightest relic of it leftall has vanished! Shall that ear ever hear? Yes, for He that made it hear at the first worked as great a wonder, then, as when He shall make it hear a second time! It needed a God to make the hearing ear of the newborn babe. It shall need no more to renew the hearing ear the second time. Yes, the ear so long lost in silence shall hear! And what shall be the sound that shall startle that newly awakened and fresh fashioned ear? It shall be the voice of the Son of God! The voice of Jesus Christ, Himself! Is it not amazing that that same voice of Jesus is now sounding in this very place and has been, thousands of times, and there are men who have ears, who have yet never heard that voice?

Yet when that voice shall speak to men who have no ears, they shall hear it and rise to life! How deaf must those be who are more deaf than the dead! What is their guilt who have ears to hear, yet hear not! And when the voice of Christ sounds through the building again and again in the preaching of the Gospel, they are no more moved by it than the slates which cover them from the rain. How dead, I say, must they be who are not moved by the Word of God which arouses even the dead in their graves who have lain in it these thousand years?! Ah, my Brethren, while this teaches us the dullness of human nature and how depraved the heart is, it also reminds you who are careless that there is no escape for you! If you will not hear the voice of Jesus now, you must hear it then! You may thrust your fingers into your ears today, but there will be no doing that in the day of the last trumpetyou must hear, then!

O that you would hear now! You must hear the summons to judgment! God grant that you may hear the summons to mercy and become obedient to it and live. All that are in the graves shall hear His voice. Whoever they may have been, they shall become subject to the power of His Omnipotent command and appear before His sovereign Judgment Seat. Note the next words, and shall come forth. That is to say, of course, that their bodies shall come out of the grave, out of the earth, or the water, or the air, or wherever else those bodies may be. But I think there is more than that intended by the words, shall come forth. It seems to imply manifestation, as though all along men were here and in their graves hidden and concealed. But as the voice of God in the thunder discovers the forests and makes the hinds to calve, so the voice of God in Resurrection shall discover the secrets of men and make them bring forth their truest self into the light, to be revealed to all.

The hypocrite, masked villain as he is, is not discovered now, but when the voice of Christ sounds, he shall come forth in a sense that will be horrible to him! He will be deprived of all the ornaments of his masquerade, the mask of his profession torn away. He shall stand before men and angels with the leprosy upon his brow, an object of universal derision, abhorred of God and despised of men. Ah, dear Hearers, are you ready to come forth even now? Would you be willing to have your hearts read out? Would you wear them on your sleeve for all to see? Is not there much about you that would not bear the light of the sun? How much more will it not bear the light of Him whose eyes are as a flame of fire, seeing all and testing all by trial which cannot err? Your coming forth on that day will be not only a reappearance from amidst the shade of the sepulcher, but coming forth into the light of Heavens truth which shall reveal you in meridian clearness.

And then the text goes on to say that they shall come forth as they that have done good and they that have done evil. From which we must gather the next Truth of God that death makes no change in mans character and that after death we must not expect improvements to occur. He that is holy is holy, still, and he that is filthy is filthy, still. They were, when they were put into the grave, men who had done goodthey rise as men who have done good. Or they were, when they were interred, men who had done evilthey rise as those that have done evil. Expect, therefore, no place for repentance after this life, no opportunities for reformation, no further proclamations of mercy, or doors of hope. It is now or never with you, remember that.

Note, again, that only two characters rise, for, indeed, there are only two characters who ever lived! And, therefore, two to bury and two to rise againthose who had done goodand those who had done evil. Where were those of mingled character, whose conduct was neither good nor evil, or both? There were none such. You say, do not the good do evil? May not some who are evil still do good? I answer, he that does good is a man who, having believed in Jesus Christ and received the new life, does good in his new nature and with his newborn spirit with all the intensity of his heart. As for his sins and infirmities, these, being washed away by the precious blood of Jesus, are not mentioned in the day of account and he rises up as a man who has done good, his good remembered, but the evil washed away.

As for the evil, of whom it is asserted that they may do good, we answer, so they may do good in the judgment of their fellow men and as towards their fellow mortals, but good towards God cannot proceed from an evil heart. If the fountain is defiled, every stream must be polluted, also. Good is a word that may be measured according to those who use it. The evil mans good is good to you, his child, his wife, his friendbut he has no care for God, no reverence, no esteem for the great Lawgiver. Therefore, that which may be good to you may be ill to God, because done for no right motive, even perhaps done with a wrong motive so that the man is dishonoring God while he is helping his friend. God shall judge men by their works, but there shall be but two characters, the good and the evil. And this makes it solemn work for each man to know where he will be and what has been the general tenor of his lifeand what is a true verdict upon the whole of it.   
O Sirs, there are some of you who, with all your excellences and moralities, have never done good as God measures good, for you have never thought of God to honor Him! You have never even confessed that you have dishonored Him. In fact, you have remained proudly indifferent to Gods judgment of you as a sinner and you have set yourself up as being all you should be! How shall it be possible, while you disbelieve your God, that you could do anything that can please Him? Your whole life is evil in Gods sightonly evil. And as for you who fear His name, or trust you dotake heed unto your actions, I pray youseeing that there are only those that have done good and those that have done evil! Make it clear to your conscience, make it clear to the judgment of those who watch you (though this is of less importance) and make it clear before God that your works are goodthat your heart is right because your outward conduct is conformed unto the Law of God.

I shall not keep you much longer in the exposition, except to notice that the mode of judging is remarkable. Those who search the Scriptures know that the mode of judging at the Last Day will be entirely according to works. Will men be saved, then, for their works? No, by no means! Salvation is, in every case, the work and gift of Divine Grace. But the Judgment will be guided by our works. It is correct, for those to be judged, that they should all be tried by the same rule. Now, no rule can be common to saints and sinners, except the rule of their moral conductand by this rule shall all men be judged. If God finds not in you, my Friend, any holiness of life whatever, neither will He accept you.

What, says one, of the dying thief, then? There was the righteousness of faith in him, and it produced all the holy acts which circumstances allowed. The very moment he believed in Christ, he avowed Christ and spoke for Christ and that one act stood as evidence of his being a friend of God, while all his sins were washed away! May God grant you Grace so to confess your sins, and believe in Jesusthat all your transgression may be forgiven you. There must be some evidence of your faith. Before the assembled host of men there shall be no evidence given of your faith fetched from your inward feelings. The evidence shall be found in your outward actions.

It will still be, I was hungry and you gave Me meat: I was thirsty and you gave Me drink: I was a stranger and you took Me in: naked and you clothed Me: I was sick and you visited Me: I was in prison and you came unto Me. Take heed, then, as to practical godliness and abhor all preaching which would make sanctity of life to be a secondary thing. We are justified by faith, but not by a dead faith! The faith which justifies is that which produces holiness and, without holiness no man shall see the Lord. See, then, the two classes into which men are divided and the stern rule by which God shall judge them. And so judge yourselves that you are not condemned with the wicked.

The different dooms of the two classes are mentioned in the text. One shall rise to the resurrection of life. This does not mean mere existence they shall both exist, both exist foreverbut life means, when properly understood, happiness, power, activity, privilege, capacity. In fact, it is a term so comprehensive that I should need no small time to expound all it means. There is a death in life which the ungodly shall have, but ours shall be a life in lifea true lifenot merely existence, but existence in energy, existence in honor, existence in peace, existence in blessedness, existence in perfection. This is the resurrection unto life.

As for the ungodly, there is a resurrection to damnation, by which their bodies and souls shall come manifestly under the condemnation of God. To use our Saviors word, they shall be

damned. Oh, what a resurrection! And yet we cannot escape from it if we neglect the great salvation! If we could lay us down and sleep and never wake again, oh, what a blessing it were for an ungodly man! If that grave could be the last of him, and like a dog he should never start again from slumber, what a blessing! But it is a blessing that is not yours and never can be. Your souls must live and your body must live. O fear Him, I pray you, who is able to destroy both soul and body in Hell. Yes, I say unto you, fear Him.

II. Our time is almost spent, but I must occupy the remaining minutes in DRAWING LESSONS FROM THE TEXT. The first is the lesson of adoring reverence. If it is so, that all the dead shall rise at the voice of Christ, let us worship Him! What a Savior was He who bled upon the Cross! How gloriously is He who was despised and rejected, now exalted! O Brothers and Sisters, if we could even get but to see the hem of this Truth of God, that He shall raise all the dead out of their gravesif we did but begin to perceive its grandeur of meaning, I think we should fall at the Saviors feet as John did when he said, I fell at His feet as dead.

Oh, what amazing power is Yours, my Lord and Master! What homage must be due to You! All hail, Immanuel! You have the keys of Death and of Hell. My soul loves and adores You, You ever great enthroned Prince, the Wonderful, the Counselor, King of kings and Lord of lords! The next lesson is consolation for our wounded spirits concerning our departed friends. We never mourn with regard to the souls of the righteous, they are forever with the Lord. The only mourning that we permit among Christians concerns the body, which is blighted like a withered flower. When we read at funerals that famous chapter in the Epistle to the Corinthians, we find in it no comfort concerning the immortal spirit, for it is not required. But we find much consolation with regard to that which is sown in dishonor, but shall be raised in Glory.

Your dead men shall live! That decaying dust shall live again! Weep not as though you had cast your treasure into the sea, where you could never find it again. You have only laid it by in a casket, from where you shall receive it again brighter than before. You shall look again with your own eyes into those eyes which have spoken love to you so often, which are now closed in sepulchral darkness. Your child shall see you again! You shall know your childthe same form shall rise. Your departed friend shall come back to you and having loved his Lord as you do, you shall rejoice with him in the land where they die no more! It is but a short partingit will be an eternal meeting. Forever with the Lord, we shall also be forever with each other. Let us comfort one another, then, with these words.

The last lesson is that of self-examination. If we are to rise, some to rewards and some to punishments, what shall be my position? What shall be my position? let each conscience ask. How do you feel, my Hearers, in the prospect of rising again? Does the thought give you any gleam of joy? Does it not create a measure of alarm? If your heart trembles at the tidings, how will you bear it when the real fact is before you and not merely the thought? What has your life been? If by that life you shall be judged, what has it been? What has been its prevailing principle up till now? Have you believed God? Do you live by faith upon the Son of God? I know you are imperfect, but are you struggling after holiness? Do you desire to honor God? This shall rule the judgment of your lifewhat was its end and aim, and bent and object?

Imperfection there has been, but has there been sincerity? Has grace, Divine Grace, that washes sinners in the blood of Christ, proved itself to be in you by alienating you from the sins you loved and leading you to the duties that you once neglected? Need I press these questions? I know they are irksome to those who cannot answer them with comfort. Yes, I must even again press them upon you! I beseech you, this morning, put yourselves into the crucible of self-examination, for from the refiners fire you shall not, at the last, be able to escape! Ah, if I can say, Yes, my God, with 10,000 sins, yet since the day in which Your Grace found me, I have sought to honor You, oh, happy, happy thought to know in that dread hour that the blood has cleansed me and the righteousness of Christ has wrapped me and that I am safe!

But if I am compelled to say, No, up to this moment I have not regarded God. My actions have had no respect to Him. A sense of His majesty has never constrained me to perform a single act and never withheld me from one solitary sin. Oh, then you are judged already! I pray you, tremble and flee to Him who can purge you from all iniquity and yet present you faultless before His Fathers Presence with exceedingly great joy!

I will ask you another questionif you do not feel happy at the thought of yourself, are you quite peaceful concerning the raising of all others? Are you prepared to meet before God those whom you have sinned with among men? It is a question worthy of the sinners thoughtof what must be the terrors of men and women who will have to meet the companions of their sins! Was not this at the bottom of Dives wishing Lazarus to be sent back to the world to warn his five brothers lest they should come into the place of torment? Was not he afraid to see them there because their recriminations would increase his misery? It will be an horrible thing for a man who has been a debauched villain to rise again and confront his victims whom his lusts dragged down to Hell! How will he quail as he hears them lay their damnation at his door and curse him for his lasciviousness!

Oh, she is buried long ago, you say and you go gaily on in your mirth. But she will see you and like a serpents eyes shall be her eyes as they shall flash vengeance on you in the light of eternity, counting you to have been the devil that destroyed her! Let any man here who has sinned against his fellow, tremble! Let anyone here who has sent another down to Hell, repent lest he, too, perish! O Man, your sin is not dead and buried and the sinner whom you joined hands with in iniquity shall rise to witness against you! The crime, the guilt, the punishment and the guilty one shall alike live again and you shall live forever in remorse to rue the day in which you thus transgressed.

Another question, if it will be terrible to many to see the dead rise again, how will they endure to see Him, the Judge, Himself, the Savior? Of all men that ever lived, He is the one that you have need to be the most afraid of, because it is He whom this day you ought most to love, but whom you forget. How many times from this pulpit have I pleaded with you to yield yourselves to Jesus Christ? And how frequently have you given Him a flat denial? It may be some of you have not quite done that, but you have postponed your decision and said, When I have a more convenient season I will send for you. When He comes, how will you answer Him? Man, how will you answer Him? How will you excuse yourselves? You would not have Him as a Savior, but you must have Him as your Judge, to pronounce your sentence! You despised His Grace, but you cannot escape His wrath. If you will but look to Jesus now, you shall find salvation in that glance! But in refusing to do so you heap up for yourself wrath when that terrible but inevitable glance shall be yours, of which the Prophet says, All the kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him. O spurn Him not, then! Despise not the Crucified! I pray you trample not upon His blood, but come to Him, so that when you see Him on His Throne you may not be afraid!

Beloved, I might have continued to ask more questions, but I shall close with these two. One of the best ways by which to learn what will be our portion in the future is to enquire what is our portion in the present. Have you life now? I mean spiritual lifethe life that grieves for sin, the life that trusts a Savior? If so, you shall certainly have the resurrection to life. On the other hand, have you condemnation now? For he that believes not is condemned already! Are you an unbeliever? Then you are condemned now. You shall suffer the resurrection of damnation! How can it be otherwise? Seek, then, that you may possess the life of God, now, by faith and you shall have it forever in fruition. Escape from condemnation, now, and you shall escape from damnation hereafter! God bless you all with the abundance of His salvation, for Christs sake. Amen.

*PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMONJohn 5:1-29.*  
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UNWILLINGNESS TO COME TO CHRIST   
NO. 1324

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON THURSDAY EVENING, NOV. 2, 1876, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**And you will not come to Me, that you might have life. John 5:40.**

OUR Lord was addressing Himself to the unbelieving Jews. He told them that they had received abundant evidence of His being the Sent One of God, but yet they had rejected Him, and He solemnly charged this home upon their consciences. If you read the passage at home you will see that in the 36th verse He reminded them that He had received the witness of John, and all men believed John to be a Prophet. He had come as the herald of Christ, the promised Elijah, and he had borne witness, saying, Behold the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world. Yet this clear testimony they had despised and trod under foot.

Next, our Lord claimed that His miracles and lifework were a sufficient witness to His Messiahship. The works which the Father has given Me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of Me, that the Father has sent Me. There is, perhaps, no better evidence of the truth of our Saviors mission than His Character, life and miracles. The truths which He revealed, the perfections which He displayed and the wonders which He worked all went to show that He was, indeed, anointed of God and sent to be the Savior of men.

Further, our Lord informs them that there was more testimony, still, though in that evidence many of them had not shared. He says, The Father Himself, which has sent Me, has borne witness of Me. Three times out of the excellent Glory the Father had said, This is My beloved Son, hear you Him. This was good evidence, whether they had heard it or not, and though He tells them that they had neither heard His voice at any time, nor seen His shape, yet others had heard that Voice and seen the descent of the Spirit like a doveand their testimony ought to have had weight with them.

To you, dear Friends, assembled here tonight, this is a very important piece of evidence. We rejoice as we hear that God has actually spoken by audible sounds out of Heaven and borne testimony to His Son that He is the Christ! Then our Lord goes on to say that there was yet another evidence in which the Jews had not sharedthe unbelieving onesand that is, the internal evidence which, to those who have it, is the very best in all the world!

Internal evidencethe evidence of a renewed heart, the evidence of joy and peace, the evidence of conscious pardon, the evidence of sanctificationthis is the most convincing of all evidence to those who possess it! It is clear as the sun in the heavens, but they had not shared in it and, therefore, felt it not. You have not His Word abiding in you; for whom He has sent, Him you believe not. And then the Master reminds them that there was yet a fifth mode of evidence which demonstrated Him to be the

Christ, and that was the Scriptures, of which He says, (if I may read the text in the indicative and I think it must be so read)You search the Scriptures; for in them you think you have eternal life: and they are they which testify of Me.

Therefore, if we will now forget the unbelieving Jews and only think of unbelieving Gentiles, there are to us, tonight, evidences concerning the Lord Jesus of the most convincing character. There are Johns witness, the witness of the miracles, the witness of the voice of the Father out of Heaven, the inner witness which many of our friends and kindred tell us of, and then the witness of the Holy Spirit in sacred Scripture. All these show that Jesus of Nazareth is the promised Redeemer of man, that He is the appointed Mediator of the Covenant of Grace and that through Him there is immediate salvation for all who will believe on Him.

The worst point about the whole conduct of the Jews was that, with all this witness in His favor, which they could not overturn, they would not come to Him that they might have eternal life! At this moment there are many such unbelievers upon the face of the earth and, what is more to the point, I fear that at this hour, in this congregation, there are some who will not come to Jesus that they may have life. There are persons in this great assembly, consisting, as it does, of individuals who have enough thought about religion to come out on a weeknight to hear a sermon about it, who, nevertheless, will not come to Christ!

Some of these persons are often here, familiar with these courts and familiar with this voiceperhaps so familiar that they have grown accustomed to it and it has but little power with them. And yet, though they will come to us, they will not come to Christ! However, it is to them that I shall speak tonight and I ask Gods people to pray that while I am speaking, the Spirit of God may apply the Word to the heart and to the conscience. I speak in great weakness and bodily pain and, therefore, I hope to be aided and assisted by a double portion of the Divine strength, and, if it is so, Gods Glory will come of it.

Now, we shall notice, first of all, the great plan of salvation. Let us look at itit is coming to Christ that we might have life. Secondly, I shall look and ask you to look at your position towards itYou will not come to Me that you might have life. Then, thirdly, I shall dwell, for a few minutes, upon what will certainly be the result of such conduct as this. And, fourthly, before we have done, let us hope for a change in your state of mind, so that before you sleep tonight it shall cease to be true of you that you will not comeand a joyful fact that you have come and found eternal life!

Your immediate conversion to the Lord Jesus Christ shall be the great object of our discourse and of the prayers which will go with it from the Lords people here assembled.

I. First, then, the text very briefly sets forth THE PLAN OF SALVATION. Christ speaks of it thus, Come to Me that you might have life. The way to be saved is to come to Christ! Christ is a Person, a living Person, full of power to save! He has not placed His salvation in sacraments, or books, or priests, but He has kept it in Himself, and if you want to have it, you must come to Him! He is still the one Source and Fountain of eternal mercy. There is no getting it by going round about Him, or only going near Him you must come to Him, actually to Him, and there must be a personal contact established between the Lord Jesus and your spirit.

Of course it cannot be a natural contact, for His body is in the heavens and we are here. It must be a spiritual contact, by which your mind, heart, thoughts shall come to Christ, and faith, like a hand, shall touch Him spiritually, grasp Him by believing upon Him and receive life and Grace from His Divine power. Just as when the woman of old touched His garments hem, the virtue went out of Him to her and she was healed, so now, though He is yonder, faiths long hand can touch His Divine and human Person, by confiding, trusting and resting in Him. And so, virtue will flow from Him into our soul and our mind shall be healed of whatever disease it has.

Think, then, at this very moment, of Jesus Christ, who was once nailed to the Cross and died as the Sacrifice for sin. Think of Him as sitting, now, at the right hand of God, even the Father, clothed with infinite majesty and might. And if you are enabled, now, to repose your heart upon Him, to believe that He is able to save you and, by an act of faith, to commit your soul into His keeping that He may save it, you have done what He bids you doyou have come to Him and He will not cast you outthe blessings of His salvation shall be yours! This is the coming which He sets before youthe drawing near of the mind, the heart, the soul to Jesus, so as to trust in Himto trust in Him at once for all that your soul needs.

The text, when it says, Come to Me that you might have life, implies that we are to come to Jesus Christ for everything, for life includes all that is absolutely necessary for salvation, yes, salvation itself! It is the lowest stage of Grace, and yet the term comprehends the very highest condition of the soul, even when it enters into Glory and enjoys life at the right hand of God. O Sinner, by nature you are dead in sin! You must be made alive or you cannot dwell with God, for He is not the God of the dead but of the living! To be quickened, you must come into contact with Him who is the Life, even Jesus. And if you come to Him, you have begun to live! You are also condemned to die on account of your breaches of the Law. You are condemned already, for you have sinned against the most high God. If you come to Christ, the Mediator, the sentence against you shall be removed. You shall live, for, there is, therefore, now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.

As soon as the soul comes to Christ, it receives pardon and justification. These two remove from us the guilt which brought us under condemnation and put upon us a righteousness which entitles us to stand before the most high God without fear, for, who is He that condemns? It is Christ that died. Coming to Christ gives us actual spiritual life and gives us, also, judicial life, so that we need not fear the axe of Justice. Those cannot be condemned who are accepted in the Beloved and all are thus accepted who have come to Christ!

I will read you two verses, as they certainly may be translated without the slightest violation of the original language. The text runs thusYou search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and they are they which testify of Me; but you will not come to Me that you

might have lifeas if to show you that there are many persons who seek life and even think that they have it, and yet have not found it because they stop short of Christ. They search the Scriptures, but they will not come to Jesus.

Is it not, therefore, a good thing to search the Scriptures? Yes, that it is, and the more you search them the better. But it is not the thingit is not the saving work. You may be Bible readers and yet perish! But this can never happen if you come to Jesus by faith. I may put the same Truth of God in another shape. You pray. Some of you pray earnestly, but yet you will not come to Christ that you might have life! Is it not a good thing to pray? Yes, indeed, a blessed thing to pray, but still it is not the thingit is not the subject of the great saving command. The Gospel precept is not, Go you into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that searches the Scriptures and prays shall be saved.

No, but the Gospel runs thusHe that believes and is baptized shall be saved. There stands the healing touchthe act which brings us life faith in the heart and confession with the mouth! To these the promise is made, and of those who neglect these our Lord says, You will not come to Me, that you might have life. Now, observe that this way of coming to Christ, which is indicated in the text, is the only way. There is other preaching, but there is only one true ministry, and the true ministry bears witness concerning Christ.

There are other supposed ways of salvation, but they shall be accursed that preach them! And woe unto them in the Last Great Day who have deluded mens souls with their other gospels, for, other foundation can no man lay than that which is laidJesus Christ the Righteous. Believe and live is the one unchanging oracle and He that has regard to it, shall find eternal life! But take heed that you despise not him that speaks this wondrous word from Heaven, for there is no other name given under Heaven among men whereby you must be saved. Come to Christ! Come to the anointed Savior! Come to the Son of God! Come to Him who is both God and Man! Come to the Mediator! Come to the Redeemer! Come to the Great Substitute for sinners!

Come and trust Him and you shall live! I have no other message for you. Do not reject it, for if you do you must perish without hope. And this way, as it is the only one, blessed be God, is a sure way and an open way. Sure, for none ever tried it and failed. There lives not on earth, there lives not in Hellone soul that trusted in Christ and yet was not saved

*There is life in a look at the Crucified One.*

*There is life at this moment for you.*   
Life in every instance. There has never yet been one that did confide, alone, in Jesus, that found faith to be useless, for faith is a living thing and works by love. It purifies the soul and saves the man through Jesus Christ. And it is an open way as well as a sure oneopen to you tonight, dear Friend.

Say not in your heart, who shall ascend into Heaven to bring Christ down? Or who shall descend into the deep to bring Him up again from the dead? The Word is near you, on your lips and in your heart. If you will, with your heart believe in the Lord Jesus, and with your mouth make confession of Him, you shall be saved, even you! The latter days have fallen upon us! The shades of the evening of the world and the damps of its autumn are all around us! But still there sounds forth the cry, Whoever will, let him come and take the water of life freely. Still is the Fountain opened for the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness

*Dear dying Lamb, Your precious blood   
Shall never lose its power,   
Till all the ransomed Church of God   
Is saved to sin no more.*

Thus have I put, as plainly as I can, the plan of salvation. That is it and that is all of itit is to come to Christ! If I talked much longer I might darken, but I could scarcely make clearer, the simplicity of the Gospel of Jesus. It is to come to Christ, to trust Him, to obey Him, to yield yourself to Him, to love Him! So, to come to Him is to come to Him on earth and be with Him forever and ever in Heaven!

II. Now, secondly, and very solemnly, I want to speak to you unconverted ones, who have heard the Gospel a long time, about YOUR POSITION IN REFERENCE TO THIS PLAN OF SALVATION. You will not come to Me that you might have life. That describes your position and I earnestly beseech you to look it in the face. I would have you get by yourself and say to yourself aloud and deliberately, I will not come to Him, that I might have life. But you reply, That would be an awful thing to say! I know it would be, but it is a more awful thing, to my mind, not to dare to say it and yet practically to be doing it! Are you ashamed to say it and yet not ashamed to do it? I know there is a curious feeling about some men that if the preacher openly rebukes a vice which they practice they find fault with him for even speaking of it. They say that he ought not to allude to such vile things, yet they live in these very sins from day to day!

This is the hypocrisy and cant of sinners and it is detestable! And so men will live in unbelief, but if you ask them to say decidedly, I do not believe, or to assert openly, I will not come to Christ that I may have life, they think we must be as wicked as they are to ask them to say such a thing! Now, what you dare do, you will surely dare say, or else you are a coward and a liar to your soul! If it is a right thing to do, it must be right thing to say. I do not ask you to go and proclaim it to othersto infect them with your diseasebut I ask you to say it to yourself. I ask you to label yourself what you are and let it be distinctly understood by your own soul what you mean and where your position is.

I pray you act honestly and openly with your own heart. It surely cannot be wise to cheat yourself. You will not come to Jesus that you might have lifewe know this to be true of many of you because you have not come. If you say it is not true that you will not come, then I reply, How is it that you have not come? If you have come, how readily do I withdraw the charge! With what joy and happiness do I bless the Lord that you have been led to His dear Son! But, if you have not come, dear Friendand you know, yourself, whether you have or notthen I cannot retract a syllable of the accusation, but I repeat the chargeyou will not come to Him that you might have life.

I know that you would rather put it another way and you would say softly, I cannot come. But this is clattering language! Do you know what, cannot, in such a case means in Scripture? It means the same thing as, will not. If you have the will, you have the power, for, wherever there is the will, God has it and He does not give the will without giving the power! Though sometimes we have to cry out that, to will is present with us, but, how to perform that which we would, we find not, yet that lasts not long. When the Lord gives the will, He soon gives the way. His Grace does not divide the two giftsthe power comes with the will.

And if you have the will tonight you have the power. That you cannot is true, but it is only true because you will notyour will is the seat of the weakness. I may say of a man that he cannot be chaste. Why? Because he will not be chaste! That is the only reason! I may say of another man that he cannot speak the truth. What do I mean by that? I mean that he is such a liar that he will not speak the truth. He could if he would, but there is the pointhe will not. Our weakness to do good lies in the fact that our will, itself, is opposed to the right. You will not come that you might have life is the true English of that excuse of yours, that you cannot! If you would, you could. It is because you will not that you cannot!

But one of you will say, It is not that I will not, but that I dare not come to Jesus. Ah, my dear Friend, but if you say, I dare not, I have to ask you on what grounds you support that remarkable fear. Dare not be saved? Dare not come to the Son of God whose very Person is Love? Dare not do what God commands you? This is His commandment, that you believe on Jesus Christ whom He has sent. Turn that, dare not, round the other wayit were much better used soI dare not refuse to come! I dare not tarry any longer! I dare not disbelieve! I dare not distrust! I dare not keep my sin and let my Savior go. That is the true kind of, dare not, but the other is an idle excuse. How idle it must be for a man to say, I dare not obey my God and trust in His Son, I leave your own consciences to judge.

The truth is, You will not come to Christ, that you might have life. Let me hold you, now, and ask you to think for a few minutes of what you are doing. Think of the life which you are spurning! There is no life for you anywhere but in Christand if you will not come to Him you will never have life! That is to say, you will not have that without which this poor existence of yours is only a lingering death. The Grace which enables you to overcome sin, the joy which enables us to master trouble, the light which helps us to look into Divine mysteries, the inward spiritual principle given in regeneration, by which we have fellowship with God and with His Son Jesus Christthese are main ingredients in the life which you need.

O my dear Friend, lifethe life of God in the soulis to me the one thing necessary, the one thing without which all the world were not worth having! It were better to be poor and hungry and naked than to be without this inner life. It is true life in this world to live by faith upon the Son of Godand that you are missing and despising! This is the life which made your mother what she was. You remember her holy living and you cannot forget her triumphant dying! The life which makes men holy, happy, safe and blessed is, Christ in you, the hope of glory, and this it is that you need. Will you reject it? O be not so foolish!

Remember that this life which you spurn is Eternal Life! It is the life with which you are to live in another world, the life which shall qualify you to dwell with cherubim and seraphim and join their songs, the life which will enable you to stand before the Throne of God and cast your crown at His feet in ecstasy of grateful joy! It is this that you do not care to have, for you will not come to Christ that you might have life. Do not continue to spurn the best of Gods gift! Let me tell you, the day will come when you will wring your hands in anguish to think that you despised that life. It may be that it will be so in the throes of death, but it is certain that it will be so amid the terrors of Judgment, when there shall open wide before you the gates of Hell, and before you shall blaze the lake that burns with fire and brimstone which is the second death.

They who are not born twice will have to die twice! And he that has not life through faith in Jesus must die the second death and endure its pangs forever and forever. See, then, the life you spurn, dear Friend, and ask yourself whether this is wise. Next, thinkand I wish I could speak to you as I wouldthink of the Person whom you reject. You will not come to ME, says Christ. I have been thinking of this all dayhow it is that any man can be so base as not to come to my Lord Jesus Christ. Look at Him! Let me portray Him to you as He completed your redemption. He hangs upon His CrossHis face is all stained with the bruises and the spit of the rough soldiers. And down it trickles the red drops that have been started from His temples by the crown of thorns.

His eyes are red with weeping and with watching, and His visage is more marred than that of any man. You can see all His bones. His body is emaciated and worn with anguish. His handsthe cruel nails have dragged and torn till you see the wide gaping wounds from which the blood flows. His feet are the samethey are both fountains of blood. And then His side! Behold His sidefrom which gushed blood and water from the deep wound made by the spear. It is He who thus redeemed mankind! The Lord of Glory hangs there! The only-begotten Son of the Highest, the Prince of the kings of the earth has given Himself up to bleed and to die a felons death for you!

And what is your attitude towards Him? You turn your backs upon Him! Is it nothing to you? Is it nothing to you that Jesus should die? Do you mean that it is nothing to you that Jesus should bleed to redeem men? Do you mean to refuse a share in that redemption? Do you utterly reject the bloody ransom price He paid upon the Cross? If it is so, then put it down in plain Englishput it down in black and white and sign your name to itI refuse Christs blood. To write it down is the very best thing you can do if it is, indeed, so! Because, perhaps, when you have read the dreadful lines, your conscience may be lashed into something like life and you may begin to look at Him whom you have pierced, and mourn because of Him. Think about this, you that will not come to Him that you might have life.

But, lo, I see Him yet again! He is in Heaven now. Quite another picture may we set before you. There He is at the right hand of God, even the Father, clothed with a snow-white garment down to His feet, and girt about

with a golden sash, distributing crowns and thrones! He is worshipped by ten thousand times ten thousand blood-washed spirits and angels in all their ranks! Now you can be sure of this, that He it is to whom you will not come! From His Glory as well as from His shame you turn away! It is well for Me that I do not feel, just now, about it as I did before I entered this pulpit, for if I did I could only stand here and burst into tears, and could not dare to say what I am uttering now.

This is so unkind to Jesus! So ungenerous to Jesus! I cannot bear it! It is at the price of your souls that you reject Him! Will you sooner be damned than have Him? Do you mean that? What strange hate is this, that to show your hatred of Jesus you will destroy yourselves? O foolish Sinners! Foolish Sinners! What mad freak of sin is this, that you will bear your sins and dare the death they bring sooner than have Christ to be your Savior? Yet it is so, so long as it is true that you will not come to Him that you might have life.

Now, think, again, what it is you are doing. What is this which you refuse to do? What is the action you refuse? You refuse to come to Him. If it were to come to Sinai, where the trumpet waxes exceedingly loud and long, and where the flaming lightning flashes forth amidst tremendous thunder, I could understand your reluctance. But the deed you refuse to do is to come to Calvary, to come to Jesus where nothing sounds but love and mercy! You will not come to Him. That means, with some of you, that you will not even think about Christ. He may die, but you cannot trouble to think His redemption is over. He may rise and thus may justify His people, but you have something else to think about.

And that something else, with some of you, is earning your daily bread. With others of you it is only how you may pass the hours and go from one amusement to another. Salvation is worth Christ dying for, but not worth your thinking about! Alas, how the mass of people in London think of anything except Christ and their souls! The papers ring with some fresh thing and the news is on everybodys tongue. But my Lords death for sinners oh, it is a bore, is it not? It is a weariness to hear about it and, sermons are very dull, they say. It is because mens hearts are dead that sermons are dull! Jesus is not endured because men will not come to Him and live!

O blessed Spirit, turn their hard hearts and stubborn wills, and turn them now! While some will condescend to think a little, yet they utterly refuse to come to the point and believe. Now, surely, the very least thing that the Lord Jesus Christ can claim of us is that we believe Him! When has He ever been false? What is there about His Character that is untrue? It is due to truth to render to it our confidence and our trustand when we know that this faith, this believing Him, this trusting Him, which is His due, is, nevertheless, simple as it is, the highest and most saving act of the mindit is strange that we should still refuse to believe!

What Jesus claims is that we so believe Him as to obey Him. Now, if He were a tyrant, we might very well be reluctant to obey. But He is so gracious, His yoke is so easy and His burden is so light that it is foolish as well as wicked to not obey! All His followers tell us that there never was such a Master and that they wish they could altogether obey His every will and wish, for obedience to Him is bliss to themand yet you refuse to yield obedience to such a Master? Is this wise or right? He asks your lovethe love of your heart. What a heart that must be which cannot and will not love Him! How foul, how vile, how dead, how black, how stony is the heart that cannot love Him who gave His hearts blood to redeem us! O Soul, Soul, Soul, if you perish, it is not because the Gospel was hard and exacting and its terms severe, or because the saving act was impossible to you and out of your reachyou perish because you will not come to Him that you might have life!

I desire you, still, to keep your eyes fixed on that fact, my Friend, that you are acting as if you had said, I will not come to Christ that I might have life. Think of why you will not come. Can you give me some good reason why you will not come? Perhaps you answer that you hope to find salvation somewhere else. These Jews fancied so. They thought that they would find it in the Scriptures. In them you think you have eternal life. Hence a personal Christ was rejected, that they might go on searching into the original text, counting the letters and disputing over knotty points. They were, however, mistakenthe Bible cannot save!

Perhaps you feel that you can get more good by trying to understand doctrine than by coming to Christ. You will be bitterly mistaken. However excellent the Scriptures are, if you put Scripture in the place of Christ, you have made a choice and you have set your choice in opposition to Gods choice, which is thisthat you believe on Him whom He has sent. It is not on itthat you are to believe, but on Him whom He has sent. That is the great saving point, the Person, the very Person of the Lord Jesus Christ! O Beloved, I wish you could see thisthat Jesus Christ gathers up in His Person all the teaching of Scripturethat in His blessed Person is all the efficacy of His redemptive work for men and that what is to be done is to come to Him.

When you do not believe in Jesus, you refuse to honor the Son of God. And He has said, He that refuses Me, refuses Him that sent Me. You refuse God when you refuse His Christ! Possibly, dear Friend, the reason why you will not come is that you indulge some secret sin which you cannot give up. O that secret sin! That secret sin! That worm at the root of the soul! I know not what it is, my Friend, but God knows and you know. Is it your pride? Can you not stoop to be saved by mercy, through the Grace of God? Or is it a fleshly lust from which you cannot separate yourself? Is it dear to you as your right hand? Off with it, Man! It is better for you to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire.

Is sin holding you back from Christ, from life, from Heaven? Dear as this Barabbas may be, do not prefer him to your Lord! Away with the sin, it is a viper! Away with it, or else God will say, Away with you. I fear, in some cases, that the chain which holds men back from Christ is sheer frivolity. It is so with a great many young peopleand there are some old people who are quite as triflingthey have gray hair on the outside of their heads, but none within. Their minds are none the riper for being old. They are silly, frivolous, superficial, trifling with everything, never serious upon any themeand above all others they need to be sharply rebuked.

Ah, Sirs, if you must play, I wish you would play with something cheaper than the blood of Christ! If you must trifle, trifle with something that will cost you less than your souls! It seems a dreadful thing for a man to stake his whole estate on the running of a horse, as some have done. But it is less foolish than to stake your endless destiny upon the possibility of your living another week, or another day! Yet you are doing this you know you are! May God awaken you, dear Friend! May He speedily awaken you from such folly as this.

Now, I want you, dear Hearer, to come back to the point and look at the fact that you will not come to Christ. You will do anything else, but you will not come to Christ. You will come out to our special meetings, but why do you come? What do you come to these meetings for if you do not need Christ? And you will pray from mere habityou would not like to go to sleep without praying after a fashionbut what do you pray for if you will not have the best gift which God can give you, even Jesus Christ? What is there worth praying for if you refuse Christ? Yes, you will search the Scriptures, but, in the name of reason, for what?

Why do men go into the harvest fields if they need no grain? Why do they dig in the mines if they do not need to find metals? The Scriptures (with all reverence of them do we speak) are but the mineChrist is the treasure! They are the fields, but He is the harvest! Take Christ out of the Bible and what is it? He is the sum and the substance of it all! And when you search the Scriptures you should search them that you may find Him, or else you misuse and abuse them. But why this strange reluctance? Oh, I need to feel, says one. Yes, I know. You would like to feel deep convictions. You would like anything rather than to come to Christ. But, says one, I must have time to think. I knowyou want to be saved by your thinkinganything is more desirable to you than coming to Christ.

Come to Christ just as you are, just as you are now, while now His Spirit pleads with you! Ah, you will not do this, some of you will not and, therefore, I must leave you. Let us pass on to the third point very briefly.

III. Let us consider thoughtfully WHAT WILL BE THE RESULT OF THIS. I will put myself in your place, now, and speak for you. I will not come to Christ that I might have life. When I have said that, what does it involve? It means that any good feelings which I may have had through hearing the preaching of the Gospel, or through listening to the addresses of earnest Christian men, are as the morning cloud and as the early dew. They are all to end in nothing and to pass away. They cannot do me any good.

I have heard sermons in vain. I have read the Scriptures in vain. I have attended Prayer Meetings in vain. If I will not come to Christ all these things are in vain. But what next? Why, then, I may expect that the feelings I now have (for I am conscious of some measure of holy desire) will pass away. I shall grow harder and harder, and harder in heart, and more indifferent, and more callous as time rolls on. And what will happen to me, then? Why, thisI never shall come to Christ at all! I suppose that some of you, though you will not come now, think you will come to Jesus one day. Oh, if it were told you, to a dead certainty, that you never would come, you would stand aghast. Ah, me! you would say, Must I, then, be lost forever? Shall I never come to Christ?

My dear Friend, it looks very likely that you never will be saved. If you are to come to Jesus, why not now? Why not now? Every day adds to the chances, if I may use such an expression, adds to the deadly odds against you, that you will never come to Christ! Ah, it is a prediction which might be terribly accurate if we were to say that some of you who have oftentimes been awakened and yet have gone to sleep again, will sleep forever and will never lift up your eyes till you awake in the flames of Hell! Ah, God, in Your mercy, prevent this! But this is the last result of all. If I will not come to Christ that I might have life, then I must die eternally and be driven forever from the Presence of God and from the glory of His power!

And, O my Soul, what will that be? What will that be? Ask those who know what it is. Ask Dives while he begs Abraham to send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water to cool his tongue! Ask those whose perpetual reply is weeping, wailing and gnashing of teeth! But I will not pause to give you their answersit would be too dreadful! Look at your future! If you will not come to Jesus that you might have life, you shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides in you!

IV. And now, last of all, LET US HOPE THAT THERE WILL BE CHANGE, and a change tonight! I felt, while I was speaking, that some of you were saying, No, I dare not say that I will not come. Well, then, there is only one other word to sayI will come. O that you would say, I will come, and then carry out the resolve at once! He is worthy of my trust. I will trust Him. He is worthy of my obedience. If He will help me, I will obey Him. He is worthy of my love. By His rich Grace I will love HimI will, I will. Thank God, dear Friend, if you have said that, though it has been with trembling lips, for you may come. He bids you. His own words are, Come to Me, all you that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

You may come. His Church invites you and His Spirit invites you, for, the Spirit and the Bride say, Come. We who have, ourselves, come, would all invite you, for it is written, Let him that hears, say, Come. And whoever will, let him take of the Water of Life freely. Do you feel a softness of soul coming over you? Does something whisper, Now is mercys hour? Then, I beseech you, quench not the Spirit, and tarry no longer! No, tarry not even to leave that pew and find your little chamber and fall on your knees, but here and now yield yourself to Him! It will be the best moment you have ever livedthe beginning of days to you! As the night when Israel came out of Egypt shall this night be to your spirit if you yield yourself

*A guilty, weak, and helpless worm,   
On Christs kind arms I fall.   
He is my strength and righteousness   
My Jesus, and my all.*

What He bids you do is two-fold, believe and be baptized. He that believes and is baptized shall be saved. First, with the heart, man believes, and next with his mouth he makes confession of Jesus. Baptism is the way to make confession according to Christs own rule, to which I charge you to be obedientand may He accept you and bless you this night, for

His names sake. We shall sing this one verse, and I ask nobody to sing it who does not mean it   
*Tis donethe great transactions done!   
I am my Lords, and He is mine!   
He drew me, and I followed on,   
Charmed to confess the voice Divine.*   
Now, for once do not stand up, but sit still and sing it just as you are those who can sing it. As for the rest of you, the Lord have mercy upon you. Amen.

**PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMONJohn 5:24-27.** HYMNS FROM OUR OWN HYMN BOOK486, 515. Adapted from The C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307.

FREE WILLA SLAVE   
NO. 52

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON SABBATH MORNING, DECEMBER 2, 1855, BY THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT NEW PARK STREET CHAPEL, SOUTHWARK.

**And you will not come unto Me, that you might have life. John 5:40**

THIS is one of the great guns of the Arminians, mounted upon the top of their walls and often discharged with terrible noise against the poor Christians called Calvinists! I intend to spike the gun this morning, or, rather, to turn it on the enemyfor it was never theirs. It was never cast at their foundry at all, but was intended to teach the very opposite doctrine to that which they assert. Usually, when the text is taken, the divisions arefirst, that man has a will. Secondly, that he is entirely free. Thirdly, that men must make themselves willing to come to Christ, otherwise they will not be saved. Now, we shall have no such divisions! But we will endeavor to take a more calm look at the text and not because there happens to be the words, will, or, will not, in it, conclude that it teaches the doctrine of free will. It has already been proved beyond all controversy that free will is nonsense! Freedom cannot belong to will any more than ponderability can belong to electricity. They are altogether different things. Free agency we may believe in, but free will is simply ridiculous. The will is well-known by all to be directed by the understanding, to be moved by motives, to be guided by other parts of the soul and to be a secondary thing. Philosophy and religion both discard at once the very thought of free will! And I will go as far as Martin Luther, in that strong assertion of his, where he says, If any man does ascribe anything of salvation, even the very least, to the free will of man, he knows nothing of Divine Grace and he has not learnt Jesus Christ aright. It may seem a harsh sentiment, but he who in his soul believes that man does of his own free will turn to God, cannot have been taught of Godfor that is one of the first principles taught us when God begins with usthat we have neither will nor powerbut that He gives boththat He is Alpha and Omega in the salvation of men.

Our four points, this morning, shall be, first, that every man is dead, because it says, you will not come unto Me that you might have life. Secondly, that there is life in Jesus ChristYou will not come unto Me that you might have life. Thirdly, that there is life in Christ Jesus for everyone who comes for itYou will not come unto Me that you might have life, implying that all who go will have life. And fourthly, the gist of the text lies here, that no man by nature ever will come to Christ, for the text says, You will not come unto Me that you might have life. So far from asserting that men of their own wills ever do such a thing, it boldly and flatly denies it and says, You WILL NOT come unto Me that you might have life. Why, Beloved, I am almost ready to exclaim, Have all that believe in free will no knowledge, that they dare to run in the teeth of Inspiration? Have all those that deny the Doctrine of Grace no sense? Have they so departed from God that they wrest this to prove free will whereas the text says, you WILL NOT come unto Me that you might have life.

I. First, then, our text implies THAT MEN, BY NATURE, ARE DEAD. No being needs to go after life if he has life in himself. The text speaks very strongly when it says, you will not come unto Me, that you might have life, though it says it not in words, yet it does in effect affirm that men need a life more than they have, themselves. My Hearers, we are all dead unless we have been begotten unto a lively hope. First, we are all of us, by nature, legally deadIn the day that you eat, thereof, you shall die the death, said God to Adam. And though Adam did not die in that moment, naturally, he died legally. That is to say, death was recorded against him! As soon as, at the Old Bailey, the judge puts on the black cap and pronounces the sentence, the man is reckoned to be dead at law. Though perhaps a month may intervene before he is brought on the scaffold to endure the sentence of the law, yet the law looks upon him as a dead man. It is impossible for him to transact anything. He cannot inherit, he cannot bequeath. He is nothinghe is a dead man. The country considers him not as being alive at all. There is an electionhe is not asked for his vote because he is considered as dead. He is shut up in his condemned cell and he is dead. Ah, and you ungodly sinners who have never had life in Christ, you are alive this morning, by reprieve, but do you know that you are legally dead? God considers you as such, that in the day when your father, Adam, touched the fruit and when you, yourselves, sinned, God, the Eternal Judge, put on the black cap and condemned you! You talk mightily of your own standing and goodness and moralitywhere is it? Scripture says you are, condemned already. You are not to wait to be condemned at the Judgment Daythat will be the execution of the sentenceyou are condemned already. In the moment you sinned, your names were all written in the black book of Justice. Everyone was then sentenced by God to death for his sinsunless he found a Substitute in the Person of Christ. What would you think if you were to go into the Old Bailey and see the condemned culprit sitting in his cell, laughing and merry? You would say, The man is a fool, for he is condemned and is to be executed, yet how merry he is. Ah, and how foolish is the worldly man, who, while sentence is recorded against him, lives in merriment and mirth! Do you think the sentence of God is of no effect? Do you think that your sin, which is written with an iron pen on the rocks, forever, has no horrors in it? God has said you are condemned already! If you would but feel this, it would mingle bitters in your sweet cups of joy. Your dances would be stopped, your laughter quenched in sighing if you would remember that you are already condemned! We ought all to weep, if we lay this to our soulsthat by nature we have no life in Gods sight. We are actually, positively condemneddeath is recorded against usand we are considered in ourselves right now, in Gods sight, as much dead as if we were actually cast into Hell! We are condemned here by sinwe do not yet suffer the penalty of itbut it is written against us and we are legally dead. Nor can we find life unless we find legal life in the Person of Christ, of which I will say more, by-and-by.

But, besides being legally dead, we are also spiritually dead. For not only did the sentence pass in the book but it passed in the heartit entered the conscience! It operated on the soul, on the judgment, on the imagination and on everything. In the day you eat, thereof, you shall surely die, was not only fulfilled by the recorded sentence, but by something which took place in Adam. Just as in a certain moment, when this body shall die, the blood stops, the pulse ceases, the breath no longer comes from the lungs, so in the day that Adam ate that fruit, his soul died. His imagination lost its mighty power to climb into celestial things and see Heaven! His will lost its power to always choose that which is good. His judgment lost all ability to judge between right and wrong decidedly and infallibly. Though something was retained in conscience, his memory became taintedliable to hold evil things and let righteous things glide away. Every power of his ceased as to its moral vitality. Goodness was the vitality of his powersthat departed! Virtue, holiness, integritythese were the life of manbut when these departed, man became dead! And now, every man, as far as spiritual things are concerned, is dead in trespasses and sins spiritually. Nor is the soul less dead in a carnal man, than the body is when committed to the grave. It is actually and positively deadnot by a metaphor, for Paul speaks not in metaphor when he affirms, You has He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins. But my Hearers, I would again wish I could preach to your hearts concerning this subject! It was bad enough when I described death as having been recorded. But now I speak of it as having actually taken place in your hearts. You are not what you once were! You are not what you were in Adam, not what you were created! Man was made pure and holy. You are not the perfect creatures of which some boast. You are altogether fallen! You have gone out of the way, you have become corrupt and filthy! Oh, listen not to the siren song of those who tell you of your moral dignity and your mighty elevation in matters of salvation! You are not perfectthat great word, ruin, is written on your heart! And death is stamped upon your spirit. Do not conceive, O moral man, that you will be able to stand before God in your morality, for you are nothing but a carcass embalmed in legality, a corpse arrayed in some fine robes, but still corrupt in Gods sight! And think not, O you possessor of natural religion, that you may, by your own might and power, make yourself acceptable to God!

Why, Man, you are DEAD! And you may array the dead as gloriously as you please, but still it would be a solemn mockery. There lies Queen Cleopatraput the crown upon her head, deck her in royal robes, let her sit in state. But what a cold chill runs through you when you pass by her! She is fair, now, even in her deathbut how horrible it is to stand by the side, even, of a dead queen, celebrated for her majestic beauty! So you may be glorious in your beautyfair, amiable and lovely. You may put the crown of honesty upon your head and wear about you all the garments of uprightnessbut unless God has quickened youO Man unless the Spirit has had dealings with your soul, you are in Gods sight as obnoxious as the chilly corpse is to yourself! You would not choose to live with a corpse sitting at your table. Nor does God love that you should be in His sight. He is angry with you every day, for you are in sinyou are in death. Oh, believe this! Take it to your soul and appropriate it, for it is most true that you are dead, spiritually as well as legally!

The third kind of death is the consummation of the other two. It is eternal death. It is the execution of the legal sentence. It is the consummation of the spiritual death. Eternal death is the death of the soulit takes place after the body has been laid in the grave, after the soul has departed from it! If legal death is terrible, it is because of its consequences. And if spiritual death is dreadful, it is because of that which shall succeed it. The two deaths of which we have spoken are the roots and that death which is to come is the flower thereof! Oh, had I words that I might, this morning, attempt to depict to you what eternal death is! The soul has come before its Maker, the book has been opened, the sentence has been uttered. Depart you cursed has shaken the universe and made the very spheres dim with the frown of the Creator! The soul has departed to the depths where it is to dwell with others in eternal death. Oh, how horrible is its position! Its bed is a bed of flame! The sights it sees are murdering ones that frighten its spirit, the sounds it hears are shrieks, wails, moans and groans! All that its body knows is the infliction of miserable pain! It has the possessor of unutterable woe, of unmitigated misery. The soul looks up. Hope is extinctit is gone. It looks downward in dread and fear. Remorse has possessed its soul. It looks on the right handand the adamantine walls of fate keep it within its limits of torture. It looks on the leftand there the rampart of blazing fire forbids the sealing ladder of even a dreamy speculation of escape! It looks within and seeks for consolation there, but a gnawing worm has entered into the soul. It looks about itit has no friends to aid, no comforters, but tormentors in abundance. It knows nothing of hope of deliverance. It has heard the everlasting key of destiny turning in its awful wards and it has seen God take that key and hurl it down into the depth of eternity never to be found again! It hopes not. It knows no escape. It guesses not of deliverance. It pants for death, but death is too much its foe to be there! It longs that non-existence would swallow it up, but this eternal death is worse than annihilation! It pants for extermination as the laborer for his Sabbath. It longs that it might be swallowed up in nothingness just as would the galley slave long for freedom, but it comes not. It is eternally dead! When eternity shall have rolled round multitudes of its everlasting cycles, it shall still be dead. Forever knows no end. Eternity cannot be spelled except in eternity! Still the soul sees written over its head, you are damned forever. It hears howls that are to be perpetual. It sees flames which are unquenchable. It knows pains that are unmitigated. It hears a sentence that rolls not like the thunder of earth which soon is hushedbut onward, onward, onward, shaking the echoes of eternitymaking thousands of years shake again with the horrid thunder of its dreadful soundDepart! Depart! Depart you cursed! This is the eternal death.

II. Secondly, IN CHRIST JESUS THERE IS LIFE, for He says, You will not come unto Me that you may have life. There is no life in God the Father for a sinner! There is no life in God the Spirit for a sinner apart from Jesus. The life of a sinner is in Christ. If you take the Father away, though He loves His elect and decrees that they shall live, yet life is only in His Son. If you take God the Spirit away from Jesus Christ, though it is the Spirit who gives us spiritual life, yet it is life in Christ, life in the Son. We dare not and cannot apply in the first place either to God the Father, or to God the Holy Spirit for spiritual life! The first thing we are led to do when God brings us out of Egypt is to eat the Passoverthe very first thing. The first means whereby we get life is by feeding upon the flesh and blood of the Son of Godliving in Him, trusting on Him, believing in His Grace and power. Our second thought wasthere is life in Christ. We will show you there are three kinds of life in Christ, as there are three kinds of death.

First there is legal life in Christ. Just as every man by nature, considered in Adam, had a sentence of condemnation passed on him in the moment of Adams sin and more especially in the moment of his own first transgression, so I, if I am a Believer and you, if you trust in Christ, have had a legal sentence of acquittal passed on us through what Jesus Christ has done. O condemned Sinner, you may be sitting, this morning, condemned like the prisoner in Newgate! But before this day has passed away, you may be as clear from guilt as the angels above! There is such a thing as legal life in Christ and, blessed be God, some of us enjoy it! We know our sins are pardoned because Christ suffered punishment for them! We know that we can never be punished, ourselves, for Christ suffered in our place. The Passover is slain for us! The lintel and doorpost have been sprinkled and the destroying angel can never touch us. For us there is no Hell, although it blazes with terrible flames! Let Tophet be prepared of old, let its pile be wood and much smokewe can never go thereChrist died for us, in our place! What if there are racks of horrid torture? What if there is a sentence producing most horrible reverberations of thundering sounds? Neither rack, nor dungeon, nor thunder are for us! In Christ Jesus we are now delivered. There is, therefore, NOW, no condemnation unto us who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

Sinner, are you legally condemned this morning? Do you feel that? Then let me tell you that faith in Christ will give you a knowledge of your legal acquittal! Beloved, it is no fancy that we are condemned for our sinsit is a reality! So, it is no fancy we are acquitted, it is a reality! A man about to be hanged, if he received a full pardon, would feel it a great reality. He would say, I have a full pardon, I cannot be touched now. That is just how I feel

*Now freed from sin I walk at large   
The Saviors bloods my full discharge!   
At His dear feet content I lay,   
A sinner saved and homage pay.*

Brothers and Sisters, we have gained legal life in Christ and such legal life that we cannot lose it! The sentence has gone against us oncenow we are pardoned! It is written, THERE IS, NOW, NO CONDEMNATION and that, now, will do as well for me in 50 years as it does now. Whatever time we live, it will still be written, There is, therefore,

now, no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.

Then, secondly, there is spiritual life in Christ Jesus. As the man is spiritually dead, God has spiritual life for himfor there is not a need which is not supplied by Jesus. There is not an emptiness in the heart which Christ cannot fill. There is not a ruin which He cannot fix! There is not a desert which he cannot make to blossom as the rose. O you dead Sinners! You spiritually dead, there is life in Christ Jesus, for we have seenyesthese eyes have seenthe dead live again! We have known the man whose soul was utterly corrupt, by the power of God seek after righteousness. We have known the man whose views were carnal, whose lusts were mighty, whose passions were strongsuddenly, by irresistible might from Heavenconsecrate himself to Christ and become a child of Jesus! We know that there is life in Christ Jesus, of a spiritual order. Yes, morewe, ourselves, in our own persons, have felt that there is spiritual life. Well can we remember when we sat in the House of Prayer, as dead as the very seat on which we sat! We had listened for a long, long while to the sound of the Gospel, but no effect followed, when suddenly, as if our ears had been opened by the fingers of some mighty angel, a sound entered into our heart. We thought we heard Jesus saying, He that has ears to hear, let him hear. An irresistible hand put itself on our heart and crushed a prayer out of it. We never, before, had a prayer like that. We cried, O God! Have mercy upon me a sinner. Some of us, for months, felt a hand pressing us as if we had been grasped in a vice and our souls bled drops of anguish. That misery was a sign of coming life! Persons, when they are being drowned, do not feel the pain so much as while they are being restored. Oh, we remember those pains, those groans, that living strife which our soul had when it came to Christ! Ah, we can remember the giving of our spiritual life as easily as could a man his restoration from the grave. We can suppose Lazarus to have remembered his resurrection, though not all the circumstances of it. So we, although we have forgotten a great deal, do remember our giving ourselves to Christ. We can say to every sinner, however dead, there is life in Christ Jesus! Though you may be rotten and corrupt in your grave, He who has raised Lazarus, has raised usand He can say, even to you, Lazarus! Come forth!

In the third place, there is eternal life in Christ Jesusand, oh, if eternal death is terrible, eternal life is blessed, for He has said, Where I am, there shall My people be. Father, I will that they also, whom You have given unto Me, be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory. I give unto My sheep eternal life and they shall never perish. Now, any Arminian that would preach from that text must buy a pair of rubber lips, for I am sure he would need to stretch his mouth amazingly! He would never be able to speak the whole truth without winding about in a most mysterious manner! Eternal lifenot a life which they may lose, but eternal life! If I lost life in Adam, I gained it in Christ. If I lost myself forever, I find myself forever in Jesus Christ. Eternal life! Oh blessed thought! Our eyes will sparkle with joy and our souls burn with ecstasy in the thought that we have eternal life. Be quenched you stars! Let God put His finger on youbut my soul will live in bliss and joy. Put out your eyes O sunbut my eyes shall see the king in His beauty when your eyes shall no more make the green earth laugh! And moon, be you turned into bloodbut my blood shall never be turned to nothingness! This spirit shall exist when you have ceased to be! And you, great world! You may all subside, just as a moments foam subsides upon the wave that bears itbut I shall have ETERNAL LIFE! O time! You may see giant mountains dead and hidden in their graves. You may see the stars like figs, too ripe, falling from the tree. But you shall never, never see my spirit dead!

III. This brings us to the third pointthat ETERNAL LIFE IS GIVEN TO ALL WHO COME FOR IT. There never was a man who came to Christ for eternal life, for legal life, for spiritual life, who had not already received it, in some sense, and it was manifested to him that he had received it soon after he came. Let us take one or two textsHe is able to save to the uttermost them that come unto Him. Every man who comes to Christ will find that Christ is able to save himnot able to save him a littleto deliver him from a little sin, to keep him from a little trial, to carry him a little way and then drop himbut able to save him to the uttermost extent of his sin, unto the uttermost length of his trials, the uttermost depths of his sorrowsunto the uttermost duration of his existence! Christ says to everyone who comes to Him, Come, poor Sinner, you need not ask whether I have power to save. I will not ask you how far you have gone into sin. I am able to save you to the uttermost. And there is no one on earth who can go beyond Gods uttermost!

Now another textHim that comes to Me, (mark the promises are nearly always to the coming ones), I will in no wise cast out. Every man that comes, shall find the door of Christs house openedand the door of His heart, too! Every man that comesI say it in the broadest sense shall find that Christ has mercy for him! The greatest absurdity in the world is to need to have a wider Gospel than that recorded in Scripture. I preach that every man that believes shall be savedthat every man who comes shall find mercy. People ask me, But suppose a man should come who was not chosen, would he be saved? You suppose nonsense and I am not going to give you an answer! If a man is not chosen, he will never come. When he does come, it is a sure proof that he was chosen! Says one, Suppose anyone should go to Christ who had not been called of the Spirit. Stop, my Brotherthat is a supposition you have no right to make, for such a thing cannot happen! You only say it to entangle me and you will not do that just yet. I say every man who comes to Christ shall be saved. I can say that as a Calvinist, or as a hyper-Calvinist as plainly as you can say it. I have no narrower Gospel than you haveonly my Gospel is on a solid foundation, whereas yours is built upon nothing but sand and rottenness. Every man that comes shall be saved, for no man comes to Me except the Father draws him. But, says one, suppose all the world should come, would Christ receive them? Certainly, if all came, but they wont all come. I tell you, all that comeyes, if they were as bad as devils, Christ would receive them! If they had all sin and filthiness running into their hearts as into a common sewer for the whole world, Christ would receive them! Another says, I want to know about the rest of the people. May I go out and tell them Jesus Christ died for every one of you? May I saythere is righteousness for every one of you, there is life for every one of you? No. You may not. You may say there is life for every man that comes. But if you say there is life for one of those who do not believe, you utter a dangerous lie. If you tell them that Jesus Christ was punished for their sins and yet they will be lost, you tell a willful lie! To think that God could punish Christ and then punish themwonder at your daring to have the impudence to say so!

A good man was once preaching that there were harps and crowns in Heaven for all his congregation. But then he wound up in a most solemn mannerMy dear Friends, there are many for whom these things are prepared who will not get there. In fact, he made such a pitiful tale, as indeed he might do. But I tell you who he ought to have wepthe ought to have wept for the angels of Heaven and all the saintsbecause that would spoil Heaven thoroughly. You know when you meet at Christmas, if you have lost your brother, David, and his seat is empty, you say Well, we always enjoyed Christmas but there is a drawback to it now poor David is dead and buried. Think of the angels sayingAh, this is a beautiful Heaven, but we dont like to see all those crowns up there with cobwebs on them. We cannot endure that uninhabited streetwe cannot behold yon empty thrones. And then, poor Souls, they might begin talking to one another and say, we are none of us safe here, for the promise wasI give unto My sheep eternal life, and there is a lot of them in Hell that God gave eternal life to. There is a number that Christ shed His blood for burning in the pit of Hell and if they may be sent there, so may we! If we cannot trust one promise we cannot another. So Heaven would lose its foundation and fall. Away with your nonsensical Gospel! God gives us a safe and solid one, built on Covenant doings and Covenant relationships, on eternal purposes and sure fulfillments!

IV. This brings us to the fourth point, THAT BY NATURE NO MAN WILL COME TO CHRIST, for the text says, You will not come unto Me, that you might have life. I assert, on Scripture authority from my text, that you will not come unto Christ, that you might have life. I tell you, I might preach to you forever, I might borrow the eloquence of Demosthenes or of Cicero, but you will not come unto Christ! I might beg of you on my knees, with tears in my eyes and show you the horrors of Hell and the joys of Heaven, the sufficiency of Christ and your own lost conditionbut you would, none of you, come unto Christ of yourselves unless the Spirit that rested on Christ should draw you! It is true of all men in their natural condition that they will not come to Christ. I think, though, I hear another of these babblers asking a questionBut could they not come if they liked? My Friend, I will reply to you another time. That is not the question this morning! I am talking about whether they will, not whether they can. You will notice, whenever you talk about free will, the poor Arminian, in two seconds, begins to talk about powerand he mixes up two subjects that should be kept apart! We will not take two subjects at once! We decline fighting two at the same time, if you please. Another day we will preach from this textNo man

can come except the Father draws him. But it is only the will we are talking of now. And it is certain that men will not come to Christ, that they might have life. We might prove this from many texts of Scripture, but we will take one parable. You remember the parable where a certain king had a feast for his son and bade a great number to come? The oxen and fatlings were killed and he sent his messengers bidding many to the supper. Did they go the feast? Ah, no. But they all, with one accord, began to make excuses. One said he had married a wife and, therefore, he could not come, whereas he might have brought her with him. Another had bought a yoke of oxen and went to prove them. But the feast was at nightand he could not prove his oxen in the dark! Another had bought a piece of land and wanted to see it, but I should not think he went to see it with a lantern. So they all made excuses and would not come. Well the king was determined to have the feast. So he said, Go into the highways and hedges and invite themstop! Not inviteCOMPEL them to come in. For even the ragged fellow sinning in the hedges would never have come unless they were compelled. Take another parable. A certain man had a vineyard. At the appointed season he sent one of his servants for his rent. What did they do to him? They beat that servant. He sent another and they stoned him. He sent another and they killed him! He, at last, said, I will send them my son, they will reverence him. But what did they do? They said, This is the heir, let us kill him and cast him out of the vineyard. So they did. It is the same with all men by nature. The Son of God came, yet men rejected Him. You will not come unto Me, that you might have life. It would take too much time to mention any more Scripture proofs.

We will, however, refer to the great Doctrine of the Fall. Anyone who believes that mans will is entirely free and that he can be saved by it, does not believe the Fall. As I sometimes tell you, few preachers of religion believe the Doctrine of the Fall thoroughly, or else they think that when Adam fell down he broke his little finger and did not break his neck and ruin his race. Why, Beloved, the Fall broke man up entirely! It did not leave one power unimpaired. They were all shattered, debased and tarnished like some mighty temple. The pillars might be there, the shaft and the column and the plaster might be there, but they were all broken, though some of them retain much of their form and position. The conscience of man sometimes retains much of its tendernessstill it has fallen. The will, too, is not exempt. What, though it is, the Lord Mayor of Mansoul, as Bunyan calls itthe Lord Mayor goes wrong! The Lord Willbe-Will was continually doing wrong! Your fallen nature was put out of order. Your will, among other things, has clean gone astray from God! But I tell you what will be the best proof of that. It is the great fact that you never did meet a Christian in your life who ever said he came to Christ without Christ coming to him! You have heard a great many Arminian sermons, I dare say, but you never heard an Arminian prayerfor the saints in prayer appear as one in word and deed and mind. An Arminian on his knees would pray desperately like a Calvinist. He cannot pray about free willthere is no room for it. Fancy him praying, Lord, I thank You I am not like those poor presumptuous Calvinists. Lord, I was born with a glorious free will. I was born with power by which I can turn to You of myself. I have improved my Grace. If everybody had done the same with their Grace that I have, they might all have been saved. Lord, I know You do not make us willing if we are not willing, ourselves. You give Grace to everybody. Some do not improve it, but I do. There are many who will go to Hell as much bought with the blood of Christ as I was. They had as much of the Holy Spirit given to them. They had as good a charge and were as much blessed as I am. It was not Your Grace that made us to differI know it did a great deal, still I turned the point. I made use of what was given me and others did notthat is the difference between me and them. That is a prayer for the devil, for nobody else would offer such a prayer as that!

Ah, when they are preaching and talking very slowly, there may be wrong doctrine. But when they come to pray, the true thing slips out they cannot help it! If a man talks very slowly, he may speak in a fine manner. But when he comes to talk fast, the old brogue of his country, where he was born, slips out. I ask you again, did you ever meet a Christian who said, I came to Christ without the power of the Spirit? If you ever did meet such a man, you need have no hesitation in saying, My dear Sir, I quite believe itand I believe you went away, again, without the power of the Spirit. I believe you know nothing about the matter and are in the gall of bitterness and the bond of iniquity. Do I hear one Christian saying, I sought Jesus before He sought me. I went to the Spirit and the Spirit did not come to me? No, Beloved. We are obliged, each one of us to put our hands to our hearts and say

*Grace taught my soul to pray   
And made my eyes overflow.   
Twas Grace that kept me to this day   
And will not let me go.*

Is there one herea solitary oneman or woman, young or oldwho can say, I sought God before He sought me? No! Even you who are a little Arminian, will sing

*O yes! I do love Jesus   
Because He first loved me*

Then, one more question. Do we not find, even after we have come to Christ, our soul is not free, but is kept by Christ? Do we not find times, even now, when to will is not present with us? There is a law in our members, warring against the law of our minds. Now, if those who are spiritually alive feel that their will is contrary to God, what shall we say of the man who is dead in trespasses and sins? It would be a marvelous absurdity to put the two on the same level! And it would be still more absurd to put the dead before the living! No. The text is true. Experience has branded it into our hearts, You will not come unto Me, that you might have life.

Now, we must tell you the reasons why men will not come to Christ. The first is because no man by nature thinks he needs Christ. By nature, man conceives that he does not need Christ. He thinks that he has a robe of righteousness of his ownthat he is well-dressedthat he is not naked. He thinks that he needs not Christs blood to wash him, that he is not black or crimson and needs no Grace to purify him! No man knows his need until God shows it to himand until the Holy Spirit reveals the necessity of pardonno man will seek pardon. I may preach Christ forever, but unless you feel you need Christ you will never come to Him. A doctor may have a good shop, but nobody will buy his medicines until he feels he needs them.

The next reason is because men do not like Christs way of saving them. One says, I do not like it because He makes me holy. I cannot drink or swear if He saves me. Another says, It requires me to be so precise and Puritanicaland I like a little more license. Another does not like it because it is so humbling. He does not like it because the gate of Heaven is not quite high enough for his head and he does not like stooping. That is the chief reason you will not come to Christ, because you cannot get to Him with your heads straight up in the air. Christ makes you stoop when you come! Another does not like it to be Grace from first to last. Oh, he says, If I might have a little honor. But when he hears it is all Christ, or no Christ, a whole Christ or no Christ, he says, I shall not come, and turns on his heels and away he goes! Ah, proud Sinners, you will not come to Christ. Ah, ignorant Sinners, you will not come to Christ because you know nothing of Him! And that is the third reason.

Men do not know His worth, for if they did, they would come to Him. Why did not sailors go to America before Columbus went? Because they did not believe there was an America! Columbus had faith, therefore he went. He who has faith in Christ, goes to Him. But you dont know Jesus. Many of you never saw His beauteous face. You never saw how applicable His blood is to a sinner, how great is His Atonementand how all-sufficient are His meritstherefore, You will not come unto Him.

And oh, my Hearers, my last thought is a solemn one. I have preached that you will not come. But some will ask, Is it their sin that they do not come? It is so. You will not come because your will is a sinful will! Some think that we sew pillows to all armholes when we preach this Doctrine, but we dont. We do not set this down as being part of mans original nature, but as belonging to his fallen nature! It is SIN that has brought you into this condition, that you will not come! If you had not fallen, you would come to Christ the moment He was preached to you. But you do not come because of your sinfulness and crime. People excuse themselves because they have bad hearts. That is the most flimsy excuse in the world! Do not robbery and thieving come from a bad heart? Suppose a thief should say to a judge, I could not help it, I have a bad heart. What would the judge say? You rascal! Why, if your heart is bad, Ill make the sentence heavier, for you are a villain, indeedyour excuse is nothing. The Almighty shall laugh at them and shall have them in derision. We do not preach this Doctrine to excuse you, but to humble you! The possession of a bad nature is my fault as well as my terrible calamity. It is a sin that will always be charged on men. When they will not come to Christ, it is sin that keeps them away! He who does not preach that, I fear is not faithful to God and his conscience. Go home, then, with this thought, I am by nature so perverse that I will not come to Christ and that wicked perversity of my nature is my sin. I deserve to be sent to Hell for it. And if the thought does not humble you, the Spirit using it, no other can. This morning I have not preached human nature up, but I have preached it down! God humble us all! Amen.

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PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #1245 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

WHY MEN CANNOT BELIEVE IN CHRIST   
NO. 1245

DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**How can you believe, which receive honor one of another, and seek not the honor that comes from God only? John 5:44.**

OUR Savior was addressing Himself to Pharisees who would not receive Him, and who, no doubt, pleaded that they could not believe on Him. They had just seen a very notable miracle worked by Hima man who had been sick many years had been suddenly restored and that by a word. That miracle, being of the same nature as the wonderful works of the great Father, a miracle of tenderness and Omnipotence, ought to have convinced them that Christ was the Son of God. They saw the miracle, however, and instead of drawing the proper inference, they began to quibble at the Master because He had performed it upon the Sabbath Day. The teaching of our Lords wonderful work of mercy and power was lost upon them. They could not, they would not see the finger of God in the miracle.

Before this miracle had occurred, John the Baptist had comethe Elijah who was foretold to herald the Messiah. These Pharisees had felt a partial belief in John and the popular voice compelled them to stifle any unbelief concerning him which may have lingered in their hearts. They dared not say that his ministry was altogether of man, and consequently they were posed by the Saviors question, The ministry of John, was it from Heaven or of men? They could not answer the question because if they denied his mission, the people would cry out against them. But, on the other hand, if they confessed that John came from Heaven, our Lords reply would have been, Why, then, did you not believe him and accept his testimony concerning Me?

They had, therefore, in addition to the miracle which Jesus worked, the testimony of John the Baptist, but still they could not believe. In addition to this, these men were exceedingly well acquainted with the Scriptures. The scribes made it their business to transcribe the Old Testament. They learned chapters and books by heart. Many of them were so well acquainted with the letter of Scripture that they could tell you which was the middle verse in each book! They have left us Masoretic notes which tell us what is the middle verse of the Bible, and the middle letter of the Bible and like trifles. They were very curious and careful concerning all the little jots and tittles of the sacred manuscripts.

Now, those books speak plainly of Christ. It is marvelous that men conversant with Old Testament Scripture could see Jesus Christ and observe His doings and not discover that He was the Messiah of whom Moses in the Law and the Prophets did write. What witness can be plainer than

that of Isaiah? Here was testimony upon testimony and yet, in the teeth of it all, the Christ was rejected! There are still persons of this kind in the world. They believe the Scriptures to be the Word of God, though they do not believe in the Lord Jesus Christ! They accept the Gospel narrative. They have no doubt, whatever, that Jesus, the Son of God, did live a life of perfection on earth and died as a substitutionary Sacrifice. They also believe that He has risen from the dead and is gone into Glory and has all power to save.

They believe that the Gospel message is true and yet they do not believe on the Lord JesusI mean that they do not so believe in Him in spirit and in truth as to believe unto salvation. They stop short with the knowledge of the outward facts. They do not come with their hearts and rest upon Him as their whole salvation. And if you ask them why not, they will not say that they will not, and shall not, but that they cannot. They plead a need of ability and they endeavor, as well as they can, to screen themselves behind that lack of ability. It is a monstrous thing, beyond all things monstrous, that a man should plead that he is under a necessity to call his God a liar!

It is an amazing thing that a man should actually urge as an apology for remaining at enmity to God that he cannot believe Him! That is to say, he actually pleads the great sin of calling God a liar as an excuse for his rebellion! What is that but to insult the Majesty of Heaven with an excuse which is, in itself, the highest insolence? To say I cannot believe a man is to malign his character. And to say that I cannot believe God is to do Him the highest conceivable dishonor. To what a pitch has the human heart gone in extravagance of presumptuous daring, when it boldly tells God that it cannot believe His testimony concerning His Son?

And though He says, Believe in My Son and you are saved, man dares to answer Him thus, We cannot believe in Your Son, as if the Christ of God were a liar, too, and He who died for us and gave the best pledge of His love, was not to be trusted. Alas for our race! Has it, indeed, come to this, that it is a hard thing to rely upon One who cannot deceive us, and difficult to place our dependence upon One who is able to save to the uttermost? Now, I want to deal as gently as I dare with those of you who have pleaded inability. It is very likely true that you cannot believelet us try to find out the reason for it.

The difficulty does not lie in the Truth of God to be believed, for it is neither absurd nor incredible. Neither does it lie in any need of mental faculty in yourself by which you might believe. In your case, the difficulty is not a mental one, for you already believe in the Inspiration of the Word of God, and in the mission of Christ and so on. Your difficulty, and I shall be faithful with you and try to put my finger upon it, just as Christ was faithful with these people and pointed out their moral difficultyHow can you believe, which receive honor one of another? May the Holy Spirit put power into my words.

First, let us speak of the hindrance which was in the way of these Pharisees. And then, secondly, let us make some guesses at the hindrances in the way of some of you who cannot believe.

I. First, THE HINDRANCE IN THE WAY OF THE PHARISEES. It may be in the way of some here and, therefore, let us note it carefully. They received honor one of another. Now, the mere fact of receiving honor, even if that honor is rightly rendered, may make faith in Christ a difficulty. A man gets to feel that he is something when others honor him and this is dangerous, for a man never believes in Jesus till he knows himself to be nothing. If others praise us. If they dwell upon our good points. If they pay respect to our rank. If they notice our abilities and talents, we are very apt to think that there should be some special way to Heaven for ussome platform tickets to let us in by a back door a little apart from the common crowd of sinners because we are so respected.

And when the Gospel says, You must be saved as a sinner or not at all. You must give up all claims of merit and all reliance upon what you can do, or else you never can be saved, then, in all probability the mere fact of our having received honor from other people will render it the more difficult for us to believe a doctrine which gives no honor to men, but stains the pride of all glory and casts human excellency into the dust. It is still more perilous if, receiving honor, we come to expect it, as these people did. They expected their countrymen to pay them homage. Were they not called by their brethren, great, and distinguished, and learned? Were they not styled doctor and, rabbi, and the like? They came to think that the people ought to honor and esteem them! And thus they went a step deeper into the perilous floods, for when a man gets to feel that he ought to be honored, he is in extreme danger.

I have known some who have been worthy of much honor and have received it without being in any degree elevated. With a proper modesty they have shunned the fame which followed them and blushed when it has overtaken them. But it is not given to all men to bear the serious trial of honor. Too many men, receiving honor, come to expect honorand he who expects honor is not in that condition of heart which renders it easy to fall down on his knees at the Throne of Divine Mercy and cry, God be merciful to me, a sinner.

Now, some of you may be very much esteemed in your familiesI am very glad you are. But, perhaps without your knowing it, there is growing up the feeling that you ought to be esteemed. Now, dear Friend, take care lest that should fester into a dangerous pride which will be your ruin! You know the simple story, (I dare say you have heard it told), of the slave owner who was under conviction and who had a servant under impressions, too. But poor Sam found Christ and peace long before his master did, at which the master expressed his wonder. The slave replied, Do you see, Massa, when de angel comes along with a white robe, he says to Massa, Here is a new robe for you. Massa looks at his coat, a little worn and a few holes, but still pretty fine. Ah, says Massa, it will patch up and do a little longer, so Massa does not get de new robe. De angel comes

to Sam and says, Sam, new robe for you. Sam says, Ah, I am all ragsI am all rags! Thank you, and I put on de new robe at once, Massa.

Now, there is just that fear lest your very amiable character and the respect it brings you should lead you to be all the longer in accepting the Righteousness of Jesus Christ. That, perhaps, is where your difficulty may be found at the present time. And if so, dear Friend, humble yourself under the mighty hand of God and you shall be exalted in due time, for God resists the proud, but He gives Grace to the humble. Remember, you may not be at all offensively proud to other people and yet there may be much pride in your heart in the sight of Godand this may be hindering you from believing the simple, precious Gospel which is meant for the guilty and the lost and the ruined, and which, dear Friends, is really meant for

you if you did but know your own condition.

In the case of the Pharisees, however, there was something more than that. They not only received honor and expected honor, but this honor was quite undeserved. These men won respect by a false character. Oh, they were wonderfully good men and marvelously religious! They had two pennyworth of halfpence to give away and they sounded a trumpet in the street, and everybody said, What a generous man that Rabbi Ben Simeon is! He has been giving money away at the corner of the street. When they paid their tithes they were very particular to send the servant down into the garden to cut exactly a tenth-part of the mint, the anise and the cumin. True, it was not worth two pence, it would not have made up a pound sterling in a hundred yearsbut it was intended to let everybody see their thorough-going principles.

Everybody said, Rabbi Ben Simeon is so very exact in the payment of his tithes. He is such a very holy man! He actually begged the collector to give him change for half a farthing so as to be quite correct, and not have even a sprig of mint on his conscience. He is very holy! Look at the border of his garmentother people wear theirs about an inch wide, but his is six inches at least! His tailor says that he is one of the godliest men he ever knew and spends a deal in trimmings. He is very holy and observes all the fastsyou can tell that by his sad countenance. He fasts twice in the week! Whoever heard of such self-denial? It is true he has a famous appetite on the other five days, but yet he is a very holy man.

They extolled one another for this ostentatious religiousnessthis wonderful piety! But if you could have seen the Pharisee in private you would have discovered that he really did not deserve a word of praise, for there, behind the door, what is that he is eating? Our Lord tells youit is a widows substance. You devour widows houses, and for a show make long prayers. He has been washing his hands because he has been to market, and they need it, for an orphans plunder defiles them. He carefully washes before he eats bread, but though he has made clean the outside of the cup and the platter, his inner part is full of filthiness.

Albeit that he was strict as to ceremonies, he taught men to set aside the Commandments of God and follow, instead, the commandments of men. The fellow, instead of deserving to be praised, ought to have been hooted off the stage for his hypocrisy! Now, be sure of this, if a man has a fine character, but does not deserve itif he allows that piece of dishonesty to go on, I do not wonder that he cannot believe in Jesus Christ! How could he? A man so false through and throughhow could he believe the Truth of God? If a man has lived in the dark all his life, do you wonder that the light makes his eyes ache and that, therefore, he hates it? If a man has been incrusted in filth from his birth and thrived in it, there is no wonder that he judges purity to be quite a superfluity. Believe in Jesus Christ? O, Man, while you are acting so vile a part, there is no wonder that you cannot believe in the honest, truthful Savior!

Now, is there anybody here who wears before the eyes of men a fair character and yet, in secret, is anything but what he ought to be? O Sir, if you cannot believe in Jesus, I can very well comprehend your difficulty! But, O, may God make you sinceremay He turn you into that honest and good ground on which the Seed will grow, for it never will grow in a hypocrites heart, let us preach to him as long as we may! These people who received honor had a further difficulty, namely, that always receiving this undeserved honor, they deceived themselves into believing that they deserved it. A man who deludes other people, by degrees comes to delude himselfthe deluder first makes dupes of others and then becomes a dupe to himself!

I should not wonder but what the Pope really believes that he is infallible, and that he ought to be saluted as, His Holiness. It must have taken him a good time to arrive at that eminence of self-deception, but he has got there, I dare say, by now, and every one who kisses his toe confirms him in his insane idea! When everybody else believes a falsehood concerning you, you come, at last, to believe it yourself, or at least to think that it may be so. These Pharisees, being continually called the learned rabbi, the holy scribe, the devout and pious doctor, the sanctified teacher, almost believed the flattering compliments! They used very grand phrases in those days and doctors of divinity were very common, almost as common as they are now. And the crowd of doctors and rabbis helped to keep each other in countenance by repeating one anothers fine names till they believed they meant something.

Dear Friends, it is very difficult to receive honor, to expect it and yet to keep your eyesight, for mens eyes gradually grow dull through the smoke of the incense which is burned before them. And when their eyes become dim with self-conceit, it will not be at all unusual if they say, We cannot believe in Jesus Christ. Their own great selves conceal the Cross and make them unable to believe the Truth of God! Once more, the praise of men generally turns the receivers of it into great cowards. How could they believe in Jesus? Why, the people would leave off terming them, the learned rabbi, and the celestial doctor, and their brethren would put

them out of the synagogue! How could they believe and lose their status?

Why, the people would say, Has rabbi So-and-So become a disciple of the carpenters son? Has he put aside his wisdom and become a child, that he may be instructed by the Nazarene? Why, the whole Sanhedrim would hiss out indignation against the learned man, the pious man, the devout man with his phylactery and the broad border on his garment, if he were to follow with publicans and harlots at the heels of the rejected Messiah! They were afraid! They were afraid! That same spirit which makes us love the praises of men makes us dread the threats of men. You cannot be pleased with the adulation of mankind without becoming fearful of their censure. It is a perilous thing to taste of human honorif it makes you sick, it is the best thing it can do for you. If you despise it utterly, it is the only way of bearing it without being injured by it, for I say again, delight in the praises of others saps the foundations of a mans manhooddelight in the praise of men takes a man off from following after the Glory of God and makes him afraid of following the Truth if it costs him ridicule.

Now, I am afraid that there are many here who cannot believe in Jesus Christ because they are afraid. Yes, there is a commercial traveler over there! If he were to become a Christian, why, the next time he went into the commercial room it would be known and there would be many odd remarks and no end of chaffing! You, Mr. Commercial, cannot follow Christ, can you? It is plain that you cannot believe and the reason is plain, tooyou are a great coward! There is a working man over there and he knows that it is right to be a believer in Jesus Christ, but he cannot believe. And the reason is that he could not stand those coarse remarks which he would be sure to get in the shop tomorrow morning! He has not spirit enough to bear with ridicule! He is the slave of others and trembles at their laughter! I would sooner lie in my grave than be so mean a thing.

Some are afraid of their brothers, others are afraid of the companions that they spend their evenings with. They have been, until this time, the first to lead the laugh at the evening carnival. If they were to be converted they would lose their little empire and no longer be a favorite. They could not stand contempt! Oh, the fear of man, the fear of man! What cowards it makes of intelligent beings! It is not conscience that makes cowards of us one-half so much as the need of conscienceif we had more conscience we should have less fear of menand would brave their scowls, and scorn their scorn, and bid defiance to their threats. But, O, how many live on the breath of their fellow men! To be approvedto be applaudedthat is their Heaven!

But to be despised, to be sneered at, to be called a fool, to have some nickname applied to themO, nothey would sooner go to Hell than bear that! I say that they are fools with an emphasis if that is the case! And if they will use their wits for a moment I think they will see it so, for surely to be lost to please fools is to be a fool yourself! Please your friends as far as it is right, but never go to such an expense as the ruin of your souls to keep up friendship with sinners. That man is no friend of mine who would leave me ruin my soul! I have known friends come to a man and suck all his estate out of him, lead him into speculations and schemes that serve their turn and desert him when they have ruined him! Do you call such men, friends?

We do not, when we speak honestly, call them such, and shall I call him a friend who leads me into sinful amusements, who seeks my favor by teaching me how to indulge my passions and courts my praise while ruining my soul? He is my decided enemy! He cannot be my friend at all! Flee from all of his class, young man, if you cannot convert him. Do not be such a coward as to be afraid of anybody! Stand straight up as God made you, and say, No, He never made me to be afraid of man, or woman, either. He has made me a man and the very least thing I can do is to pray Him to make me manly enough to buy the Truth of God and sell it not, and take up my Cross and follow Christ, come what may of it. Thus much upon the point as it concerned the Pharisees and some here.

II. Now, secondly, I am going to make some guesses as to OTHER HINDRANCES and you must all help me. You who cannot believe must help me by trying to find out how far I am describing your cases. It is, no doubt, true that some are unable to believe in Christ because they have a very high opinion of themselves. They have never done anything amiss, at least, not much, and they have got very good hearts at bottom. And if there has been anything awry they mean to mend and set it all right. They have no doubt that they will fare as well as most people. They will just do their best and God Almighty is very merciful and, no doubt, they will, by some means, get on the right side of the Judge at last.

Ah, dear Friend, you must be purged of this perilous stuff, or you cannot be saved! Your self-satisfaction is founded upon falsehood! Your heart is not so good as you think it, nor your conduct so commendable as you suppose. You have not done your best. If you will examine your past life, your conscience will find out many instances in which you did not do your best. And you cannotmark that worddespite the apparent strength of that resolve of yoursyou cannot conquer sin. I must say to you as Joshua to the children of Israel, You cannot serve the Lord. You are going to fight a stout enemy and the spear you carry in your hand is but a reed which will snap in battles perilous hour.

You think that you shall chase out the Canaanites, but they have chariots of iron and you cannot drive them out. I wish you would give up thinking that you can, for as long as you are strong and good and meritorious you will never be saved! Confess that you have failed! Confess that you are weakness, itself! Lay hold on the Divine strength! Leave yourself in the hands of Jesus! Yield to His Holy Spirit and sin will be conquered! Unless you do this, the real reason why you cannot believe in Christ is because you believe in yourself, and that is a very sorry reason for unbelief.

The lie of self-conceit prevents your seeing the great Truth of Christs ability to save.

In many cases there is a strong aversion to confession of sin and to an approach to God, and that is the reason why men cannot believe. When they are told, Whoever believes in the Lord Jesus has everlasting life, they answer, I wish I could believe, but I cannot. Now, let me ask one who speaks in that fashion. Did you ever go to God with tears and say, Lord, I have sinned? Did you ever acknowledge your transgressions to the Lord and, acknowledging them, did you then say, God be merciful to me a sinner? No, you have not done that and you cannot bring your mind to it. You do not like to make a clean breast of it. Now, he that confesses his sin shall find mercy, but none else. David said, When I kept silence my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long.

Moreover, if you do not confess your sin to the Lord, I do not see how you can believe in Christ, because Christ has come to pardon sin, and if you will not confess that you have transgressed, how can you believe in His power to pardon? How can you rightly value forgiveness when you are not awake to the fact that you have offended? The Lord Jesus has come to cleanse you by virtue of His blood. But if you do not need cleansing, or will not acknowledge that you do, I can well understand you when you say, I cannot believe in Him. It is your hardness of heart! It is your hatred of God! It is your esteem of yourself that hinders!

Many, also, are unable to believe in Jesus Christ because they are too lazy. They are slothfully thoughtless and careless. A great many young people and some older ones, too, do not like thinkingit is too much trouble. If you think, some of you women, it is about how that ribbon will suit your complexion. And some of you men, if you think at all, it is only about how you shall get an extra five pound note by your speculations. Thinking is a kind of work which the mass of the present race abhor! They will no more think than butterflies will make honey. They flit from flower to flower, but gather nothing. I know that this is true of multitudes in this country and I confess it was true of myself before the Lord, in mercy, met with me.

I did not want to think about sin, death, Heaven and Hell. I did not mind hearing a sermon, because that was the proper thing, and one could soon shake off any uneasy impression produced by it. To spend an hour quite alone, to look into another world, to face death, judgment and eternitythat is very dreary work to you whose main consideration is to kill time and keep yourselves amused. Now, my dear Friend, if you are a trifler, indifferent, careless, frivolous, superficial, giddy, forever giggling, not even serious enough to laughif life is all surface work with youI can very well understand why you cannot believe in Jesus Christ. You do not seem to have mind enough, or sense enough, for you degrade yourself into a semi-idiotic state by your frivolity. May God awaken you!

This life was given us for something better than to be sported away. It is not all a game of badminton, or skipping-rope. This life is given you to be followed by anotherand that other will be molded by this. What you are here you will be forever. He that is filthy, here, will be filthy. And he that is holy, here, will be holy. Mind what you do! The hours you try to get rid of, when you speak of, killing time, will accuse you before God as their murderer and bear blood-red evidence upon their hands against you. Wake up from such laziness, I charge you, lest you wake up when it will be too late! Already such sluggishness has kept you from believingit will soon sleep you into Hell.

There are some, again, who cannot believe in Jesus Christ because they are very, very fond of what they call pleasure. Now, every man is desirous of happiness and is not to be condemned for being so. The human mind was constituted to enjoy pleasure, but it was never created that it might be content with the vanities which nowadays are falsely called pleasures. It makes one blush for the age in which we live when we think of the trifles, light as air, in which our neighbors take delight. Sinful pleasures are a great bar to faith and must be renounced. That evil companion who has charmed you with questionable jests must be given up. Do you say that you cannot quit him? Then I see why you cannot believe in Jesus!

That house of unclean amusement which leads to viceunbelievers know that they must forsake it if they believe in Christand they cannot believe because they love the place of temptation. They hesitate. They deliberate. They say that they cannot believe in Jesus, but if they would speak the truth, they mean they cannot give up sweet sin! Sin is such a dainty that they need to roll it under their tongue and relish it once more. They prefer their pleasure to their Savior! Let me also say there are some who are unable to believe in Jesus Christ for reasons which I hardly care to utter publicly, and yet I must do it. I have sometimes had sorrowful proof of the reason why some men have lived in unbelief of Christ.

After death I have heard what it would have been a shame to whisper in the ear of an unsuspecting wife. The man was a respectable merchant in the City. He went into the best society, but he was keeping a mistress and living in fornication all the while! He said he could not believe in Christ! Do you wonder? How could he? I speak plainly, because these things are very common among your respectable merchants and they need to be told plainly of their sins. Do not come whining to me about I cant believe in Jesus Christ. Of course you cannot while you live in filthy lusts!

Some cannot believe, but why is it? Why, about once a fortnight, or perhaps once a month, the bottle gets the upper hand of them! They cannot believe, no, and there is another thing they cannot do, they cannot walk straight! They cannot believe, but they could if they would fling that brandy bottle out of the windowthe vile drink stands between them and Christ. To show us that they cannot believe, they hunt up some of Tom Paines blasphemies. And when they get half seas over they blubber out their religious difficulties and want us to believe that they are troubled about them! They are only acting a partthey are not honest infidels they only use skepticism to quiet their consciences, for they know very

well that drunkenness is their real master. There are plenty of very respectable people who never have to pay five shillings and costs, and yet do not go to bed sober as a rule. I mean women as well as men. These, also, cannot believe.

Have I not told some of you why you cannot believe? I will not mince matters with you. You know that what I say is true. I cannot go into all the sins which separate between men and Christ, but there are some who live for gain and, therefore, cannot believe. They must make money! Their first aim and their last is to make moneyand they are making money but they are making money in a way they would not like to have known. There are tricks in all trades, they say, as if they would smudge everybody else with their black brush to make themselves seem clean!

Now, I do not believe that every tradesman practices dishonesty. I believe there are many who would scorn a trick even if they could win millions thereby. And therefore it is not fair to blacken our neighbors to excuse ourselves. There are men about who seek gain and will stick at any lie if they can make a profit. They are making great sacrifices alwaysof their customers, I suspect, mainly. They misrepresent their goods and puff them with barefaced liesthe world is full of this rotten trading. Are any of you engaged in such trading? Dare you go to God and say, Lord, help me to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and then take down your shutters and cheat people? Why, the Lord will never help you to do anything of the sort! You must give up knavery and puffery, for you cannot serve God and Mammon, and God will never help you to do so.

There is no promise in the Bible that God will allow a man to remain dishonest and yet be saved. You need to be saved from your dishonesty, to be saved from your drunkenness, to be saved from your injustice! And unless you are saved from these you can by no means enter the kingdom of Heaven. May God grant us Grace to shake these vipers into the fire, for, O, my Hearers, though I have spoken sternly, just now, even as John the Baptist might have done, I, also, am a man and would plead with you tenderly. What sin can be worth indulging at the expense of your soul? Young soldier, over yonder, is there any sin which prevents your being a Christian in your regiment? Can any sin repay you for losing your soul? Young woman, over there, tempted by pleasure, can any gaiety be worth losing Heaven? Whether young or old, I ask you, What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul? I have spoken roughly to you in lovelove to your souls. If the whole host of pleasurable sins could be put together and gold piled upon them high as the moon, the whole mass would not repay a man for being cast into the fires of Hell! Do not run such risks, I pray you. May great Grace enable you to cast your sins away and take Christ at once.

There is one other thing I will mention, which I am persuaded prevents a great many from believing in Christ, and it is thisthey complain that they cannot believe that God will forgive such sinners as they areand they try to make out that it is impossible that their iniquities should be pardoned. I have, on several occasions, discovered that the true reason has been that they have not forgiven other people. Now, let us not deceive you. You must forgive everyone his trespasses against you, or your Father in Heaven will never forgive you. An unforgiving man is an unforgiven man. Let us say that againAn unforgiving man is an unforgiven man! If you take your brother by the throat and say, Pay me what you owe, you cannot wonder that the great King should be angry and refuse to hear you when you pray unto Him!

It is a very dreadful thing when this kind of spirit springs up between relatives, but it does do so. We have known parents who cannot forgive children. And we have known brothers who cannot forgive brothers, so that two of the same family will not speak to each other by the year together. I hope they are not so daring as to come to the Communion Table in such a temper as that, because they have no right there, certainly! It is not possible for us to be at peace with God if we will not be at peace with one another. May I not have put my finger upon the cause of unbelief in some now present? I know I have!

And now to sum up all in a word. If these are the reasons why you cannot believe in Jesus Christ, are they not reasons which aggravate your sin? You dare not plead any one of them before God. They are reasons which will fail you when you come to die. Remember, they will all be made known at the Day of Judgment. Every secret sinner here will have to stand forth to be seen as I stand publicly before you now. Yes, and much more so! Every man will be visible to the eyes of the assembled universe and all his actions will be read out in the face of the sunand more, his motives will be published, too. Whowho among you but must feel some dread of the Great Day of Assize? If you are not covered by the Righteousness of Christ, how will you endure the revelation of that day?

There will be no secrets then! A trumpet voice shall proclaim aloud every hidden thing and the lightning flash of the Divine eye shall discover the deeds of darkness. O, Soul, if you have any of these reasons for not believing, what shall I say to you? Put away such unreasonable reasons! God has given His Son to bleed and die for sinnersall He bids sinners do is to come and trust His Sonand if they will but trust His Son they are saved! Their transgressions are forgiven the moment they believe in Jesus! They receive a new life and begin a new career. But, you say, how am I to know that it is so? God says it is so! Is not that enough? There are hundreds of us here who have tried and proved the Truth of the promise

*Oh, believe the message true   
God to us His Son has given.*   
Rest on Him and you shall have the blessings which He came to give to the guilty and the lost!

I feel as if I cannot utter what I feel, or feel as I ought to feel, when I look round upon this congregation and remember that there are many here who are refusing Jesus Christand that some of them, in a very short time, will be where they will have no more space for believing unto

life, but will be shut out forever from all hope! I cannot bear the thought that one among you should then say, I went to hear the preacher at the Tabernacle one Sunday evening and he preached to us about the reasons why we could not believe. But he was so very smooth-tongued and velvetmouthed that he did not deal with our consciences fairly and honestly.

No, Sirs! You will not dare to say that! You will not dare to say that! I have spoken plainly to you! What, then, will you say? You will have to admit, I was plainly warned, but I persisted in not believing in Jesus Christ. I said I could not, but the reason was that I would not. I harbored evils in my heart and I refused to get rid of them. And so I could not believe in Christ. I chose my own destruction and now that I have accomplished it, I have no one to blame but myself. Over the roof of that dreadful prison in which I am shut in forever, I continually read these words, You knew your duty, but you did it not. You heard of Jesus, but you rejected Him, and your blood is on your own head.

God grant it may not be so, but instead thereof, may many of you come to believe in Jesus now! And then we will meet in Heaven and praise redeeming Grace. Hoping that free Grace will make it so, we will sing one of Mr. Sankeys joyful hymnsRing the Bells of Heaven

**Ring the bells of Heaven! There is joy today, For a soul returning from the wild!   
Look! The Father meets him out upon the way, Welcoming His weary wandering child.   
Glory! Glory! How the angels sing,   
Glory! Glory! How the loud harps ring!   
Tis the ransomed army, like a mighty sea, Pealing forth the anthem of the free.**

***PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMONJohn 5.*** HYMNS FROM OUR OWN HYMN BOOK387, 572, 541.   
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WHY MEN DO NOT BELIEVE   
NO. 3463

A SERMON   
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, JUNE 17, 1915.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, OCTOBER 11, 1868.

**How can you believe, who receive honor one of another John 5:46.**

THE Pharisees in our Lords day were very fond of high-sounding titles. They had their diplomas, like our modern doctors of divinity, and they took good care to pride themselves upon them. Some were called Rab, others, Rabbi, others, Rabbini. They had their various degrees of respectdegrees which signified the respect due to them, and the attainments to which they had reached. In fact, they would not listen to a teacher unless he came with the title of, Rab, or, Rabbi, or, Rabbini. He must be one who had about him a great air of self-importance. He must be a witness of himself and that very abundantly, too, or else the confraternity of the Scribes and Pharisees turned away from him.

Now our Lord asked no testimonials from anybody. He stood up and spoke very simply, but very earnestly, the Truth of God and He did not quote, as these old Rabbis did, authors far gone back, one upon another, and make glosses upon them. He took the authority derived from God and constantly said, Verily this is the case, and, Verily I say unto you that this other is the case. And when these mighty Scribes and Pharisees turned upon their heels and would not receive Him, He replied to them, It was not at all likely that you would. You gentlemen are so given to complimentary phrases and to grandiloquent titles, that there was no likelihood that you would listen to a Man who came with Truth on His lips, and still further, in His heart. Perhaps there could be nothing more clear than that the position which the Scribes and Pharisees occupied was most dangerous. They were prejudiced. They considered that they had the key of knowledge. They already knew by far, too much to be taught anything more and, consequently, while publicans and harlots heard Christ and rejoiced to listen to Him, out of all those who were continually caviling and finding fault, how few ever won the blessing!

Now this is an illustration of a general rule upon which I wish to speak tonight. The moral character has a great effect upon the faith. These men, through being proud, stilted and fond of titles, were unable to believe in Christbut there are other faults more common than these which effectually prevent men from becoming the disciples of our blessed Master. Of some of these I intend to speak this evening. And when I have done so, I shall have a few words to address to the individuals here who cannot believe in Christ because there is a something within their hearts that very effectually prevents their coming to the faith of Gods elect. First, then, it is very clear that

I. IT IS NOT BECAUSE A TRUTH IS PLAIN THAT, THEREFORE, ALL MEN SEE IT.   
There are some men in such a condition of mind, of such a blinding sort, that even if the Truth of God could be still more plain, it would be the most unlikely thing in all the world that they would receive it! We will suppose for a moment that teetotalism is based upon the surest Truth of God and cannot, for a moment, be disputed. Some earnest Brother is endeavoring to convince a man. He belabors him with the most potent argumentshe brings before him the most astonishing facts and some of those wonderful statistics which the more we look at, the less we believe! And after bringing all these to bear upon the man, he is still unmoved. You are surprised, but somebody whispers in your ear, He owns a gin palace, and now you are not surprised at all! It would be a very unlikely thing that he should be convinced of the propriety of total abstinence while he, himself, gets his gain by selling the pernicious evils! But take another case of the same sort. A young gentleman, in conversation with a bishop, was endeavoring to show his lordship the unscriptural character of the Episcopal body as now held in the Church of England. His lordship was observed to smile and when he was asked the reason, he replied, Why, I wonder at the courage of this young gentleman that he should imagine he could ever convince me out of 3,000 a year! And, indeed, it was not very likely that he would be converted from the errors of Episcopacy, if these are errors, any more than our friend of the gin palace was likely to be converted to anti-alcoholic principles! There is a something in both instances about the position of the men which renders them, probably, impervious to the Truth of God! These two illustrations just bring that point before your minds eye.   
Now there are some men who do not believe in Jesus. They have godly parents. They have lived to see others who have believed and though, perhaps, they have never been quite able to cast away the recollections of their early days, yet for all that, they are almost and would be quite infidels if it were not for a slender thread which is still held in the hands of God. Now the question comes to usWhy are not these people Believers? Under so many good influences, why are they not decidedly Believers in Christ? The answer may be found by the light of the Truth which I have brought to your minds. There may be a something about their characters which renders it impossible for them to be Believers in Christ, no, which even reflects credit upon the Gospel of Jesus, that they should not be able to believe it, for if, being as they are, they could receive it, it might prove that Gospel to be a thing devoid of the power of God!

Let me just mention some of the things which effectually prevent men from believing in Christ, and one is a self-righteous idea of ones self. Exceedingly common, this! The man thinks that he is not as other men are and though he does not say so, he is rather proud of himself. Though he is so humble as not to say it, yet at the bottom of his heart he is convinced that nobody is worthy of greater respect than he is! He has been scrupulously honest and has brought up his family, to the best of his knowledge, in the ways of integrity. He is a good fellow, generous to the poor and if he should have a fault or two, yet who has not his faults? As for himself, if the world were picked, he would at least take his place somewhere near the first! Now you cannot expect that man to believe the Gospel, for that Gospel tells him that he is fallen, that his sins have been so many that God has condemned him forever, that he must escape from that condemnation or, if not, he must sink forever into misery and that for him there is no salvation except upon the footing of pure Grace apart from merit! The Gospel denies that he has any merit. It pulls off from him all those finely woven raiments of his, in which he boasted himself, and makes him stand naked before the bar of Godand the man does not like that. No, he says, I will not be treated so! The Gospel gives me so ill a character that I will take my chances and not believe the Gospel, but still hope to be saved by my own natural goodness.   
Well, dear Hearer, if this is your case, I should not advise you to run the risk, for if you are to look at yourself, you will find many omissions and, above all, this glaring omissionthat you have not loved the God who made you and you have not served Him! He supplies you with life, but you do not reverence Him. If it had not been for His will, you had long ago been among the dust that sleeps in the grave, or among the lost that howl in the Pit and yet, despite His longsuffering goodness, you have not thanked Him, but gracelessly gone up and down the world with no more thought of your Maker than the brute that dies and so comes to its end! I do pray you look at yourself in the light of Gods Law, that spiritual Law which judges your thoughts and which comes home to your imaginations. What if your outward life is pure, yet can you stand such a test as that? You know you cannot! Believe not, then, yourself to be rich and increased, for you are poor, you are penniless in the Presence of God. Oh, that you could feel this! Then would you come to Jesus and put your trust in Him, but, alas, this self-righteousness of yours is that which holds you back from Christ. How can you believe while you take honor to yourselves and flatter yourselves? You must be humbled! You must be brought low, or else faith in Christ can never reside in your bosom.   
A second remark may come closer home to others, and I do desire to come very close home to you. There are men who never will believe in Jesus because their very idea of religion is a mistake. You ask them what their religion is and, if they spoke very plainly, they would say that they like good music, excellent music, and they like the best of architecture, and they like floral decorations, and they like millinery, and some of them like images on altars, and I know not what other devout and admirable things besides! They take religion to be simply the indulgence of their tastes, the pleasing of the eyes, the gratification of the senses and, if they can sit while the pealing organ pours forth floods of music and they are charmed thereby, they call that adoration! True, as excellent music might be heard at the theater or the opera, but that would be an abomination! The ears are tickled with the same sounds, precisely the same, and yet in the one case it is sin, and in the other case it is holiness! I confess I cannot quite see the differenceI can perceive none whatever! The gratification of the senses, of the ears and the eyes cannot be devotion! It is for the heart to draw near to God! It is to learn that God is a Spirit and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth. It is to learn that the broken heart is the best sacrifice, that the tears stealing down the cheek is that which is received by the great Father who is in Heaven. That to come humbly and confess our sins, to come with lowly reverence and trust in the great Lamb of God is acceptable worship, not the mere chanting or singing of the lips, or the bending of the knees, or the joining in a liturgical servicebut for the inner man to bow itself before the unseen Godthe vital part of our nature to come into contact with Him who lives and who hears prayer! Now, you cannot expect a man who has imbibed his notions of religion from a thing that is theatrical and full of show, to accept the simple teaching of Jesus Christ. How can they believe while they are duped by these gewgaws? How can they believe in Jesus while they are taken up with these mere externals, these fancies, these sweet perfumes and sounds which can never be acceptable to the great God who is in Heaven? There is something greater, something deeper about salvation than this!   
There are not many here who will come under that head, but they will come under another. There are many who cannot believe in Jesus becausenow let them themselves estimate the force of thisthey cannot believe in Jesus because they have a besetting sin that they cannot give up! There is the bottom of most mens doubt! They would not doubt if they did not sin. If they could have their sins and be Believers, they would be Believers fast enough, but there is that company that must be given up, that company which, instead of sanctifying the soul, depraves it. There are those amusements which are not merely recreations which might invigorate the jaded mind, but which are, in truth, a sort of debauchery which turns aside the mind from its true force and vigor. Oh, how many things there are in this great London that we know nothing of, and which it were better not to know, which are the secret source of the doubts and skepticism that come up on the surface of society! It were a very curious thing to follow these men home, to follow those home, I say, who say they doubt this and doubt that! Yes, when you see them drunk, you do not wonder that they doubt a sober Gospelit were a pity but what they did. When you see them cheat, you do not wonder that they doubt an honest Gospelit were a great pity that they should believe it! When you hear them swear, you do not wonder that they doubt a sacred Gospel! Why, to keep up any appearance of consistency, not to say, sanity, they must doubt it! There is a kind of honesty about this professed doubt which I like, for it is better for a man to doubt those things which contradict his life than that he should be such a damnable hypocrite as to pretend to believe in thembetter than that he should stand to them in theory, and yet deny them in his life!   
But to return to the subject, there lies the secret spring that makes up the non-belief in Jesus in many hearts. It is because they feel that His service is too hard, and exacts too much, too great a self-denial, too much of coming out from the world, and so they cannot believe in Him. And yet Jesus asks us to give up nothing that is really for our good. Jesus, I say, takes away from us no pleasure that is a true pleasure, no enjoyment that exalts the mind or that makes a man truly blessed. Tis true He takes away that poisoned cup. Who would permit you to drink it who had a care for you? Tis true He takes away from you that dagger of sin, that poisoned viper that is only nestling in your bosom to destroy you! Who that loved you would let you have these dangerous things about you? Jesus Christ asks us only for such self-denial as shall promote our everlasting welfare. Ah, men and women, you will find your sins wont pay you when you come to dieand I suppose you intend to do that. I hope you think not that you shall live forever! Then that little drink will seem sour enough when you come to leave it for the last time. Then the giddy merriment of this world will seem foolishness enough when the curtain begins to be drawn and you look from side to side on the river of death into an eternity that is dark, unlit by a single star of hope! You know that you will not perish like brutes. You know, for God has put a trembling conscience within you, that you will start upon a voyage that is never to end! Oh, Sirs, how is it that you thus wreck your vessels for a little joy, and for a paltry pleasure give up the welfare of your souls forever?   
There are some men, too, who are kept from believing in Jesus Christ because they are lovers of gain. How could they believe in Jesus when their whole life is spent in money-grabbing? Mammon, the least erect of spirits, says Milton, but he is the god of London! Does not Mammon rule and reign abundantly, and do not men fall down and say their prayers to him? All hail, thrice glorious Mammon! Fill our pockets full and help us to blow out our bubble-companies and cheat the public! Are not these the prayers offered by many? Yes, and among you in sober trade, how many spend their whole lives in getting and scraping for themselves aloneno consideration for the Church of Christ, or for the poor and needy, but only for themselves? Now when Christ comes and says, Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon Earth, where moth and rust corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in Heaven, where neither moth nor rust corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal, you do not wonder that they do not like that. No, they say, it is contrary to social economics! When He tells them that this world will pass away, and the fashion of it, and bids them seek another and a better portion, where things endure without end, they will not have it. This world is quite enough for them and they are gone from Christ. How can they believe in Him if they live for gain?

So, too, there are some others who never can believe in Jesus because they are so downright cowardly that it would be very difficult for them to believe in anything which involves the slightest oppositions. Yes, many a man and many a woman has been influenced by that mean thought, I would be laughed at. I would be ridiculed if I became a real Believer in Jesus Christ. Why, how could I meet my old companions? What would they say to me if they heard that I had become a saint? How could I stand the sneers of the commercial room? How could I run the gauntlet down that long workshop where all the benches are? How, says the young woman, could I have it known in that book-folding room that I have been baptized? And among your upper circles it is just the same. How men are afraid of one another, afraid of poor worms, afraid of poor sinners like themselves who shall wither before the face of the terrible Judge of all the earth! Oh, that men should be so afraid of men, and not afraid of God, that they will consent to be His enemies and lose His good opinion! The good opinion of a drunk or of an arrant fool is thought to be of more weight to them than the good opinion of their God! Sirs, I scarcely like to talk to you on this subject because it is not manly for you to be ashamed of your convictions. If you do love Christ, say so, and if the world hisses, what does it matter to you, as long as you get Christs smile? Are we the sons of those brave old sires who at Edgehill met sword with sword and feared not? What have we to do to cringe before the worlds frown, or to court its smile? God grant it may be otherwise, and may you rise into the full stature of spiritual manhood and be not ashamed to follow Jesus through good report and through ill-report.   
Now I might enlarge, but I shall not. You clearly see that there are many moral faults which keep men back from believing in Jesus. Now for   
II. A FEW PLAIN, EARNEST WORDS WITH THOSE OF YOU WHO HAVE NOT BELIEVED.   
There have been many arguments which have been used at different times to bring over the skeptical to the faith. I will just tell you what has often strengthened my own mind, so that, my dear Friends, if God inclines you to overcome the moral difficulty, you may not have a mental difficulty. In the first place, the Doctrine that we are called upon to believe is, that having sinned we are condemned, but that God, full of mercy, had pity upon us and that His Son, God Himself, came down on earth to suffer what was due on account of our sins. In order that the Justice of God might not even seem to be robbed of its due, Jesus, Gods onlybegotten Son

*Bore that we might never bear*

*His Fathers righteous ire.*   
Now I have turned that over, and it looks to me as if it must be true because I cannot conceive where else it came from but from the realm of facts. A God condescending to bleed and die for His own enemies out of respect to Justice, and moved by lovewhere in all heathen mythology is there anything like it? Where have the most refined of men ever hit upon anything that at all approaches to it? Their gods are usually lustful and the highest honors of their gods are crimsoned with blood. But if this is not true, it ought to be, for it is the grandest conception that ever flashed upon the human mind! The superlatively Just, the superlatively Great must suffer sooner than that His creature should suffer, and sooner than that the laws of His Kingdom should for a moment be dishonored? I do not know how it is, but I never need arguments about it, myself. It seems to me so plainly a Divine thing, so standing out of all conceptions of poetry, so distinctly rising out of all the realms of philosophy that it must be true!

Then, again, another thing which often helps me is this ever since I have trusted in the Son of God to save me, I have been conscious of a very remarkable change that has passed over my entire nature. Now I desire to speak very soberly and I claim to be believed. I have as good a claim to be believed as any other man. I do not wish to distort the truth, but now this I know, I look up to the starlit sky at night and I think, The God who made this great universe and orders it all, I really love. I would not do a thing contrary to His will if it were not for my poor infirmities. I would do and I would wish to be whatever that great invisible God would wish me to do and to be. I feel I would. Now I know there was a time when I did not think about Him at all, or if I did, I never could say, I am reconciled to Him. I am one with Him. His will is my will and I desire to do whatever He bids me do. Now I know that that same thing that has made me love God has made me desire to be truthful, to be honest, to be kind, to be generousand when I have not done right, I feel a pricking within my heart that I did not feel once, so that I do know that there is set up in me a wonderful standard which was not there before. Now a thing that makes me love God and makes me live and feel so, cannot be a lie! If so, it is a very wonderful kind of lie which produces holiness and goodness. And indeed, my Brothers and Sisters, if you would try this for yourself, you would get the same evidenceit would produce in you the same change. There would be your old nature, and you would have to grapple with it, to your own shame and sorrow, but still there would be a new nature with better desires and feelingsand with this new nature within me I am convinced, for myself at any ratethat this thing is true.

Moreover, knowing a great many of those who have believed in Jesus, I am obliged to say of them that they are all imperfectI wish they were not. I wish they were what God Himself is for purity, and gentleness, and lovebut for all that, if I had to pick the people I should like to live with, I would choose them. And with all their faults, I am persuaded that you would sooner have the world full of them than you would of any other sort. If you were going down a dark lane tonight, and you did not know what sort of people were going along it, I would be bound to say it would be a wonderful consolation to you to be told that they were Believers in Christyou would feel pretty safe, and though there are professors, rotten professors who are a very stench both to the Church and to the worldit is but natural that there should be hypocrites. There never was a good thing in the world but what people did make shams of it. When people say, They are all hypocrites, I say, Then I suppose all our sovereigns are bad ones. Why, if there were no good sovereigns, people would not make bad ones, for it is the good ones that pass off the bad ones! And if there were not some real, genuine children of God, people would not pretend to be soit would not pay! It is because the world, after all, knows that faith in God makes men happier and nobler, that men make pretense of having what they have not! Now when I see the effects of the Gospel upon Gods people, making than patient under pain, joyful in the hour of trouble, making them pray to God and receive answers as indisputable facts, I am able to receive Jehovahs Word and believe the Gospel of Jesus as sent from God.

Now a word with regard to you, dear Friend, who are still a doubter. We are driven to believe two things about you and about everybody like you, namely, that you will never come to know Christ unless the Holy Spirit deals with you, for all the arguments in the world do not convince the human heart unless the Spirit of all Grace shall come and change the nature! And we believe another thing of you, that you must first give up that belief in yourself before you are ever likely to believe in Jesus. How simple it all seems! God has punished Jesus, His dear Son, instead of those who trust Him. Those who trust Him are forgiven. That trust, that sense of forgiveness operates upon the mind, leads the mind to gratitude, influences it to love. The man loves God, chooses what he once rejected, and runs now in the ways of God which were once tedious to him. There is the whole theory of salvation and the experimentally acting out of it. It does seem to me hard that you turn from it. If it were a Gospel full of superstitions, like Roman Catholic teachingsif we asked you to believe in certain miracles that were so strange, so weird that you could not conceive them to be true, I could well excuse your unbelief! But when it is simply to trust the Incarnate God who did hang on Calvary and bleed for sinners, a thing which looks so true, and which to tens of thousands has been proved to be true in their lives and in their heartsoh, I would that you would doubt no longer, but close in with Christ and find safety in Him! These reflections will do to close with, namely, that

III. IF WE DO NOT BELIEVE IN JESUS, OUR NON-BELIEF WILL NOT CHANGE THE FACTS.   
If a man says, I am no sinner, he remains a sinner. If he says, I do not believe that God will punish sin, the punishment will be just as sure. If he says, There is no hereafter, the future will not end for him. If he shall doubt as to the punishment of the wicked, his skepticism shall not mitigate Gods wrath. The facts remain. Oh, think not, when you have blotted out your own recollection, that you have blotted out Gods determination! There it stands.   
And then think againthose facts are coming nearer every hour. We shall soon be into another year. How these years do fly! How the multitudes of men fly, too! They were dying last year when the snowflakes fell upon their tombs. They died while the sweet flowers were blossoming from the sod as though to remind us of resurrection. They fell when the mowers scythe laid the grass in the netand they are dying nowdying fast while the sere leaves are descending and heaping up their sepulchers. How is it that we presume that we shall not die? Persons well a week ago are gone, and our own hearts are merely like muffled drums which beat sad funeral marches to the tomb, and here are still the factsthe fact of sin and a tortured conscience! The fact of punishment and no forgiveness! The fact of eternity and no hope! The fact of Hell and no escape! Oh, you who have doubted, if you push these off by your doubting, let alone annihilating them, there might be some excuse for youbut they come! They come like some huge express train thundering down the line, and there are you, like children playing on the tracks, and you tell us that your games are full of merriment and there is time enough, and you will think about it! Or you do not believe the express is coming, though there it is with its great red eyes and its great mouth of fire, and it comes rushing on and crushing everything that shall be in its pathway! Fly, in Gods name, Man! This may be the last hour you may have in which to fly! Think not that you can postpone it, or that you can stop it. Over you with a crash will the Divine vengeance come! He shall tear you in pieces and there shall be none to deliver you. But this is not yet! And meanwhile be wise and escape! Lay hold on eternal fife. Trust Jesus and the Infinite Mercy of God shall blot out the past and secure the future and you shall be saved in Christ Jesus with an everlasting salvation!

I talk thus somewhat strongly because I feel strongly, and I often puzzle myself with this questionwhy do I feel concerned about some of your souls when you are not concerned about them at all? Why, you came and heard me tonight, and it only seems like a little kind of music. Well, it may be sport to you, but it is none to me! I have to answer for this, and if I speak not so that you understand, and speak not earnestly, I know I shall have to account to my Master! I would not be some that occupy the pulpit for all the worlds that God ever made if they were threaded on one string! To get a sermon and read it coldly, to read out statements which do not concern your hearers and deliver them as if it did not matter whether they were true or notto be an iceberg in the midst of an assemblyhow will God call us to account if such is our way of ministry! But I beseech you, men and women, if you have not believed in Christ, to remember that that is the only door of safety according to Gods own Revelation. Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, Jesus Christ, the Righteous. To deny Him, to neglect Him, is to perish! To trust Him, to accept Him, is to be saved! May Gods blessed Spirit move you to trust Him this very night, and as there will be on earth, so will there be joy in Heaven, and Gods shall be the Glory world without end! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **JOHN 3:1-21.**

We can scarcely find a Chapter in which the Gospel lies so compact and so plainly stated.   
1. There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. Christs door is open at all hours. You may come to Christ by day. You may come to Christ by night. There is never a time when Christ is not home. He that seeks finds, and, to him that knocks, it shall be opened. The same came to Jesus by night. Perhaps he was timid. It is just as likely that he was prudent and did not wish to commit himself till he had seen what it was that Jesus taught. Perhaps, too, he was busy and had no time except at night. Better come at night than not come at all! The same came to Jesus by night.   
2. The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto Him, Rabbi, we know that You are a Teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that You do, except God be with Him. The miracles were accepted as a proof of Christs mission, and if they do not seem to be such a proof to us at this distance, they were a most marvelous and necessary proof at the first. Perhaps they have ceased because that first work being done, the testimony can now stand upon its own strength, and men reading it may judge it to be of God if they will. But to Nicodemus it was quite clear that Christ could not have worked His miracles, except God were with Him.   
3. Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a man is born-again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God. Here is a greater miracle than I have worked in the outside world. Here is a spiritual miracle. This is what you must receive as well as others. You cannot even understand My Kingdom, and know what it meansyou cannot see it, except you are born-again.   
4. Nicodemus said unto Him, How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mothers womb, and be born? Thus do men interpret Christs figures literally, and this has been the basis of much mischief and false doctrines. When He is using metaphors to make the thing plain, they straightway use the metaphor rather as a cloak to hide the meaning than as a glass through which to see it! This is the reason why the false doctrine of transubstantiation has come up. Because our Savior said, This is My body, men have not been able to understand that He meant, This represents my body. This is a figure. Truly the letter kills. It is the inner spirit that gives life.   
5. Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God. He cannot be Christs professed disciple unless he receives the Spirit and unless he is baptizedif the water here relates to Baptism at all, which we judge it does not. He must be renewed, washed and purified. That must be the waterand he must have the Holy Spirit dwelling in him, or else, as he cannot see, so he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.   
6. That which is born of the flesh is flesh: and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. A man may have the best parents that ever lived, but all that is born of the flesh is flesh, at the very best. Your father may be a saint and your mother a saint, but you are born in sin, for that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and unless you are born of the Spirit, you cannot understand or see spiritual thingsand you cannot enter into the spiritual Kingdom, for you have no spiritual capacity. The carnal mind discerns not the things that are of God, for they are spiritual, and must be spiritually discerned. Therefore we must be born-again so as to receive that Spirit by which spiritual things are discerned and entered into.   
7, 8. Marvel not that I said unto you, You must be born-again The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound thereof, but cannot tell from where it comes, and where it goes; so is everyone that is born of the Spirit. There are mysteries in Nature. There are mysteries in Grace. Every new-born soul is a mystery. He cannot explain himself. He can scarcely understand himself.   
9, 10. Nicodemus answered, and said unto Him, How can these things be? Jesus answered and said unto him, Are you a master of Israel, and know not these things? These simple thingsthese elementary principlesthese rudiments of the school book of Believers.   
11. Verily, verily, I say unto you, We speak what We know, and testify what We have seen: and you receive not Our witness. This was an additional hint to Nicodemus of the unbelief that still lingered in him. You receive not Our witness.   
12. If I have told you earthly thingsThings that have to do with men while here below.  
12. And you believe not, how shall you believe if I tell you of heavenly things? If I lift the veil and talk to you about still greater mysteries, if you do not believe about regeneration, where will you be if I begin to talk of My Godhead and of all the inner secrets?  
13. And no man has ascended up to Heaven, but He that came down from Heaven, even the Son of Man which is in Heaven. A riddle, doubtless, to Nicodemus, which in later days he understood.   
14, 15. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up: That whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life. Oh, that blessed, whoever! Hear it, you sons of men, and tell it to your neighborsThat whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.   
16-18. For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world: but that the world through Him might be saved. He that believes on Him is not condemnedhe may be very faulty. His conscience may accuse him, but he is not condemned.   
18. But he that believes not is condemned already. Hear that! Condemned alreadynot in a state of probation. Never was there a greater mistake than to say that men are in a state of probation! That probation has passed long ago. They have been proved in the world and if they are unbelievers, they are condemned already. Condemned already.   
18-19. Because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnationthe head and front of it.   
19, 20. That Light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than Light, because their deeds were evil. For everyone that does evil hates the Light, neither comes to the Light, lest his deeds should be reproved. This is the secret of infidelity. This is the reason of all opposition to Christ. It is love of sin! Trace it home to its den and lair, and you shall find that it is love of sin that breeds hatred of Christ. Men do not see because they do not want to see. They do not want to see too much lest they should be uneasy in their present state of life. So they kick against Christ and try to put out the Light of His Gospel, lest they be reproved by it.   
21. But he that does truth comes to the Light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are worked in God. God give us the heart that seeks His Light, and sooner or later we shall find it. We shall find it in Christ!

Adapted from the C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Version 1.0, Ages Software.   
PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #1605 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

JESUS KNEW WHAT HE WOULD DO   
NO. 1605

**DELIVERED ON THURSDAY EVENING, JUNE 23, 1881, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**This He said to test him: for He Himself knew what He would do. John 6:6.**

OBSERVE, dear Friends, how careful the Holy Spirit is that we should not make a mistake about our Lord Jesus Christ. He knew that men are liable to think too little of the ever-blessed Son of God and that some, who call themselves Christians, nevertheless deny Christs Deity and are always ready to forge an argument against the true and real Deity of the Savior out of anything which appears to limit His power or knowledge. Here is an instance of the care of the Spirit to prevent our falling into an erroneous conclusion. Our Lord consults with Philip, asking this poor disciple, Where shall we buy bread, that these may eat? Some might, therefore, have inferred that Jesus did not know what to do and felt embarrassed. From this they would argue that Jesus cannot be Almighty God, for, surely, embarrassment is inconsistent with Omnipotence! Why should Jesus consult with Philip, if He knows all things?

Now, the Holy Spirit would have us beware of falling into low thoughts of our great Redeemer and Lordand especially of ever being so mistaken as to think that He is not God. Therefore He plainly tells us, this He said to test Philip, for He Himself knew what He would do. Jesus was not asking information or taking counsel with Philip because He felt any doubt about His line of procedure or needed help from His disciple. He did not want Philip to multiply bread, but He desired to multiply Philips faith. Take heed, therefore, dear Friends, that you never think little of the Savior, or impute any of His acts to motives that would lessen His Glory.

Learn here, too, that we, being very apt to make mistakes concerning Christ, need daily that the Spirit of God should interpret Christ to us. Jesus simply asks the question of Philip, Where shall we buy bread? and we are at once in danger of drawing a wrong inference and, therefore, the Holy Spirit tells us more about Christ that we may escape from that danger. By giving us more insight into our Lords motives, He prevents our misjudging His actions. We must have the Spirit of God with us, or we shall not know Christ, Himself. The only way to see the sun is by its own lightand the only way to see Jesus is by His own Spirit. Did He not, Himself, say, He shall receive of Mine and shall show it unto you?

No man can call Jesus, Lord, but by the Holy Spirit. The Spirit must come to each man, personally, and reveal the Son of God to him and in him. Therefore, do not let us take up the Bible and imagine that we shall, at once, understand it as we do another book, but let us breathe the prayer that the Great Author of its letter would, Himself, give us Grace to enter into its spirit so as to know its meaning and feel its power. Even with the Infallible Word before you, you will miss your way and fall into grievous error unless you are taught of God. The mercy is that it is written, All your children shall be taught of the Lord. and again, We have an unction from the Holy One and know all things. There is no knowing anything except by that unction and by that Divine teaching. What dependent creatures we are, since we make mistakes even about Jesus Christ, Himself, unless the Spirit of God is pleased to instruct us concerning Him! Lead us always, O Light of God!

Another thing we learn from the text before we plunge into it is that our Divine Lord always has a reason for everything that He does. Even the reason of His asking a question may be found out or, if we cannot discover it, we may still be quite sure that there is a worthy reason. That reason, in Philips case, certainly was not because of any need of wisdom in Himself, but there was a reasonThis He said to test him. Now, if there is a reason for all that Jesus asks, much more is there a reason for all that He does. We cannot tell the reason of Divine Electionwhy this man is chosen or thatbut there is a reason, since God never acts unreasonably, though His reasons are not always revealed and might not be understood by us if they were.

Sovereignty is absolute, but it is never absurd. There is always a justifiable cause for all that God does in the Kingdom of Grace, though that cause is not the merit of the person whom He favors, for there is no merit. In the matter of your present trial and trouble, dear Friend, you have been trying to figure out the design of the Almighty, but without success. Dont you know that His ways are past finding out? In all probability this side of eternity, you may never discover Gods purpose in your present trial, but that He has a purpose is certain and that purpose is a wise and kind one. It is such as you, yourself, would delight in if you were capable of understanding it. If you could have a mind like that of God, you would act as God does even in this matter which troubles you!

At present your thoughts are far below those of God and, therefore, you err when you try to measure His ways. If you have a quarrel with your heavenly Father about a bereavement or a sicknessend it at once with humble shame. There, child, if it ever comes to a question as to which is righta poor, ignorant, inexperienced youth, or a great, good, wise Fatherthere cannot be a moments deliberation! The Fathers will must be better for the child than its own will. Be in subjection to the Father of Spirits and live. Believe in your Lord and be quietJesus knows what He is doing and why He is doing it. For the loss of your health there is a reason. For those pains of your body, for that depression of spirit, for that lack of success in business, even for the permission of the cruel tongue of slander to inflict its wounds upon you there is a reason! And possibly that reason may lie in the words of our text, This He did to test him.

You must be tested. God does not give faith, or love, or hope, or any Grace without meaning to prove it. If a man builds a railway bridge, it is that engines may go over it, that so its carrying power may be tested. If a man makes a road, it is that there may be traffic over it, every rod of it will be proven by wheels and hoofs. If he only makes a needle, it must be tested by the work it can do. When the pillars that now support these galleries were cast, they were made with the object of supporting a great weight and these 20 years they have bravely endured the pressureit would have been an idle thing to have set them up and placed no weight upon them!

So when God made you, my Brother, to be strong in the Lord, He meant to test every ounce of your strength, for that which God makes has a purpose and He will test it to see that it is equal to its design. I do not think that a single grain of faith will be kept out of the fireall the golden ore must go into the crucible to be tested. You have heard of the Birmingham proving houses for the barrels of guns? Now, the great Maker of Believers tests all whom He makes in His factory of Grace with heavy charges of afflictionand only those that can bear the test shall receive His mark. When no other explanation of a Providence can be found, you may always fall back upon the belief that this He said and this He did to test you.

Let us at once come to the text, which seems to me to have much comfort in it. May the Holy Spirit lead us into it. First, here is a question for PhilipWhere shall we buy bread, that these may eat?a question with a purpose. But, secondly, there is no question with the Master, for He, Himself, knows what He will do. And, thirdly, if we enter into the spirit of the Master, there will be an end of questions with us, for we shall be perfectly satisfied that He knows what He is going to do.

I. First, then, HERE IS A QUESTION FOR PHILIP, as there have been many questions for us. Jesus put this question to Philip with the motive of testing him in several points. He would thus try his faith. As one has well said, He wanted not food of Philip, but faith. The Master enquires, Where shall we buy bread, that these may eat? What will Philip say? If Philip has strong faith, he will answer, Great Master, there is no need to buy bread. You are greater than Moses and under Moses the people were fed with manna in the wilderness. You have but to speak the word and bread shall be rained around the host and they shall be filled. If Philip had possessed great faith, he might have replied, You are greater than Elisha and he took a few loaves and ears of corn and fed the sons of the Prophets. O wonder-working Lord, You can do the same!

If Philip had displayed still greater faith, he might have said, Lord, I do not know where bread is to be bought, but it is written, Man shall not live by bread alone. Your can refresh these people without visible bread. You can satisfy their hunger and fill them to the fullest and yet they need not eat a single mouthful, for it is written, By every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God shall man live. Speak the word and they will be at once refreshed. This question, therefore, was put to test Philips faith. It did test it and proved it to be very little, for he began calculating his pennyworthsOne, two, three, four. No, I will not count 200, but that is what Philip did. He began counting pennies instead of looking to Omnipotence!

Did you ever do the same, dear Friend, when you have been tested? Did you get reckoning up and counting coppers instead of looking to the eternal God and trusting in Him? I fear that few of us can plead exemption from this failure, since even Moses once fell into unbelieving calculations. And Moses said, The people among whom I am are six hundred thousand footmen; and You have said, I will give them flesh, that they may eat a whole month. Shall the flocks and the herds be slain for them, to suffice them? Or shall all the fish of the sea be gathered together for them to suffice them? Remember Gods answer to His anxious servant? And the Lord said unto Moses, Is the Lords hand waxed short? You shall see now whether My Word shall come to pass unto you or not.

Even so shall we see the faithfulness of God! But if we are unbelieving, we may have to see it in a way which will painfully bring home to us our sin in having distrusted our Lord! The question was meant, no doubt, also, to test Philips love and he could endure that test better than he could stand the other, for he loved Jesus even though he was slow of heart to believe. In many true hearts there is more quiet love than active faith. I am sorry that there should be little faith, but thankful that there should be more love. The Savior seemed to say, Philip, I want these people fed. Will you come to My help in it? Where shall we buy bread? I am going to associate you with Me, Philip. Come, now, how shall we do the work?

Philip loves his Master and, therefore, he is quite ready to consider the matter and to give at least the benefit of his arithmetic. He says, Lord, two hundred pennyworth is not sufficient. His Master did not ask him what would not be sufficient, but what would be! But Philip begins calculating the negative question, which question, I am afraid that you and I have, also, often calculated. Even to give each one in the crowd a little could not be done under two hundred penceis it not clear that our resources are inadequate? That is always a depressing and unpractical question to go into. Poor Philip counts up what would not be sufficient for all and leaves the All-Sufficient Lord out of the reckoning! Still, even in that calculation he showed his love for his Master.

If he had not been full of love and esteem for Jesus, he would have said, My Lord, it is idle to go into that. We are a poor company. We have a trifle of money given us every now and then and I do not quite know what is left. Perhaps Judas does. But I am persuaded that there is not enough in the bag to feed these multitudes, even if there were bakers shops in the neighborhood at which we could buy loaves. But Philip did not answer thus. No. He had too much reverence and too much love for Jesus for thathe failed in his faithbut he did not fail in his love. It will be well for us to love our Lord so much that we never speak of His gracious plans as being visionary, nor judge them to be impossible. Jesus never proposes Quixotic schemes and we must never allow the idea to cross our mindseven the conquest of the

world to truth and righteousness is not to be looked upon as a dream, but to be practically considered!

The question also tried Phillips sympathy. Jesus, by this query, moved Philips heart to care about the people. The other disciples said, Send the multitude away that they may go into the villages and buy themselves food. Jesus, perhaps, noticing a little more tenderness in Philip than in the others, said to Philip, Where shall we buy bread? It was putting great honor upon Philip to associate him with Himself, but perhaps He saw in him a sympathetic soul and Christ loves to work with sympathetic agents. One thing I noticeGod seldom uses a man greatly who has a hard heart, or a cold heart. Only warmth within ourselves can create warmth in others. A man must love people, or he cannot save them. A minister must have an intense desire that his congregation should be saved and must get into sympathy with Jesus upon that subject or else Jesus will not make use of him.

So our Lord sought to stir up Philips sympathy. Come, Philip. What shall you and I do? Where shall we buy bread to give them to eat? I do not think Philip failed altogether there. He had not such sympathy with his Master as he ought to have had, but he had a measure of it. I trust that our God has given to us, also, some communion with His dear Son in His love to the souls of men and so this question comes to test us. Let us not be lacking in either faith, or love, or sympathy. God grant that we may abound in all these through the effectual working of His Holy Spiritthen shall we be fitted to be workers together with Him.

But why was that question put to Philip? Why is a special question put to some of you, or a peculiar trial sent to one of you? It was sent to test him, it is said. But why test Philip? Well, I think the Savior spoke to Philip because Philip was of Bethsaida. They were near Bethsaida and so Jesus said to Philip, Where shall we buy bread? Every man should think most of the place where he lives. I want Jesus to say to some of you, What shall we do for London?because many of you are Londonerspossibly born within the sound of Bow Bells, or within the postal district. You belong to the four millions of this great provinceno, this great nation of a city and it is a solemn responsibility to be a citizen of the greatest city in the world!

If the Lord does lay London on anybodys hearts, He would naturally lay it upon the hearts of those who live in it, just as He said to Philip, Where shall we buy bread? If He associates anybody with Himself in the evangelization of a village or town, it will naturally be a person either born there, or living there. I know that the old proverb declares that the cobblers wife goes barefoot and sometimes a man will care for people thousands of miles away and not look to his own house or to his own neighborhood. But it should not be so, for it is to Philip, the man from Bethsaida, that the message comes about the people when they are near Bethsaida Where shall we buy bread? It is said to test him! And to you, Brother Londoner, questions about this great city are sent to test you.

It is also probable that it was Philips department to attend to the providing for the little company of 12 and their Leader. Judas was the treasurer and, unless we are much mistaken, Philip was the butler. It was Philips business to see that they had bread and his part to make some little provision when the band of disciples went into desert places. Even so, there are Brothers and Sisters here present whose official business it is to care for the souls of men. Among these are ministers, missionaries, Sunday school teachers, deacons, elders, district visitors, Bible-women and the like. If the Lord does not say to others, What shall we do for London? He says it to us! The question is sent to test us to see whether we are fit for our office, or whether we have taken upon ourselves a position for which we are not qualified because we have no heart for it.

Christ asks us, especially, but I think He also asks all those whom He has made priests and kings unto God, Where shall we buy bread? How shall we feed this great city? The question comes to test us because it is upon us that this burden ought to be laid. And perhaps it came to Philip because he was not quite so forward in the school of Divine Grace as some were. Philip did not make a very wise remark when he said, Show us the Father, and it suffices us, for our Lord answered, Have I been so long time with you, and yet have you not known Me, Philip? He was evidently slow in learning. I do not think that Philip was the most stupid of the 12, but I am sure that he was not the most intelligent. James and John and Peter were the first threeAndrew and Thomas followed close behind and probably Philip was close after them. Perhaps Philip was number six. I do not know, but certainly the Savior selected him as not the lowest in the class, yet not the highest, and He said to him, Where shall we buy bread?

Those people in the middle position very much need testing for their own satisfaction. The lowest kind of Christians are so feeble that they can hardly bear testing. Poor souls, they need encouraging rather than testing and, therefore, the greatest problems are not often pressed upon them. On the other hand, the highest kind of Christians do not so much need testing, for they make their calling and election sure. The middle sort most need testing and they make up, I am afraid, the great bulk of the rank and file of the army of God. There are many who may be described as halfinstructed, half-enlightenedand to these the Lord puts the question Where shall we buy bread? This He says that He may test them.

Note well that the question which the Savior put to Philip to test him answered its purpose. It did test him. How it tested him I have shown you already. It answered its purpose because it revealed his inability. Where shall we buy broad? Philip gives up. He has made a calculation of what would not suffice, even, to give every man a little refreshment and that is all his contribution to the workhe has not even a loaf or a fish which he can produce to make a start with. Philip is beaten. What is more, his faith, being tested, is beaten, too. Oh, good Master, he seems to say, the people cannot be fed by us. We cannot buy breadwenot even You and I. You are the Lord and You can do great things, but my faith is not strong enough to believe that we could buy bread enough for all these thousands of people. So the question answered its purpose. It tested Philips faith and his faith was proven to be very weak, very wavering, very shorthanded.

Is it a good thing to find that out? Yes, Brothers and Sisters, it is good to know our spiritual poverty. Many of us have a heap of faith, we think but if the Lord were to test it, He would not need to put it in the fire to melt itHe has only to put it on the fire and the most of it would evaporate! Under ordinary trial much faith disappears like morning dew when the sun looks upon it. What a deal of faith a man has when he is healthy! Just turn on the screws and let him suffersee how much of that faith will vanish! How many men have faith if they have an excellent income regularly paid! But when they have to ask, Where will the next meal come from? have they faith? Alas, they grow anxious and cumbered! It is a wholesome thing to be made to see what weaklings we are, for when we find much of our faith to be unreal, it drives us to seek for more true faith and we cry, Lord, increase our faith!

Philip was drawn into his Master and it is a grand thing to be driven right out of ourselves into our Lord so as to feel, Lord, I cannot do it. But I long to see how You will perform Your purpose. I cannot even believe in You as I ought to believe, unless You give me faith so that even for more faith I must come to You! Quite empty-handed I must come and borrow everything. Then it is that we become full and strong! You will see Philip breaking the bread, directly, and feeding the multitudes just because Christ has emptied Philips hands! Until He has emptied our hands He cannot fill them, lest it should be supposed that we shared in the supplying. This He said to test him, to make him see his own weakness, for then he would be filled with the Masters strength!

This question did good, for it was meant not only to test Philip, but to test the other disciples, and so they came together and they had a little talk upon the subject, At any rate, here is a committee of two, Philip and Andrew. Philip says, Two hundred pennyworth is not sufficient, and Andrew says, Well no, it is not. But there is a lad here with five barley loaves and two small fishes. I like this brotherly consultation of willing mindsand to see how they differ in their ideas. Philip is willing to begin if he has a grand start. He must see at least 200 pennyworth of bread in hand and then he is ready to entertain the idea. Andrew, on the other hand, is willing to commence with a small capitala few loaves and fishes will enable him to start, but he remarks, What are they among so many?

When saints converse together, they help each other and, perhaps, what one does not discover another may. Philip was counting the impossible pence and could not see the possible loaves. But Andrew could see what Philip overlooked. He spied out the lad with that basket packed full of loaves and fishes. It was not muchAndrew had not faith enough to see food for the thousands in that little basketbut still, he saw what he saw and he told the Master of it. Thus they made a commencement by mutual consultation. Perhaps if we were to consult we might make a start, too. When a question eats into mens hearts like thisWhat shall we do for London? When it leads Christian people to come together and talk about it and when one sighs out, Why, it will take many thousands to build chapels, find Ministers and maintain Missionaries, there is something hopeful in the calculation!

All right, Philip, I am glad you have had your say and shown the difficulty of the task. And then I like Andrew to get up and say, It is a very difficult task, but still, we must do what we can do, and as we have these five loaves and two small fishes we must at least put these before the Lord and leave it with Him as to what is to be done. All this is better than shirking the question altogether and leaving the crowd to starve. Philip had his faculties exercised. Christ tried his arithmetic! He tried his eyesight! He tried his mind and spirit! And this prepared him to go and serve at the Masters banquet which followed. A man never does a thing well till he has thought about it. And if Philip had not thought about how to feed the multitudes, he would not have been a fit man to be employed in it.

It prepared him, also, to adore his Master after the feast, for Philip would say, when the meal was over, The Master asked me how it was to be done, but I could not tell Him and now, though I have had a share in doing it, He must and shall have all the Glory. He multiplied the fishes and increased the loaves. My poor faith can take no Glory to itself. He did it. He did it all! Perhaps some question comes to you, my Brother, about the Lords workHow can it be done? How can England be evangelized? How can the masses be reached? How can the world be made to hear the Gospel? Whatever the question is which is put to you, it is a question sent on purpose to do you good and benefit your soul and to lead you to magnify the Lord all the more when the miracle of Grace is done!

II. Now I come to the second part of the subject and that is that THERE WAS NO QUESTION WITH JESUS. The question was with Philip, but Christ had no question. This He said to test him: for He Himself knew what He would do. Let us take these words and pull them to pieces a minute. He knew. He always knows. Ah, says one, I am sure I do not know what I shall do. No, dear Friend, and yet you have been taking advice, have you not? That is a splendid way of confusing yourself! I hear you cry in bewilderment, I do not know! I have been to everybody and I do not know what I shall do! That is a chronic state with us when we puzzle our own poor brainsbut Jesus knew what He would do. This is sweet comfortJesus knows.

He always knows all about it. He knew how many people there were. He knew how much bread it would take. He knew how many fish He would need and how He meant to feed the crowd and send them all away refreshed. He knew all before it happened. Tried Brother, Jesus knows all about your case and how He is going to bring you through. Do not think that you can inform Him as to anything. Your heavenly Father knows what you have need of before you ask Him. Prayer is not meant for the Lords information. The question is not put to you that you may instruct Him, but that He may instruct you! He made the heavens and the earth without you. With whom took He counsel? Who instructed Him? And He will bring you through this present trial of yours without needing to add your poor wisdom to His infinite knowledge!

He knows. Jesus knew what He would do. He meant to do something. He was quite ready to do it and He knew what He was going to do. We embarrass ourselves by saving, Something must be done, but I do not know who is to do it. The Savior knew that something must be done and He knew that He was going to do it Himself. He was not in a hurry, He never isHe never is before His time, He never is too late. Our blessed Master has glorious leisure because He is always punctual. Late people are in a hurry, but He, being never late, never hurries. He does everything calmly and serenely because He foresees what He will do. Jesus knows, dear Friend, concerning you, not only what you will do, but what He will do! That is the point and He means to do some great thing for you and to help you.

He means, also, to bring this city and this nation to His feet. He means that every knee shall bow to Him and that the whole earth shall be filled with His Glory. He knows what He means to do. He knew, moreover, how He meant to do it. He knew precisely the way and method which He intended to use. He perceived long before Andrew told Him that there was a lad somewhere in the crowd with five barley cakes. When the lad set out that morning, I cannot make out what made him bring five barley loaves and fishes into that crowd except the Master had whispered in his heart, Young lad, take with you a good lunch. Put those barley cakes into the basket and do not forget the fishes. You do not know how long you may be away from home.

Nature bade him provide for contingencies, but then Nature is Gods voice when He chooses to make it so. He was a hungry, growing lad with a fine appetite and he meant to be well provided for, but had he ever thought in his mind that these strangely providential cakes would multiply so as to feed that mass of people? Where is the man that is to be the universal provider? Where is the chief of the commissariat? It is that youth and that is the whole of his storehouse! He is carrying a magazine of food on his backin that basket. The Savior knew that. And He knows exactly, dear Friend, where your help is to come from in your hour of trouble. You do not know, but He does. He knows where the ministers are to come that will stir up this city of London and He knows in what style and manner they shall come and how they shall get at the masses.

When everybody else is defeated and nonplussed, He is fully prepared. He knew that those loaves and fishes would be fetched out, in due time, to be the basis of a banquet. He knew that He would bless them, break them, multiply them and give them to the disciplesand the disciples to the multitude. Everything was arranged in His mind and as much fixed as the rising of the sun. Once more, He did it as one who knew what He was going to do. How does a man act when he knows what he is going to do? Well, he generally proceeds in the most natural way! He knows that he is going to do it, so he just goes and does it. Can you conceive that a miracle was ever performed in a more natural style?

If this had been a Roman Catholic miracle, they would have thrown the loaves up in the air and they would have come down mysteriously transformed and multiplied a million times! All popish miracles, if you observe, have a great deal of the theatrical and glitter about them. They are totally distinct from the miracles of Christ. He does this miracle in the most natural way in the world, because it is virtually the same miracle which Christ works every year. We take a certain quantity of wheat and put it into the ground and, in the long run, the end of it is that it is multiplied into loaves of bread. Certain fishes are in the sea and they increase into great shoals. The sown wheat passes through the same operation in the ground in the same handsin Gods handsand it comes out loaves of bread!

And that is precisely what came of our Lords action! He took a little into His own blessed hands and broke it and it kept on multiplying in His hands, and in the hands of His disciples, till they were all filled! He knew what He was going to do and so He did it naturally and did it orderly. It is not so when a man does not know what he is to provide for. We have a large meeting and there is provision made for teaand three times as many come as you have provided for. What a hurry! What a scurry! What a running to and fro! Jesus never conducts His matters in that way. He knew what He was going to do and, therefore, He bade the men sit down on the grassand they sat down like so many children. Mark tells us that they sat down in rows by fifties and by hundredsthey were arranged as if each one had been specially set before his plate and found his name engraved upon it!

Moreover, there was much grass in the place so that the hall was carpeted in a way that no firm in London could have done! The feast was conducted as orderly as if there had been notice given seven days beforehand and a contractor had supplied the provisions. Nothing could have been done in a better way and all because Jesus knew what He would do! Moreover, He did it very joyfully. He took bread and blessed it. He went about it with great pleasure. I should have liked to have seen His face as He looked on these poor famishing people being fed. Like a good host, He cheered them with His smile while He blessed them with the food! And then He did it so plentifully, for He knew what He would do. He did not come half-provided, or stint them so that every man should have a little.

No, He knew what He would do and He measured their appetites exactly, a difficult thing when you have a number of hungry people to feed. He provided all that they needed and afterwards there was provision left for the head waiters, so that each one should have a basketful for himselffor they took up of the fragments, 12 basketfuls, one for each of the head waiters. Our Lord Jesus Christ, in the matter of bringing in His own elect, is going about it, I am quite certain, knowing what He is going to do. And when you and I see the end of the great festival of mercy we shall say, Blessed be the Lord! We were in a great worry. We were in sore trouble, but our Lord has done it easily and thoroughly. There has been no muddle, no crowding, no passing over of anybody! Blessed be His name! He has not done it by chance or through fortunate circumstances, but He knew what He would do and He has planned it all through from the beginning to the end in such a way that principalities and powers in Heaven shall sing forever of the Grace and love and wisdom and power and prudence wherein He has abounded towards His people.

Oh, but if we could see the end as well as the beginning we would begin, even now, to exalt the name of Jesus our Savior who foreknows all His work and never deviates from His plan!

III. I conclude by saying that because there is no question with Christ, though He puts questions to US, THERE OUGHT TO BE NO QUESTION OF A DOUBTFUL CHARACTER ANY LONGER TO US. Let me mention three questions and I have done. The first question that troubles a great many people is, How shall I bear my present burden? How shall I endure this suffering? How shall I make a living? That question is sent to you to test you, but remember that there is no question, with Christ, as to how you will get through, for, as your day so shall your strength be, and He will keep His saints even to the end. Therefore let there be no question with you, for Jesus Himself knows what He will do!

You came here, tonight, very distressed and you said, I wish I might get a word to tell me what I should do. You will not get half a word as to what you shall do, but you shall hear a word of a different sort. Jesus knows what HE will do and what He will do is infinitely better than anything you can do. Your strength, my Friend, is to sit still. Roll your burden upon the Lord! Do the little you can do and leave the rest with your heavenly Father. This is the answer from the Urim and the Thummim. For youJesus knows what He will do! There is that other question, which I have already askedWhat is to be done with this great city?

I had the great privilege of being able to preach, yesterday afternoon, [Wednesday evening, June 22, 1881] in one of our eastern suburbs. Setting out from my own house early in the morning, I went on riding, riding, upon one railway and another till I think I must have been journeying for fully two hours and a half before I had passed from one end of London to another! What a city of magnificent distances! It seems as if there was not a green tree which the builders will not cut down, nor a grassy meadow which they will not turn into ugly streets. Replenish the earth, indeed! It is replenished. The dead earth is buried away beneath the abodes of living men!

As for creatures of our race, what myriads there are of them! And, then, as you go along with a Christian friend, he says, There is a chapel needed here. Or, There is a little chapel here, but not one person in 50 goes to a place of worship. Then you arrive at another suburban place and your guide will say, Here are people anxious for the Gospel, but there is nobody to take it to them. I went along yesterday sorely burdened and questioning in my heart, What shall we do? I kept thinking, You had better not ask yourself that question, for you cannot do much towards answering it and it will only worry you. And yet it came back to me, How shall we buy bread for this multitude?

My Lord and Master would say, YOU. In my heart I wanted Him to leave me out, but He would not. He never would have said, How shall I buy bread? because He knows that. But He put it to me and I felt that I was a hindrance for making it a question at all, for He only makes it a question to me for my sake. O that we had men and money to send out ministers and to build places for them to preach in! We have preachers ready in the College, but I have no means for building places of worship! Surely many of you must have been burdened with the hugeness of this city! But, dear, dear, this is like one drop of rain in a great shower compared with the whole world that lies in the Wicked One. How is this world to be enlightened?

It is no question with Jesus and, therefore, it should never be an unbelieving question with us. Can these dry bones live? Let us answer, Lord, You know. There will we leave it. He is able to do exceedingly abundantly above what we ask, or even thinkand we may depend upon it that if He has sworn by Himself that every knee shall bow and every tongue confess to Him, it shall be so and He shall have the Glory! One other question should be mentioned. It is this. Has the Lord put into the heart of any unconverted person the questionWhat must I do to be saved? And is that question perplexing any of you? I am glad it is so, but I hope you will turn to the right place for an answer. I hope you are enquiringLord, what would You have me do?

Do you know why that question is put to you? It is to test you and to humble you. It is meant to make you feel the impossibility of salvation by your own works so that you may submit yourself to the righteousness of God and be saved by faith in Christ Jesus! Remember that there is no question with Christ about how you are to be saved. In fact, that question was settledwhen shall I say? Settled when He died? No, settled long before thatit was decided in the Everlasting Covenant before the day-star knew its place, or planets ran their round! God had then regarded His son as the Lamb of God, slain before the foundation of the world and to this day the word still standsBehold the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world.

Look unto Him and be saved! There is no question about the possibility of your salvation, or about Christs ability to save you. The question in your heart, What must I do to be saved? is put there to test you, but Jesus Himself knows what He will do. What a blessed word is that! He knows how He will pardon, comfort, regenerate, instruct and lead you! He knows how He will keep you to the end by His unchanging Grace! He knows how He will preserve you and sanctify you and use you and glorify His own name by you! He knows how He will take you up to Heaven and set you upon His Throne and make all the angels wonder and adore, as they see what He will do! God bless what He will do. God bless you for Jesus sake. Amen.

Adapted from The C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307 Sermon #2216 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

THE LADS LOAVES IN THE LORDS HANDS   
NO. 2216

**A SERMON INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS-DAY, AUGUST 9, 1891, DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**Jesus took the loaves.   
John 6:11.**

Look, there are the people! Five thousand of them, as hungry as hunters, and they all need to have food given to them, for they cannot, any of them, travel to buy it! And here is the provision! Five thin wafersand those of barley, more fit for horses than for menand two little anchovies, by way of a relish! Five thousand people and five little biscuits to feed them! The disproportion is enormousif each one should have only the tiniest crumb, there would not be enough! In like manner, there are millions of people in London and only a handful of whole-hearted Christians earnestly desiring to see the city converted to Christ. There are more than a thousand millions of men in this round world and oh, so few missionaries breaking the Bread of Life to them! Almost as few for the millions, as were these five barley cakes for those five thousand!

The problem is a very difficult one. The contrast between the supply and the demand would have struck us much more vividly if we had been there, in that crowd at Bethsaida, than it does sitting here, nearly 1,900 years later, and merely hearing about it. But the Lord Jesus was equal to the emergency! None of the people went away without sharing in His bountythey were all filled. Our blessed Master, now that He has ascended into the heavens, has more rather than less power! He is not baffled because of our need, but can even now use paltry means to accomplish His own glorious purposes. Therefore let no mans heart fail him. Do not despair of the evangelization of London, nor think it hopeless that the Gospel should be preached in all nations for a testimony unto them. Have faith in God, who is in Christ Jesus! Have faith in the compassion of the Great MediatorHe will not desert the people in their spiritual needs any more than He failed that hungry throng in their temporal need, long ago.

We will now look at these biscuits and sardines, which seem to be truly an insufficient stock-in-trade to begin witha very small capital, indeed, on which to conduct the business of feeding 5,000 persons. I shall say of these loaves and fishes, first, that they had a previous history before being mentioned in our text. Secondly, when we get to our text, we shall find these little things in a very grand positionJesus took the loaves and, therefore, thirdly, they will have an after-history which is well worthy of being noted. When things get into Christs hands, they are in the very focus of miracles!

I. We will begin by saying that THESE LOAVES AND FISHES HAD A PREVIOUS HISTORY. Andrew said to Jesus, There is a lad here, which has five barley loaves, and two small fishes.

Notice, first, then, the Providence of God in bringing the lad there. We do not know his name. We are not told anything concerning his parentage. Was he a little peddler who thought that he could make some money by selling a few loaves and fishes and had he nearly sold out? Or was he a boy that the Apostles had employed to carry this slender provision for the use of Jesus and His friends? We do not know much about him, but he was the right boy in the right place that day! Be his name what it might, it did not matterhe had the barley loaves and fishes upon which the people were to be fed! Christ never is in need but He has somebody at hand to supply that need. Have faith in the Providence of God! What made the boy bring the loaves and fishes, I do not know. Boys often do unaccountable things, but bring the loaves and fishes he did. And God, who understands the ideas and motives of lads and takes account, even, of barley loaves and fishes, had appointed that boy to be there!

Again I say, believe in the Providence of God! Mr. Stanley tells us that when he came out of that long journey of his through the forest, I think after 160 days of walking in darkness, and found himself at last where he could see the sun, he felt that there was a special Providence of God that had taken care of him. I am very glad that Mr. Stanley felt that it was the hand of God that had brought him out of the noisome shade, but I do not need to go to Africa to learn that we are beset behind and before by His goodness. Many of us have felt a special Providence of God in our own homeswe have met with His hands in connection with our own children. Yes, every day we are surrounded by tokens of His care. Whoever is wise and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving kindness of the Lord. I am sure God took care of me, said one, for as I was going along a certain street, I slipped on a piece of orange peel and had what might have been a serious fallyet I was not hurt in the least. To which his friend replied, I am sure God has taken care of me, for I have walked along that street hundreds of times and have never slipped on a piece of orange peel, or on anything else. Full often God draws near to us in common life

*He comes to us all unaware,   
And makes us own His loving care.*

Let us also believe in His Providence with regard to the Church of ChristHe will never desert His peopleHe will find men when He needs them. Thus it has always been in the history of the saints and thus it shall always be! Before the Reformation there were many learned men who knew something of Christs Gospel, but they said that it was a pity to make noise and so they communed with one another and with Christ very quietly. What was needed was some rough bull-headed follow who would blurt the Gospel out and upset the old state of things. Where could he be found? There was a monk named Luther who, while he was reading his Bible, suddenly stumbled on the doctrine of Justification by Faithhe was the man! Yet when he went to a dear Brother in the Lord and told him how he felt, his friend said to him, Go back to your cell and pray and commune with God, and hold your tongue.

But then, you see, he had a tongue that he could not hold and that nobody else could, either! And he began to speak with it, the Truth of God that had made a new man of him! The God that made Luther knew what He was doing when He made him! He put within Luther a great burning fire that could not be restrained! And it burst forth and set the nations on a blaze. Never despair about Providence! There sits, tonight, somewhere in a chimney corner in the country, a man that will turn the current of unbelief and win back the churches to the old Gospel! God did never yet come to a point of distress as to His Truth but that suddenly one came forwarda David with a sling and a stone, or a Samson with a jawbone, or a Shamgar with an ox-goadwho put to rout the adversaries of the Lord! There is a lad here. The Providence of God had sent him.

Next, this lad with his loaves was brought into notice. When they were searching for all the provisions in the company, this obscure boy who never would have been heard of otherwise, was brought to the front because he had his little basket of biscuits. Andrew found him and he came and said to Jesus, There is a lad here, which has five barley loaves, and two small fishes. So, rest assured, that if you have the Bread of Life about you and you are willing to serve God, you need not be afraid that obscurity will ever prevent your doing it. Nobody knows me, says one. Well, it is not a very desirable thing that anybody should know youthose of us who are known to everybody would be very glad if we were not there is no very great comfort in it. He that can work away for his Master, with nobody to see him but his Master, is the happiest of men. I have only 100 people to preach to, said a country pastor to me. And I replied, If you give a good account of those 100, you have quite enough to do. If all you have is very littlejust that pennyworth of loaves and fishesuse that properly and you will do your Master service! And in due time, when God wants you, He knows where to find you!

You need not put an advertisement in the paperHe knows the street you live on and the number on the door. You need not go and push yourself to the frontthe Lord will bring you to the front when He wants you and I hope that you do not want to get there if He does not want you. Depend upon it, should you push forward when you are not required, He will put you back again! Oh, for Grace to work on unobserved, to have your one talent, your five loaves and two fishes and only to be noticed when the hour suggests the need, and the need makes a loud call for you! We have thus seen, first of all, the loaves and fishes in the desert, quite unnoticed, but put there by Providenceand we now behold them by that same Providence, thrust into prominence.

When brought into notice, the loaves and fishes did not fare very well they were judged insufficient for the purpose, for Andrew said, What are they among so many? The boys candle seemed to be quite snuffed out! So small a stockwhat could be the use of that? Now, I dare say, that some of you have had Satan saying to you, What is the use of your trying to do anything? To you, dear mother, with a family of children, he has whispered, You cannot serve God. He knows very well that, by sustaining Grace, you can, and he is afraid of how well you can serve God if you bring up those dear children in His fear. He says to the religious book salesman over yonder, You have not much ability; what can you do? Ah, dear Friend, he is afraid of what you can do and if you will only do what you can do, God will, by-and-by, help you to do what now you cannot do! But the devil is afraid of even the little that you can do now and many a child of God seems to side with Satan in despising the day of small things! What are they among so many? So few, so poor, so devoid of talent what can any of us hope to do? Disdained, even by the disciples, it is small wonder if we are held in contempt by the world! The things that God will honor, man must first despise! You run the gauntlet of the derision of men and afterwards you come out to be used of God.

Though seemingly inadequate to feed the multitude, these loaves and fishes would have been quite enough for the boys supper, yet he appears to have been quite willing to part with them. The disciples would not have taken them from him by forcethe Master would not have allowed itthe lad willingly gave them up to be the commencement of the great feast. Somebody might have said, John, you know that you will soon be able to eat those five cakes and those two little fishes. Keep themget away into a cornerevery man for himself. Is it not a good rule, Take care of number one? Yes, but the boy whom God uses will not be selfish! Am I speaking to some young Christian to whom Satan says, Make money, first, and serve God, by-and-by. Stick to business and get on! Then, after that, you can act like a Christian and give some money away, and so on?

Let such a one remember the barley loaves and the fishes. If that lad had really wisely studied his own interests, instead of merely yielding with a generous impulse to the demand of Christ, he would have done exactly what he did, for if he had kept the loaves, he would have eaten them and that would have been the end of it. But now that he brings them to Christ, all those thousands of people are fed and he gets as much, himself, as he would have had if he had eaten his own stock. And then, in addition, he gets a share out of the 12 baskets full of fragments that remain. Anything that you take away from self and give to Christ is well investedit will often bring in ten thousand per cent! The Lord knows how to give such a reward to an unselfish man, that he will feel that he that saves his life loses it, but he that is willing, even, to lose his lifeand the bread that sustains itis the man who, after all, gets truly saved!

This, then, is the history of these loaves. They were sent there, through Gods Providence, by a lad who was sought out and brought into notice. His stock-in-trade was despised, but he was willing to give it, whether it was despised or not. He would yield it to his Lord. Now, do you see what I am driving at? I want to get a hold of some of the lads and some young men and young womenI will not trouble about your age, you shall be lads if you are under seventy! I want to get hold of you who think that you have very little ability, and say to you, Come, and bring it to Jesus. We need you! Times are hard. The people are famishing. Though nobody seems to need you, yet make bold to come out and who knows but that, like Queen Esther, you may have come to the Kingdom of God for such a time as this? God may have brought you where you are to make use of you for the converting of thousands! But you must first be converted yourself! Christ will not use you unless you are, first, His own. You must yield yourself up to Him and be saved by His precious blood and then, after that, come and yield up to Him all the little talent that you may have, and pray Him to make as much use of you as He did of the lad with the five barley cakes.

II. But now I want to show you that THESE BARLEY CAKES GOT INTO A GRAND POSITION. The text says, Jesus took the loaves. He took them into His own hands! From the trembling hands of the boy, or from his little basket, they were transferred to the blessed hands which one day would bear the nail-prints! This may teach us several lessons.

First, they were now associated with Jesus Christ. Henceforth those loaves do not so much suggest the thought of the lads sacrifice as of the Saviors power. Is it not a wonderful thing that Christ, the living God, should associate Himself with our feebleness, with our need of talent, with our ignorance, with our little faith? And yet He does so. If we are not associated with Him, we can do nothing. But when we come into living contact with Him, we can do all things! Those barley loaves in Christs hands become pregnant with food for all the throng! Out of His hands they are nothing but barley cakes, but in His hands, associated with Him, they are in contact with Omnipotence! Have you that love the Lord Jesus Christ thought of this, of bringing all that you possess to Him, that it may be associated with Him?

There is that brain of yoursit can be associated with the teachings of His Spirit. There is that heart of yoursit can be warmed with the love of God. There is that tongue of yoursit can be touched with the live coal from off the altar. There is that manhood of yoursit can be perfectly consecrated by association with Christ. Hear the tender command of the Lord, Bring them here to Me, and your whole life will be transformed! I do not say that every man of common ability can rise to high ability by being associated with Christ through faith, but I do say thisthat his ordinary ability, in association with Christ, will become sufficient for the occasion to which God, in Providence, has called Him. I know that you have been praying and saying, I have not this, and I cannot do that. Stay not to number your deficienciesbring what you have and let all that you are, body, soul, and spiritbe associated with Christ. Although He will not bestow upon you new faculties, the faculties you have will have new power, for they will come into a new condition towards Him and what may

not be hoped for by association with such wisdom and might?   
But, further, they were transferred to Christ. A moment ago, they belonged to this lad, but now they belong to Christ. Jesus took the loaves. He has taken possession of themthey are His property. Oh, Christian people, do you mean what you say when you declare that you have given yourselves to Christ? If you have made a full transfer, therein will lie great power for usefulness. But do not people often say, If I might make some reserve? What is the meaning, then, of this bleating of the sheep in my ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear? What about that odd thousand that you put in the funds the other day? What about the money saved up for a new bonnet? You sometimes sing

*Yet if I might make some reserve,   
And duty did not call,   
I love my God with zeal so great,   
That I should give Him all.*

Ah, well, when you have really yielded all, you may sing that again! But I am afraid that there are but few who can truly sing it. Oh, that we had more real putting of the loaves into Christs hands! The time that you have not used for self, but given to Christ! The knowledge that you have not stored, as in a reservoir, but given to Christ! The ability that you have not wielded for the world, but yielded to Christyour influence and position, your money and home, all put into Christs hands and reckoned to be not your own, but to be Histhis is the way in which Londons needs will be met and the worlds hunger will be satisfied! But we are staggered, at the very outset, by the lack of this complete dedication of everything to Christ.

What is better, still, as these loaves were given to Jesus, so they were accepted by Jesus. They were not only dedicated, they were also consecrated! Jesus took the five barley loaves. Jesus took the two little fishes and, in doing so, He seemed to say, These will do for Me. As the Revised Version has it, Jesus therefore took the loaves. Was there any reason why He should? Yes, because they were brought to Him! They were willingly presented to Him! There was a need for them and He could work with themthereforeHe took the loaves. Children of God, if Christ has ever made use of you, you have often stood and wondered why the Lord could accept you. But there was a, therefore, in it. He saw that you were willing to win soulsHe saw the souls needed winning and He used you even you! Am I not now speaking to some who might be of great service if they yielded themselves to Christ, and Christ accepted them, and they became accepted in the Beloved? Only five barley cakes, but Jesus accepted them! Only two small fishes, brought by a little lad, but the great Christ accepted them and they became His own! Let us join one now in Heaven who on earth brought her all, and pray

*Oh, use me, Lord, use even me!   
Just as You will, and when, and where.   
Until Your blessed face I see,   
Your rest, Your joy, Your glory share.*

But, what is better still, these loaves and fishes were blessed by Christ as He lifted up His eyes and gave thanks to the Father for them. Think of it! For five little cakes and two sprats, Christ gave thanks to the Father! Apparently a meager cause for praise, but Jesus knew what He could make of them and, therefore, gave thanks for what they would presently accomplish. God loves us, says Augustine, for what we are becoming. Christ gave thanks for these trifles because He saw into what they would grow! Do you not think that, having thanked the Father, He also thanked the boy? And in later years these words of gratitude would be ample recompense for such a tiny deed! Like the woman who cast in the two mites to the treasury, he gave his all, and doubtless was commended for the gift.

Though high in Glory, today, Christ is still grateful when such offerings are made to Him. He still thanks His Father when, with timid trembling hands, we offer to Him our best, our all, however small! His heart is still gladdened when we bring Him our scanty store that it may be touched by His dear hands and blessed by His gracious lips! He loves us, not for what we are, but for what He will yet make us! He blesses our offerings, not for their worth, but because His power will yet make them worthy of His praise! May the Lord thus bless every talent that you have! May He bless your memory. May He bless your understanding. May He bless your voices. May He bless your hearts. May He bless your heads. May He bless you all and forevermore! When He puts a blessing into the little gift and into the little Grace that we have, good work begins and goes on to perfection.

And when the loaves had been blessed, the next thing was, they were increased by Christ. Peter takes one, begins to break it, and as he breaks it, he has always as much in his hands as he started with! Here, take a bit of fish, Friend, he says. He gives a whole fish to that manhe has a whole fish left! So he gives it to another, and another, and another, and goes on scattering the bread and scattering the fish everywhere, as quickly as he can! And when he is finished, he has his hands just as full of fish and as full of bread as ever! If you serve God, you will never run dry! He who gives you something to say one Sunday will give you something to say another Sunday! These 37 years and more, I have ministered to this same Church and congregation, and every time that I have preached, I have said all that I knew. Some very learned Brothers are like the great wine vats of Heidelbergthey can hold so much wine that there is enough to swim inbut they put in a tap somewhere up at the top, so you never get much out. Mine is a very small barrel, indeed, but the tap is down as low as it can beand you can get more liquid out of a small tub, if you empty it, than you can out of a big vat if you are only permitted to draw a little from the top.

This boy gave all his loaves and all his fishnot much, trulybut Christ multiplied it. Be like hegive your all! Do not think of reserving some for another occasion. If you are a preacher, do not think of what you will preach about the next timethink of what you are going to preach about now. It is always quite enough to get one sermon at a time you need not have a reserve, because if you get a lot piled away somewhere, there will be a stale odor about them! Even the manna that came down from Heaven bred worms and stankso will your best sermons, even if the message is God-given. And if it does not come down from Heaven, but from your own brain, it will go bad still more quickly! Tell the people about Christ! Lead them to Jesus and do not trouble about what you will say next time, but wait till next time comesand it shall be given you in the same hour what you shall speak.

But, mark once morewhen Jesus took the loaves, it was not only to multiply, but also to dispose of them. They were distributed by Christ. He did not believe in multiplication unless it was attended by division. Christs additions mean subtractionand Christs subtractions mean additions. He gives that we may give away. He multiplied as soon as ever the disciples began to distributeand when the distribution ended, the multiplication ended. Oh, for Grace to go on distributing! If you have received the Truth from Christ, proclaim it! God will whisper it in your ear and tell it inbut if you stop the telling out, if you cease the endeavor to bless othersit may be that God will no more bless you, nor grant you, again, the communion of His face.

Putting all this together, if we all would bring our loaves and fishes to the Lord Jesus Christ, He would take them and make them wholly His own. Then, when He should have blessed them, He would multiply them and He would bid us distribute themand we could yet meet the needs of London and the needs of the whole world even to the last man! A Christ who could feed 5,000 can feed five millions! There is no limit! When once you get a miracle, you may as well have a great one. Whenever I find the critics paring down miracles, it always seems to me to be very poor work, for if it is a miracle, it is a miracleand if you are in for a penny, you may as well be in for a pound! If you can believe that Christ can feed fifty, then you can believe that He can feed five hundred, five thousand, five millions, five hundred millions, if so it pleases Him!

Thus have I tried to stir up Gods people to believe in the Lord and consecrate themselves to Him. But some of you are saying, He is not preaching to me. No, I am not preaching to you, but I am preaching for you, for if Gods people begin to be awakened, they will soon look after you. You will have somebody asking you about your soul before you get out of the Tabernacle! And during the week, if you meet some of them, they will be troubling you, rousing up your conscience and making you feel what an awful thing it is to be an enemy to God and to live without Christ! I hope that it will be so. Oh, you that do not love my Lord, what will become of you? Paul said that you would be Anathema Maranathacursed at His coming! I pray you, do not rest easy while that may be your portion! You are the people that we want to feed, you are the people whom we want to bless! Oh, that God, in His mercy, would but bless you! We do not ask to have the honor of it. We would be willing to have it quite unknown who it was that brought you to the Savior, so long as you did but come to Him. May the Lord in mercy bring you!

III. But now, thirdly, and to conclude, THESE LOAVES AND FISHES HAD A LATER HISTORY. They got into Christs hands. What was the result?

First, a great deal of misery was removed by the lads basket of barley cakes. Those poor people were famished. They had been with Christ all day and had had nothing to eat. And had they been dispersed as they were, tired and hungry, many of them would have fainted by the way perhaps some would even have died. Oh, what would we give if we might but alleviate the misery of this world! I remember the Earl of Shaftesbury saying, I should like to live longer. I cannot bear to go out of the world while there is so much misery in it. And you know how that dear saint of God laid himself out to look after the poor, the helpless and the needy all his days! Perhaps I speak to some who never woke up yet to the idea that if they were to bring their little all to Christ, He could make use of it in alleviating the misery of many a wounded conscience and that awful misery which will come upon men if they die unforgivenand stand before the judgment bar of God without a Savior.

Yes, young man, God can make you the spiritual father of many! As I look back upon my own history, little did I dream, when first I opened my mouth for Christ, in a very humble way, that I should have the honor of bringing thousands to Jesus. Blessed, blessed be His name! He has the Glory of it. But I cannot help thinking that there must be some other lad here, such a one as I was, whom He may call by His Grace to do service for Him. When I had a letter sent to me by the deacons of the church at New Park Street, to come up to London to preach, I sent it back by the next post, telling them that they had made a mistake, that I was a lad of 19 years of age, happy among a very poor and lowly people in Cambridgeshire who loved me, and that I did not imagine that they could mean that I was to preach in London! But they returned it to me and said that they knew all about it, and I must come. Ah, what a story it has been since then, of the goodness and loving kindness of the Lord!

Now, perhaps, these words come to some Brother who has never yet laid hold of the idea that God can use him. You must not think that God picks out all the very choice and particularly fine persons. It is not so in the Biblesome of those who He took were very rough people. Even the first Apostles were mostly fishermen. Paul was an educated man, but he was like a lot out of the catalogone bow out of due timethe rest of them were not so. But God used them and it still pleases God, by the base things and things that are not, to bring to nothing the things that are! I do not want you to think highly of yourselfyour cakes are only five and they are barleyand poor barley at that. And your fish are very small and there are only two of them. I do not want you to think much of them, but think much of Christ! And believe that whoever you may be, if He thought it worth His while to buy you with His blood, and is willing to make some use of you, it is surely worth your while to come and bring yourself and all that you have to Him who is thus graciously ready to accept you! Put everything into His hands and let it be said of you, tonight, And Jesus took the loaves. It is a part of the history of the loaves that they relieved a great mass of misery.

And next, Jesus was glorified, for the people said, He is a Prophet! The miracle of the loaves carried them back to the wilderness and to the miracle of the manna. They remembered that Moses had said, The Lord your God will raise up unto you a Prophet from the midst of you, of your Brethren, like unto me. For this Deliverer they longed and as the bread increased, so grew their wonder, until in the swelling cakes they saw the finger of God and said, This is, of a truth, that Prophet that should come into the world. That little lad became, by his loaves and fishes, the revealer of Christ to all the multitude! And who can tell, if you give your loaves to Christ, whether thousands may not recognize Him as the Savior because of it? Christ is still known in the breaking of bread.

But the people went further with reference to Christ, after they had been fed by the loaves and fishesthey concluded that He was a Prophet and they began whispering among themselvesLet us make Him a king. Now, in a better sense than the text implies, I would to God that you and I, though humbly and feebly, might serve Christ till people said, Christ is a Prophet. Let us make Him a King! This sermon I offer my Master, if He will be pleased to accept it, though it is but a barley cake. And I pray that by it some may take Jesus Christ to be their King. Oh, that He had a throne in the hearts of many whom He shall feed at this time with the Bread of Heaven! Brothers and Sisters, I know that you wish to glorify Christ! Here is the way. Bring your loaves and fishes to Christ that He may use them in His Divine commissariatand then He shall be magnified in the eyes of all the people!

When the feast was finished, there were fragments to be gathered. This is a part of the history of the loavesthey were not lost. They were eaten, but they were therepeople were filled with them, but yet there was more of them left than when the feast began! Each disciple had a basketful to carry back to his Masters feet. Give yourself to Christ and when you have used yourself for His Glory, you will be more able to serve Him than you are now! You shall find your little stock grow as you spend it! Remember Bunyans picture of the man who had a roll of cloth. He unrolled it and he cut off so much for the poor. Then he unrolled it and cut off some more and the more he cut it, the longer it grew! Upon which Bunyan remarks

*There was a man, and some did count him mad!*

*The more he gave away, the more he had.* It is certainly so with talent and ability and with Divine Grace in the heart. The more you use it, the more there is of it. It is often so with gold and silverthe store of the liberal man increases, while the miser grows poor. We have an old proverb, which is as true as it is suggestiveDrawn wells have the sweetest waters. So, if you keep continually drawing on your mind, your thoughts will get sweeter. And if you continue to draw on His strength, your strength will get to be more mighty through God! The more you do, the more you may do, by the Grace of the Ever-Blessed One!

Last of all, it came to pass that these loaves had a record made about them. There is many a loaf that has gone to a kings table and yet never been chronicled, but this boys five cakes and two little fishes have got into the Bibleand if you look, you will find the barley cakes in Matthew; you will find the barley cakes in Mark; you will find the barley cakes in Luke! And you will find the barley cakes where we have found our text, in John. To make quite sure that we should never forget how much God can do with little things, this story is told four times overand it is the only one of Christs miracles which has such an abundant record!

And now, as a practical issue, let us put it to the test. You young people who have lately joined the Churchdo not be long before you try to do something for Christ! You that have, for a long time, been trusting Christ and have never yet begun to work, awaken yourselves to attempt some service for His sake! Aged friends and sick friends can still find something to do! Perhaps, at the last, it will be found that the persons whom we might have excused on account of illness, or weakness, or poverty, are the people who have done the most! That, at least, is my observation. I find that if there is a really good work done, it is usually done by an invalid, or by somebody who might very properly have said, I pray you, have me excused. How is it that so many able-bodied and gifted Christians seem to be so slow in the Masters service? If there is a political meeting, something about Liberals and Conservatives, how earnest you are! You are all there, every bit of you, over your politics, which are not worth a penny a year!

But when it comes to souls being saved, many of you are mute as fish! You go all the year round without caring even for the spiritual welfare of a little child! One of our friends gave a good answer to a Brother who said to him, I have been a member of a Church, now, for 40 years. I am a father in Israel. He asked him, How many children have you? How many have you brought to Christ? Well, the man said, I do not know that I ever brought anybody to Christ. Upon which our friend retorted, Call yourself a father in Israel and yet you have no children?! I think you had better wait until you have earned the title. So do I. It would be better that we had no professors of that sort, but that all our members, even were they much fewer, should be men and women constantly bringing forth fruit unto God in the conversion of others! The Lord set you all to work with this objective!

I am almost done, but again I cannot help reminding those who are not Christs, that while I have not directly preached to them, I have tried, by a side wind, to be preaching to them all the time! Either you are the Lords, or you are not. If you are Christs servant, take a sheet of paper and write down, Lord, I bring my loaves and fishes to You. And if you are not Christs, confess the awful truth to yourself and face it. I wish that you would make a record of it in black and white, putting down both name and date, I am not Christs. Take a good look at it! Try and grasp what it means, to withhold yourself from Him who loves you and waits to save you. Then ask yourself why you are not His. I remember a woman, not long ago, who said that at her work it came across her mind, I am not saved. She was sweeping the room and when she finished that, she said to herself, I have to cook dinner, but I am not saved.

She went into the kitchen and had her fire all ready, and her foodbut all the while she was putting things in the pot she kept saying to herself, I am not saved. And so it was when she was busy all the afternoon and when her husband came home, she could not help blurting it out to him, Oh, Husband, I am not saved! But he wasand, by Gods Grace, he pointed her to Christ! They knelt together, and oh, how he prayed with her! She found that which she so earnestly sought and it was not very many days before she could say, Oh, Husband, by His Grace I am saved! May that be the case with you! The Lord bless every one of you, wherever you may be! We shall all meet in the Day of Judgment. May you and I meet there without fear, to sing of the Sovereign Grace of God, which saved us from the wrath to come and helped us while we were here to bring our little, and put it into Christs hands! The Lord be with you! Amen.

**PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMONJohn 6.** HYMNS FROM OUR OWN HYMN BOOK504, 497, 888.

MR. SPURGEON UPDATE:   
Another week has gone and still MR. SPURGEON remains in very much the same condition as was reported last week. The abatement in certain serious symptoms, then mentioned, has continued, and this has been a cause for devout thanksgiving. But so far as the actual malady is concerned, there has been little or no real progress towards recovery. The message to all who love MR. SPURGEON and desire his complete restoration, is, Pray! Always pray! Is not this also an opportunity of giving a wider circulation to the sermons, that while the preachers voice is, for a while, necessarily silent, he may continue to speak through the printed page, to an ever-increasing congregation? This sermon, like the lads loaves, has been given to the Lordlet the Masters disciples distribute it among the multitude.

[That message was written in 1891I write to you in the year 2006, begging you to print this sermon and give it to as many people as you possibly cansaved or unsavedand in so doing, glorify God! And who knows what His Holy Spirit may do with it?EOD]

Adapted from The C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307 Sermon #2945 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

NIGHTAND JESUS NOT THERE!   
NO. 2945

A SERMON   
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, JULY 20, 1905.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON THURSDAY EVENING, APRIL 29, 1875.

**And it was now dark, and Jesus had not come to them. John 6:17.**

CHRISTS disciples, when they joined Him, had some very happy times with Himand they had just had a very grand day in feeding the multitude. I wish I had been there to help in the feeding of 5,000 men. Everyone who had a share in that service was highly honored and those who were not there might well regret their absence on such an eventful day! But notice fair days have foul eventides and the Christ manifested during the day may become a Christ hidden during the night. Close on the heels of the intense excitement of great success comes the relapse into darkness of spirit and absence of joy. The very same men who had been rejoicing with unspeakable joy in the Divine power of their Master, are now left to endure that which is a very sad experience for anyone to haveeverything darkand Jesus not there!

I am going to talk about the condition of the men described in our text. It was now dark, and Jesus had not come to them. And, first, I shall speak about the affliction of His absence. Secondly, about some considerations which may cheer us under it. And then, thirdly, I shall take a very different and far more terrible view of this condition and apply it to quite another class of persons.

I. First, then, It was now dark, and Jesus had not come to them. This suggests to us THE AFFLICTION OF HIS ABSENCE.   
It was a great affliction for these disciples to have Christ away from them at all. Whenever He was away, they were as sheep without a shepherd and as soldiers without a leader, but for Him to be away when they were at seawhen they were at sea in the darkwhen they were at sea in a stormall this made it much worse for them, for, although we always need Jesus, yet we more peculiarly recognize the value of His Presence when we can derive no comfort from anything else.   
Christs absence was, in itself, an affliction to His disciples and, in proportion as we love Him, we shall acknowledge it to be an affliction to have Him absent from us. Those who never knew the sweetness of the society of Christ do not feel any sorrow that He is absent from them. A person who had never tasted pure water, but has always had to drink some foul draught, would not sigh for the cooling spring because he had never known its sweetness. There is no poverty in the world so dire as the poverty of those who have been richand there are none who can know the value of the Savior, in His absence, but those who have enjoyed His preciousness by dwelling in His Presence! If your love to Jesus Christ is chilled, you will not miss Him much. Prince Emmanuel went away from Mansoul and when He was gone, the townspeople did not miss Him. But had they been enjoying continual fellowship with Him and He had departed from them only for a little while, they would have begun to sigh and cry in the bitterness of their soulsand would not have been content till they had Him back againand would have been ready to die if He did not come back to them at once! To those who intensely love Him, it is, in itself, an affliction to be without the Savior! And it is an affliction in proportion as they love Him.   
These men were put to many inconveniences by Christs absence. To be without the Savior made the darkness seem all the darker. Had He been there, they might have sungif the lines had then been written *Mid darkest shades, if He appears,   
My dawning is begun!*   
If Christ is in the boat with us, I do not know that it matters much whether the sun is shining or not, for, if the sun shall shine, we shall see HIM, and delight to see Him by the light of the sun. But if it is dark, we will see Christ by His own light and rejoice to see, in that brighter light, what we might not have recognized had the sunlight still shone upon us! You all know what it is to be in the dark and you know that material darkness is not comfortable. I remember being in a third-class railway carriage with a large number of other people travelling a long journey at night. Somebody struck a match and lit a candle. That became the most cheerful part of the carriage and our eyes could not help turning in that direction, for we did not like the darkness. Nobody does. There is also a kind of mental darkness in which you are disturbed, perplexed, worried troublednot, perhaps, about anything tangibleyou could not write down your troubles. It may even be that you really dont have any, but you feel troubled and dismayed. Other people say that you are nervous and they blame you and say, You ought not to give way in this manner. That is what they think. But when a person gets into your present condition, that is the unkindest thing that anyone can possibly sayand the least likely to do any good to the poor troubled soul! I do not mind a trouble which I can see and understand. Manfully would I shoulder it in my Masters strength. But when the spirit, itself, is in the dark, one imagines a thousand evil things! Even good things, themselves, seem to be evil and what should be to your encouragement becomes often a source of discouragement! Have any of you ever been in that condition? If you have, and if Jesus has not come to you, then, I am sure that you have felt it very difficult and you have greatly needed His Presence.   
There are a great many of you who appear to have a large stock of faith, but it is only because you are in very good health and your business is prospering. If you happened to get a disordered liver, or your business should fail, I would not be surprised if nine parts out of ten of your wonderful faith would evaporate! I have noticed that certain brethren who talk about being perfect are generally persons of robust constitution with a very comfortable income and not much to do except to go about to conferences and conventionsand talk about themselves. But the tried people of God do not often ride upon those high horses. They have to cry out very frequently! They have many anxieties and cares which, although they cast them upon the Lord, make them realize that they are not yet pure spirits, but are still in the body. Let a man have a bad headache for about half an hour and let him see whether he does not feel himself to be mortal and to still have something sinful about him!   
Another part of the affliction of the disciples when it was now dark, and Jesus had not come to them, was that their toil became very wearisome. They were rowing and they had rowed their boat several furlongs from the shore and it was wearisome work in Christs absence. When He was with them and favored them with a cheering glance, and spoke comforting messages to them, I can well imagine how merrily that boat went alonghow they tugged the oar as the Venetian gondolier tugs his to the sound of song, and how the vessel would glide over the waves! But now they had to toil by themselves and there was no sweet word from Jesus, no gracious promise from His lips, no loving glance from His dark eyes which were to them like the fish pools in Heshbon, by the gate of Beth-Rabbim. Now that their Lord was absent, it was all tugging and straining till muscle and sinew were weary. It is just so with our Christian serviceif Christ is with us, it is glorious work to teach in the Sunday school or to preach in the congregation! And going from house to house is light work to the visitor, for he is conscious of the Presence of his Master. But if the Lords Presence is withdrawn, you feel that you must do these things from a sense of duty. You will do them and you will nerve yourself up to persevere with the task, but it is hard, trying work.   
Not only did the darkness seem to get darker and the toil become more wearisome, but the way grew rougher, for we are told that the sea arose by reason of a great wind that blew. When our Lord Jesus Christ is with us, rough roads grow smooth, but when He is absent, smooth roads grow rough. It is marvelous how a man who lives in the light of Christs Countenance makes light of losses and crosses. He takes them as a matter of course, or, better still, he accepts them as gifts from God and believes that they will be overruled for goodand so he keeps on singing as he passes over the rough road. But if Jesus Christ is absent, a comparatively easy lot appears to be a heavy one and where we should have seen a thousand mercies, we only have an eye to observe our discomforts. It is trying traveling when the waves are rough and it is darkand Jesus is not there.   
Worst of all, when Jesus is away, all perils become more terrible. Many a boat has perished on the Galilean Lake, beneath those waters which sometimes gleam so placidly as though they tempted the boat to float upon their surface. And many a man has found a watery grave in that land-locked sea when it has worked tempestuously beneath the gusts from the surrounding hills. If Jesus had been with His disciples on that stormy night. If He had been awake to speak to and cheer them, they would have rejoiced to see the boat go up and down, from the trough of the wave to the billows crown, like some great sea bird in its play! They would have felt a sort of hilarity of spirit at being in such a brisk gale when the Lord High Admiral of all the seas was in command of their boat! But now that He was away from them, they feared that the vessel would go down. They thought they would never survive that storm, they would drift onto a rock and not one of them would again reach the shore! The perils are, indeed, great when it is dark and Jesus is not there!

You will say, dear Friends, that I am describing a very sad condition of things. Well, it is no fancied one to me, at any rate, and I think it is no unusual thing for those whom Jesus loves to be put into such a condition. There are many saints of whom we read in the Word who were precious in the sight of the Lord, but, among them all, where do you find one who was not tried? O man greatly beloved, was said to Daniel and, therefore, it might have been added, O man greatly tried and passed through stern processes to prove whether you really are what you seem to be. Whatever God keeps away from His servants, I do not think He ever keeps away the rod from them! He had one Son without sin, but He never had one son without chastisement. If there are many of Gods children who have not yet had any trials, I would not recommend them to pray for itthat would be very wrong. The Lords children need not ask to be whipped, but I would advise them to reckon that somewhere between here and Heaven they will have to realize the truth of that saying of the Apostle, If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chastens not?   
There I leave this first pointthe affliction of Christs absence.   
II. Now, secondly, I am going to mention SOME CONSIDERATIONS WHICH MAY CHEER US WHEN IN THIS CONDITION.   
The first consideration I would mention is this. Dear Friend, perhaps it may not really be as you think it is. You say that Christ is absent from you, but, possibly He is not. Perhaps you have not really lost His Presence. Oh, but I am not as happy as I once was! I do not know that Christs company in the soul necessarily makes that soul consciously happy continually. I know that Jesus was very near to Peter when a look from Him made the sinful disciple go out and weep bitterly. I think that the Presence of Christ may sometimes tend to breed in us a certain holy sorrow which, though not so sweet, is yet as precious as holy joy itself. Perhaps, dear Friend, you are not just now in a right state of body or in a right mental condition to get joy and happiness from the Presence of Christ. At any rate, if He were not there, your spirit would have sunk much lower than it does now. Sad as you are, you would have been much sadder if it had not been for the sacred influence of His more than magnetic Presence which is really staying your soul. You might have fallen into despair, but you have not come to that condition yet and it is because His left hand is under your head so that, although you sink, you do not sink lower. You might have been utterly overwhelmed if it had not been for the Divine supports which have been given to keep you where you are!   
I will tell you a secret from my own experience. I have had times in which I have blamed myself and grieved before God and if anyone had asked me, What is your souls condition? I would have said, Bad. Yet, in a month or twos time, I have longed to have that very condition over again, for I have said to myself, I am happy now, but I wish I could grieve over sin as I did then. I think I have strong faith now, but I wish I had the same tender consciousness of the least touch and taint of sin that I had in what I regarded as my dark days. We are very bad judges of our own spiritual experiences. We often undervalue who God esteems and set great store by that which God does not prize. So it may be that Christ is really with you, dear Friend, although you are writing such bitter things against yourself and mourning His absence.   
If He is, indeed, absent, there is one thing to comfort you, namely, that you have not driven Him away by your sins. That is to say if you are in the same condition as those disciples were in the vessel. Their Master had bid them go, and they had gone at His command. He had left them they had not left Him, so they had not to blame themselves because He was not there when the darkness came on.   
If you are conscious that you have been living in some known sin, go and bitterly repent of it before God. If you have grieved the Spirit of God and driven Him away from you, listen to the voice which says, Return, you backsliding children. But that is not the subject upon which I am now speaking. I am addressing these who think they have lost the Presence of Christ, these whose conscious joy has departed, who, nevertheless, are not aware that there has been anything in them which would separate them from their God. You, dear Friends, may derive comfort from this fact. Say, Well, as the Lord has sent us to sea and left us, we are where He put us. And as this is His Sovereign appointment, even if it is the post of trial, so let it be. We will kiss the rod and even in the dark we will believe that all is well! And just as a child, when it is put to bed without a candle, must not cry, but must go to sleep, so we will not weep, but bow submissively to whatever our Lord ordains.   
Further, if Jesus Christ is not in the boat with His disciples, although it is dark, they have this thought to comfort themthat He still loves them. He is not there, but He loves them, so His heart is with them. They seem to be alone, but their names are written on His heart just as they used to be. Yes, Beloved, our condition before God does not depend upon our conscious enjoyment. Do you believe that we are children of God today because we are happy, and that we may be children of the devil tomorrow because we may then be desponding? Oh, no!   
*If ever it should come to pass   
That sheep of Christ should fall away,   
My fickle, feeble soul, alas,   
Would fall a thousand times a day!*   
But the mercy is that even though we believe not, He is faithful! We change, but He changes not! And when His servants are in a storm or under a cloud, the love of Jesus Christ for them is just the same as when they rejoiced in the full sunlight of conscious enjoyment of His Presence.

Recollect, also, that although you cannot see Jesus and He is not with you, He knows where you are. You cannot see Him, but He can see you. What a terrible blast came down from the hills just now! The Lord knows all about it and how it made the ship rock and reel, and stagger like a drunken man. That wave seemed to come right over us and to wet us to the skin. Yes, but Christ knew every drop that was in it and just where each drop would fall. But see how every timber in the vessel startsit must surely go to pieces soon. But Christ knows all about the starting of the timbers and the straining of the masts. He is not ignorant of the condition of any of His children. And if He has put them in a position of trial, He Himself watches over them with tender and sympathetic eyes and knows exactly their perils and their needs.

And, more than that, our blessed Lord not only knows where we are and all about our circumstancesand loves us and feels for usbut He can come to us. How can He come to us? We are many furlongs out at sea. Yes, but He can come to you. But there is no other boat near and if there were, how could it live in such a storm as this? Would you have us believe that He will came riding upon the wings of the wind or walking upon the waves? It cannot be! Yet it was, you know, for Jesus did come to them. And if you say, in the time of your distress, that the Lord Jesus cannot come to you, I must tell you that you know not what you are saying! His people never can be in a place where He cannot get to them!

And what is morelet this comfort you He will come to you for He did come to His disciples. He came walking on the water and so reached themand He will come to you, also. Though He may tarry a little while, for the trial of your faith, He will come to you before long. If you believe in Christ even when it is dark with you, the clear shining will come to you before long

*When your eye of faith is dim,*

*Still trust in Jesus, sink or swim*   
and in due time Christ must come to you. He cannot finally forsake one of His people and when He comes, He will say, For a small moment have I forsaken you, but with great mercies will I gather you. In a little wrath I hid My face from you for a moment, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on you, says the Lord your Redeemer. So be of good cheer, for Jesus Christ will come to you even when it is all dark around you!

And here is another word of cheer for you, namely that when He does come, it will be in a way that will give you a higher sense of His Glory than you ever had before. You have seen Him on the land, but you have never yet seen Him on the water! Well, you could not see Him walking on the water unless you were on the water, yourselfand you could not see Jesus Christ calming the storm unless there was a storm to be quieted! And if the wind did not blow, you could not tell whether He could control it. Trial is absolutely necessary in order to reveal to us some of the attributes of our gracious God! We cannot, ordinarily, see the stars in the daytime, but if we go down a mine or a well, we can. And often in the deep mines or wells of trouble, as we go down, down, down, we see the brightness of our Lord Jesus Christ as we never saw it before! You know that there is a certain kind of ink with which you may write but no one will perceive that there is any writing on the paper until it is held near a firethe heat of the fire makes the writing legible. There are many precious promises that are written with this invisible ink and, until you hold them to the fire of affliction or trial, you will never read them and understand them. You must be brought into this trial! You must be in the dark, or Jesus will not come to you with such a splendid display of His marvelous power and love as He gave to His disciples on that stormy sea! But, lookover the tops of those rolling billows He comesthe Man, the Christ, the Godswift to help and deliver you in your hour of greatest peril! Oh, it is worthwhile to miss His Presence for a whileand to be in darkness for a timeif we may afterwards see Him in a still nobler Character and understand more of His mighty power to save!

It is very possible that when your Lord comes back to you, His return will be to you the end of a great many troubles, toils and difficulties. I do not understand how it was, but when our Lord came walking on the water and entered the little vessel, immediately the ship was at the land where they went. There was some sudden lift, or darting forward of the vessel and immediately it was at the shore! Have you ever noticed how when you have had a time of great spiritual darkness and, perhaps, of great labor and trial, and you have worried yourself because you could not see the Lords hand in it all and could not trace the Lords love overruling it, Jesus Christ has at last come to you and there has been an immediate end to your spiritual troubleand what has been possibly more remarkable, there has been an end to all the rest of your trials? Perhaps, for months afterwards, you have not had any spiritual darkness, or stormy winds or contrary waves! There was a great calm after all your trials, just as, when the children of Israel had been so oppressed in Egypt and were about to be delivered from the hand of Pharaoh, the Lord said, Against any of the children of Israel shall not a dog move his tongue.

I have had those seasons of wonderful calm when not a dog has moved his tongue against me, although I have had all the dogs of Hell at my heels a little while before! There have been no troubles from above, around, or beneathnot a devil has dared to tempt me and nothing external has afflicted meall seemed to come exactly as I would have it and all in a moment! Perhaps it would not be safe for us to get to land so quickly without having first been in the dark a little while. We cannot bear sudden prosperity. Great success is one of the worst perils of mankind. Many a man has been elevated until his brain has grown dizzy and he has fallen to his destruction. He who is to be made to stand securely on a high place has need to be put through sharp affliction. More men are destroyed by prosperity and success then by affliction and apparent failure.

These are some of the considerations which may cheer those of Gods people who, for a time, walk in darkness and see no Light of God. May God bless these words to any mourning saint who may hear or read them!

III. But now, in concluding my discourse, I am going to make a very different use of the text. There are some of youI am glad to see you here and I pray the Lord to bless the message which I am about to give youthere are some of you who do not know the Lord Jesus Christ and who are not trusting in Him. Your condition may be described in those amazing words of the Apostle Paul, (to me they are very amazing), without Christ. That is one of the saddest things that can be said of anybodywithout Christ. Possibly you say that you do not see any sadness in your present condition. You enjoy yourself very much. You are young, in good health, the world is bright and life seems to be one continual dance to you. It is true that Jesus has not come to you, but you do not need Him and you think that you can do very well without Him. But one of these days it will be very dark all around youand it is a very terrible thing for a man when it is dark and Jesus does not come to him!

I have seen such people. I saw some of them during the recent financial panicthey were men of considerable business and they were making money, but everything around them seemed to be shaking. Many firms were failing and presently the news came that there was a failure in a certain house which would involve them in its ruin. All was gone in a moment and there was nothing to be done but to call their creditors together and tell them the truth. In such a time as that, a man who has a large family depending upon him and who occupied a high position in society may have to come down to almost absolute poverty. I do not know what some men whom I saw then, did, for they had not any Christ to go and talk tothey had not the Well-Beloved into whose ear they could whisper the sad tale of their troubles. I know that some of them were glad to get anybody to listen to what they had to say, and it was a sorry story. Well now, some of you have been prospering in worldly matters. God has blessed you with temporal goods, but reverses may come to you and what will you do, then, without Christ?

But there is something worse than that! It may be that your worldly business may continue to prosper, but there may come to you a mental trouble. It does come to you sometimes, does it not? You have been out to a very merry party, but when you come home you feel dreadfully flat. Do you not occasionally get into that state? Perhaps I am addressing someone who used to be very interested in the theater. He has been again, lately, but somehow or other the plays are not so interesting as they used to be, or else he has changed his attitude towards them. The fact is that the man has not the tastes and desires that he once had. If he goes where he used to go, he does not any longer find the mirth and merriment that he used to find therethe laughter seems to him to be folly and madnesshe cannot enjoy it. Well now, if you have lost your taste for this world, it is a sorry thing for you if you have not acquired a taste for another and a better world! If your old friend has gone from you, it is a sad thing if the new best Friend does not came to you! I pity those of you who once thought yourselves so very good and whose selfrighteousness is all gone, but who have nothing better in the place of it it is very dark and Jesus has not come to you. I pity you who were once so self-contained and dogmatic, but who now begin to tremble and to be afraid because Jesus does not come to you it is night with youmental nightand it is night in your circumstances, yet Jesus has not come to you. What I would bid you do is just look through the thick darkness, for on the crest of the wave, the crucified Savior is standing! And if you will but look to Him with the eye of faith, He will come into your vessel and deliver you. He will sanctify your trouble, clear away the affliction from your mind and give you peace and rest!

Remember, also, that in a very short time all of you will die. Will you picture yourself lying upon the bed of sickness? I cannot describe the room, for I have not seen it, but I can well imagine you propped up with pillows, for you can scarcely get your breath. And the physician has told your wife that in a few hours it will be all over. And you have been very gently toldat least, you have spelt it out for yourselfthat they have given you up and that the sweat that they are wiping from your brow is really the death-sweat. It is very dark. There, bid good-bye to your wife and children, for you must leave them. Look out of the window and see what you can of the surroundings of the old homestead, for you are going to leave it and you have no home to dwell in forever. It is very dark. Money cannot help you now. The honors you have gained cannot help you now. And the fondness of affection, which would help you if it could, cannot help you now. It is very dark, but, worst of all, Jesus has not come to you

*Jesus can make a dying bed*

*Feel soft as downy pillows*   
but if He does not come to you then, man, what will you do? What will you do? What will you do? To die in the dark is terrible! To live in the dark is more than I would choose, but what must it be to die in the dark and not to have Jesus with you? May God deliver you! But if you will not have Christ as your Savior in life, how can you expect to have Him in death? Fly to Him now, lest tomorrow you should see the picture which I have sketched, executed to the very lifeand you the subject of it!

But if it is dreadful to die without the Savior, what will it be to wake up in the unseen world without Him? And, at the last, what will it be when the great trumpet sounds, to have no Savior to welcome you, but, instead thereof, to see Him far away, seated upon that Great White Throne as your Judge? What will it be to have no Jesus coming to help you when the earth is rocking and reeling and the Heavens are on fire, and the books are opened, and the Judge is dividing, to the right and to the left, the sheep and the goats? And, all the while, He has not darted one glance of love at you, or opened His lips to say one friendly word to you? Think what will be your despair when, at last, it comes your turn to hear the terrible words, Depart, you cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.

*You sinners, seek His Grace,   
Whose wrath you cannot bear!   
Fly to the shelter of His Cross   
And find salvation there.*

Look to Him and live! God help you to look now! And then, when it is dark, Jesus will come to youno, better still, He will live with you forever and ever!

God bless you all, for Jesus Christs sake! Amen.   
EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **JOHN 6:14-40.**

Verses 14, 15. Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that Prophet who should come into the world. When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take Him by force, to make Him a king, He departed again into a mountain, Himself alone. Our Lord Jesus had just worked the miracle of feeding the five thousand men with five loaves and two small fishes, so He was very popular at that time. The people even wanted to come and take Him by force and make Him a king, but He escaped from them, for He knew the value of that popularity! What was it but a puff of wind? Probably many of the very people who tried then to crown Him were among the crowds in Jerusalem who cried, Crucify Him! Crucify Him! And, nowadays there may be a great deal of anxiety to hear the Gospel, yet very little result may follow from it. A crowded House of Prayer is certainly a very hopeful sight, yet it may end in disappointment to those who are looking for souls to be won for the Savior.

16-26. And when evening was now come, His disciples went down unto the sea, and entered into a boat, and went over the sea toward Capernaum. And it was now dark, and Jesus had not come to them. And the sea arose by reason of a great wind that blew. So when they had rowed about five and twenty or thirty furlongs, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and drawing near unto the boat and they were afraid. But He said unto them, It is I; be not afraid. Then they willingly received Him into the ship: and immediately the ship was at the land where they went. The day following, when the people which stood on the other side of the sea saw that there was no other boat there, save that one which His disciples were entered, and that Jesus went not with His disciples into the boat, but that His disciples were gone away alone, (howbeit there came other boats from Tiberius near unto the place where they did eat bread, after the Lord had given thanks). When the people therefore saw that Jesus was not there, neither His disciples, they also took boats, and came to Capernaum, seeking for Jesus. And when they had found Him on the other side of the sea, they said unto Him, Rabbi, when did You come here? Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, You seek Me not because you saw the miracles, but because you did eat of the loaves, and were filled. How faithful and truthful the Master was! There was in Him nothing of the political concealment of His knowledge and the endeavor to please everybody which we see in so many! He speaks the truth whether it offends or pleases His hearersand so should His servants. You seek Me, He said, not because you saw the miracles, but because you did eat of the loaves, and were filled.

27. Labor not for the meat which perishes, but for that meat which endures unto everlasting life, which the Son of Man shall give unto you, for Him has God the Father sealed. He rebuked their excessive ardor in seeking meat for their bodies and urged them rather to seek food for their souls. But did you ever notice what an extraordinary piece of advice our Savior gave to these people? It is one of His paradoxes. He bade them not to labor for the very thing which they could not get without laboring, and to labor for that which they never could get by laboring. Labor not for the meat which perishesyet how else can we have it? But for that meat which endures unto everlasting life, which the Son of Man shall give unto you. It is a free gift and not the reward of labor, yet Christ told them to labor for it! Did He not mean just thisLet not your greatest efforts be expended upon the things of time and sense, but let them go out after eternal and spiritual blessings?

28. Then said they unto Him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? What is the noblest work that we can do? What is that work which will please God most?

29. Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that you believe on Him whom He has sent. The grandest work that any man can do is to believe on the Savior whom God has sent. There are some who despise faith, but Christ was not of that number. He honored it exceedingly when He said, in effect, This is the Godlike work, the work which is nearest to Gods heart, that you believe on Him whom He has sent. Dear Friend, are you struggling after that which is high and noble? Would you do the best days work that was ever done in any mortal life? Then run not to this or that invention of your own, but be content to believe on Him whom God has sent! This is the first, the highest, the noblest workthe work which gives to God the greatest pleasure!

30. They said therefore unto Him, What sign show You then, that we may see, and believe You? What do You work? What strange questions for them to ask when He had amazed them with His wonderful works!

31. Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from Heaven to eat. They talked about bread againhow they persist in coming back to that! You know the questions that men of the world are always asking, What shall we eat, what shall we drink, and with what shall we be clothed? This is the worlds wretched trinity!

32. Then Jesus said to them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from Heaven; but My Father gives you the true bread from Heaven. Moses did not give Israel the manna, God gave it. And it did not come from Heaven, that is, from the celestial sphere, in the sense in which Christ, the true Bread, came from Heaven.

33. For the Bread of God is He which comes down from Heaven, and gives life unto the world. The Bread of God is Jesus Christ, Himself! The man who would feed so as to satisfy his spiritual nature, and live thereby, must feed upon Jesus Christ, Himself.

34. Then said they unto Him, Lord, give us this bread. They did not understand the meaning of their own prayer. Sometimes, in our services, when people are very quickly convicted of sin and fall to praying all of a sudden, a wise conductor ought to enquire carefully whether it is not a mistaken prayer. I do not doubt that many of the cries and many of the professions made in enquiry-rooms are mistaken ones, after all, and that we put down as the results of our work much of which we shall have cause to be ashamed when it comes to the time of testing.

35. And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that comes to Me shall never hunger and he that believes in Me shall never thirst. Hear this, poor starving people! The needs of your soul can all be met by Jesus Christ! If you have Him, the hunger of your spirit shall be appeased and the thirst of your heart shall be quenched.

36. But I said unto you that you have seen Me, and believe not. How the Savior brings the truth home to these people and He might do the same to some of you. You pray, Give us this bread and He replies, I have given it to you, yet you have not eaten it. You have seen Me, you have heard Me, you know Me and yet you do not believe on Me. If Christ were to appear in this building at this moment, might He not say to many of you, You have heard of Me from your childhood and you know all you need to know about Me, yet you have not believed in Me? Would God it were not so with so many of you!

37-40. All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me and him that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from Heaven not to do My own will, but the will of Him that sent Me. And this is the Fathers will which has sent Me, that of all which He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it again at the last day. And this is the will of Him that sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son, and believes on Him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day. This is the glorious Gospel of the blessed Godthat everyone who looks to Christ with eyes of faith has everlasting life, and though his body may die, yet even for that there is everlasting life, for Christ will raise him up again at the last day. Oh, that you would all believe on Jesus Christ and so find that eternal life!

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SEEKING FOR JESUS   
NO. 947

**DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, AUGUST 21, 1870, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**Seeking for Jesus.   
John 6:24.**

THE persons who are here described as seeking for Jesus were looking after Him from a very mean and selfish motivenot because of the gracious words which He spoke, nor to render Him thanks for benefits received at His handsbut merely because they had eaten of the loaves and fishes, and hoped to do so again. From such sordid motives let us flee. May we all shun with detestation the very idea of making a profession of religion for the sake of worldly advantage. It is detestable to the last degree. Those who seek Jesus Christ with the groveling desire to make a gain of godliness are hypocrites of the meanest order.

Like Judas they will follow the Lord while they can steal from the bag, and like that son of perdition, they will sell Him when the thirty pieces of silver are the reward of treachery. Let them know that such gain will involve their souls eternal loss.

I shall apply the words before us to those who really and spiritually seek Jesus, seek Him as Jesusthe Savior who saves His people from their sins. Last Sunday morning I tried to speak concerning maturity in Grace, giving the advanced Believer a word. And as we are bound to give a portion of meat in due season to all classes, I will now deal with those who are but babes in Grace, if indeed they are babes at all. I shall speak to those who cannot say, We have found Him, but who are earnestly seeking for Jesus.

I. First, let us notice THE CHARACTER OF THE STATE described as seeking for Jesus. In it there is a mingling of good and evil. We see in it much of light, but too much of darkness. It is neither day nor night, a dim twilight, hopeful but overclouded. I may call it not light, but darkness visible. It is one of those miry places, a marsh, not altogether sea, and certainly not land. Like the brackish water of the rivers mouth, not altogether salt, but assuredly not sweet.

Seeking for Jesus has a large amount of hopefulness in it. It is as the almond tree in blossom, though as yet there is no fruit. The seeker at any rate is not indifferent now. He is not a careless sluggard, demanding yet more sleep and folding of the hands. He is not a defiant rebel, daring the wrath of God with blasphemous audacity. He is no longer a denier of Revelation. He would not be seeking for Jesus unless he had some kind of faithat any rate, a theoretical faithin a Savior, and in his need of Him.

Now it is a very encouraging sign when we see men aroused and willing to hear. When we can bring men to think, we are very grateful, for thoughtfulness lies on the road to conviction of sin, and conviction is on the way to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. I am glad, my dear Friend, that you are now no longer deaf to the appeals of Gods Word. It is well that your ears are open, and though as yet what you hear is far from bringing you any comfort, rest assured it is a great blessing to you to hear the

Truth of God, even when it condemns you. I rejoice to see you under concern and I hope that something may come of it.

Your face is now turned in the right direction, now that you are seeking for Jesus. When you sought sinful pleasure you were facing the pit of Hellnow your face is heavenward. I am glad that Jesus is the Object of your search, for depend upon it, nothing else is worth seeking for salvation from sin and Hell should be the first object of your souls desire. For an alarmed and awakened sinner to seek rest in ceremonies will be a search for bread among ashes. To labor for salvation by your own righteousness will be looking for substance among dreams.

Your seeking after Jesus shows that you are on the right tack, and though as yet you have not reached the haven, the helm is set in the right direction, and I am grateful to God for it and encouraged concerning you. I regard your present state as the little cloud which foretells the coming rain. But, alas, I may be disappointed, and the early cloud may melt into nothingness! Hope tells a flattering tale, but she may be deceived. What a pleasing sight it is to see a man who has formerly been prayerless casting himself upon his knees in secret!

How gratifying to see the unread Bible brought out from the dust and carefully studied! Methinks an angel must look on with holy interest when he sees the fresh tear fall in the solitary chamber, and the unaccustomed suppliant bow before his God. Glad are those blessed spirits when they hear the seeker say, O God, I will seek You until I find You. I will cry unto You till I receive an answer of peace.

Intelligence of such a vow would make a Church rejoice in hope trusting that the time for newborn children of God to be found in her midst was fully come. A heart that turns itself to Christ if haply it may find Him, is evidently in a hopeful condition. Yet in the state of seeking for Jesus there is much that is doubtful, for, my Brethren, the seeker after Christ remains disobedient to the great command of the Gospel. If he were obedient to the great Gospel precept, he would at once cease to be a seeker, and become a happy finder.

What is the command of the Gospel? Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved. Properly speaking, Christ is not an object for seeking, He is not far from any of uslike the brazen serpent uplifted by Moses, He is not so much to be looked for as looked at. We have neither to clamber to Heaven to find Him in the loftiness of His Deity, to bring Him downnor dive into the chambers of Hades to bring Him up again from the dead.

Thus says the Lord, The Word is near you, even in your mouth, and in your heart: that is, the Word of faith, which we preach. That if you shall confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus, and shall believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved. Jesus is Immanuel, God with us. A prayer will reach Him, a wish will find Him, a groan will pierce His heartdo but confide in Him and He is yours.

The first command of the Gospel to guilty sinners is not to pray, to search the Scriptures, to attend upon sermonsall these are natural dutiesand woe unto the man who neglects any of them. But the command, the special command of the Gospel is, Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ! Now, the seeking sinner is disobedient to the command. He is going about here and there seeking, but he declines trusting. He is eagerly looking abroad for that which is at home.

He is seeking for peace afar off when it is near him. He looks east and west to behold a wonder, while the Wonderful, the Savior, stands at his right hand ready to forgive. The way of salvation for me as a sinner is simply this, that I, being a sinner, do now put my trust in Christ Jesus the Substitute for sinners. God has set forth His crucified Son as the accepted Propitiation for sinthe way of salvation is that I accept Him for what God has set Him forthnamely, as the Atonement for my sin, in which I place my sole reliance.

Seeing He is God, seeing He took upon Himself the nature of man, seeing that as Mediator He suffered in the place of as many as trust in Him, I trust Him, and I obtain thereby the blessed result of His sufferingsI am, in fact, thereby saved. Now, it is some good thing certainly to be a seeker, but it is also an ill thing if I follow my seeking and refuse Gods way of salvation.

Hear what the Apostle John saysHe that believes not God has made Him a liar because he believes not the record that God gave of His Son. This is no small sin to be guilty of, and it entails no small punishment, for he that believes not is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

Suppose that I have been told of a remedy for my disease. Well, it is very good that I desire to be cured of my deadly malady, it is so far hopeful that I have sent for a physician. But after being informed that there is the one specific remedy for my disease, and that it alone will certainly heal meif I were still to continue seeking a remedy, or to say I am seeking this one true remedyI shall remain sick, and ultimately die. I shall never be healed unless I take that which is prescribedto seek it is not enough, I must actually take it.

In seeking, then, there is some good, but oh, how much of evil! Here are gleams and flashes of light, but oh, how dense is the darkness! Here is a little smoke in the flax, but I dare scarcely call it a spark. O Seeker for Jesus, think of this, for while I would not discourage you, yet would I encourage you to end your seeking by becoming a Believer. Look not at salvations cup, but drink of it. Stand not by the fountains brim, but wash in it and be clean. O may the Holy Spirit lead you to cease your search for goodly pearls, for the Pearl of Great Price is before you! Jesus is not to be discovered as a secretHe stands before you openly. Behold His hands and His feet! Mark well His torn side, and as you look, TRUSTand from now on He is all your own!

Hear, dear Friend, your true position. It is the case of a soldier on the battlefield, wounded, bleeding, life oozing away from him. He is perishing, but he is sufficiently sensible to know it and to call for help. The surgeon is on the field within hearing, the sufferer pleads for relief with many cries and entreaties. So far, so good. But I pray you remember that crying and weeping will not of themselves heal the sick manthe surgeon must actually come and bind up his wounds. And if he refuses to receive him, he may cry as he wills, but he will bleed to death.

So remember that your prayers and seeking, of themselves, cannot save youJesus must come to you, and it is madness on your part to refuse Him by your unbelief. To give another similitudeyou are today like the manslayer of old, you have done the murderous deed, vengeance is

armed against you. Judgment, swift as lightning pursues you. You are not now slumbering in foolish security, or presumptuously defying the avenger, but happily you are so aroused that you are running towards the City of Refuge.

I delight to mark your earnest running, but run as you may, you are not safe until you are within the city gate. The most vigorous running will not save you if it does not end within the walls of refuge. To enter that open gate, to dwell within that sheltering wall, to enjoy the privilege of sanctuarythis is safety. All else is but hope of escape, and not deliverance itself. To pray, to hear, to desire, to seekall this is the roadway and the running, but Christ Himself must be laid hold upon by faithor we are not saved.

Run, Man, but oh, take care that you run in Gods wayby faith in Jesusand not by trusting in your resolves and feelings! You must have Christ to be yours by personal faith, or you must die eternally. Let me give yet another picture. You are like one who has been asleep in a burning house. At last you are awakened. The cries of those who would gladly save you have broken your deadly slumber. You start up in horror. I think I see you now at the upper window, with the flames drawing near to you. You clearly perceive your danger, you passionately clamor for aid. All your energies are aroused.

So far, so good. But, Man, all this will not rescue youyou must get on the fire escape which is now uplifted to the window. Are you unwilling to take the one and only way of escape? It is close to you. It is suitable, it is efficient! Why seek another? There it is, and precisely what you need. Your present alarm will only be the prelude of your despair if you put from you the way of escape. I put these figures before you that you may see that while you are only seeking for Jesus, your best friends dare not altogether hope for you, but are led to tremble, too.

We wonder which way the scale will turnyour future quivers in the balances. As anxious eyes watch a laboring boat making with difficulty for port, and in imminent danger of the rocks, so we watch you. We see you like Lot and his family, ready to leave the City of Destruction, but you have not yet reached the mountain, and our heart asks concerning you, Will he linger in the plain? Will he look back? Or will he altogether be delivered?

If you remain as you are, there is no hope for you. All the supposed good which is now in you is vanity itself if it leaves you short of Christ. Remember well this verse, and I will pass on

*Why those fears, poor seeking sinner?   
Why those anxious, gloomy fears?   
Sighs and sorrows cannot save you,   
Healing dwells not in your tears;   
It is BELIEVING   
Which the soul to Christ endears.*

II. The second part of our discourse shall deal with THE PERPLEXITIES OF THIS STATE. Seeking for Jesus is a state of heart in which the poor soul is usually very much put to ittumbled up and down in his thoughts, as John Bunyan would say. For first, seekers are very often much perplexed as the result of their ignorance of the way of salvation. Too often, awakened souls, though they may have heard the Gospel, do not in their hearts understand it. Many enquirers do not know what faith is.

I am persuaded millions of our fellow countrymen do not know what believing in Jesus means. Though every Sunday they are told, yet they do not catch the thought, for the Spirit of God has not illuminated their minds. To believe in Jesus, as we say again, and again, and again, is simply to trust in Jesusto take God at His Wordto take Christ for what God says He is, namely, the Atonement, the satisfaction for sin, the Savior of sinners.

But poor, troubled consciences think faith is a deep mystery, and they go about like blind men groping for the wall. They wander like travelers in a dense fog, not knowing which way leads to their homeshoping, but hoping against hope, by reason of ignorance. Many, though desirous to be saved, do not understand the work of Christ, or know what Atonement is. Though the doctrine of Substitution, which is the very marrow of the Gospel, is to Believers so very plain, yet many seekers have not learned it.

That Jesus bore the sin of His peoplethat the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. That He was made sin for us. That Justice received its due at His hands. This precious fact many penitent sinners have not grasped. They still think there is so much repentance to do, so much feeling to endure, so much praying to go through, so much mystery to be experienced. But the plain, simple precept, Believe and live, trust and be accepted, hide under the shadow of the Cross and be safethis, through ignorance, they do not understandand this involves them in trouble upon trouble, till their way is hedged up with thorns.

At such times, too, to increase their perplexity, they are usually distracted with fear. Persons in a panic act generally in the worst conceivable manner for their own safety, and an awakened sinner is in much the same condition. A terrible sound is in his earshe hears the rumbling of the everlasting tempesthe sees the gathering storm. He knows not what to do, nor where to flee. His sins, which once appeared such trifles, now rise before him like mountains of blackness. The wrath of God, which once he defied, makes him exceedingly fear and quake.

He sees the dark record of his transgressions and anticipates the hour when all his sins shall be read before the assembled universe, and the sentence of wrath shall go forth against him. To where shall he flee? He scarcely knows how or where to fly. A spirit distracted with dread is never a wise spirit, and often is goaded on to madness. Pressed out of measure with forebodings of heart and threats of conscience, many a man refusing to believe in Jesus has laid violent hands upon himself.

Do you wonder, then, that souls under a sense of sin and fear of wrath, are far from being calm and collected, but rather are like mariners in a storm who reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man? How soon would their bewilderment end in sweet repose if they would obey the Divine mandate and accept the great salvation! During these struggles for life the mind is usually harassed with a thousand questions. The newlyawakened mind is very apt to lose itself in the many spiritual problems which lie before it. The man cared nothing for these matters before, but now he has even a morbid craving after knowledge!

He seems as if he could not learn too much or too fast. How many an enquirer, instead of turning to the Cross, worries himself with intricacies of doctrine, vexed points which belong to metaphysics rather than to di

vinity! They are fascinated by the things hard to be understood, and forget the Truths of God which a wayfaring man, though a fool, may readily comprehend. How many ask themselves, Are we elect? when their enquiry should be, How can a man be cleansed from iniquity?

In truth, they must learn Latin and Greek before they know their letters, and must fathom the doctrine of election before they will believe in the redemption of Jesus. They would come to the Father before they have come to the Son, and learn their predestination before their pardon. That which has perplexed the wisest of men, namely, how to reconcile Divine ordination with the free agency of man, they attempt to grapple with while they are in danger of the unquenchable fire.

They philosophize at Hells mouth, and debate in the jaws of perdition. You may show them how absurd it is, as absurd as a drowning man to wish to quibble about hydraulics, and refuse to lay hold on the friendly rope until he understands some mystery in hydrostatics. Or, as if a person sorely sick refused all surgery until he understood anatomy, and comprehended the secret influences of drugs upon the many parts of the body. Yet some enquirers will abide in this folly. I do not wonder at it, when I remember how foolish man is by nature.

Men who have left the whole spiritual realms untrod are very apt, when they see it open up suddenly before their eyes, to aspire in their hearts pride to stand upon its loftiest peaks, to climb its Himalayas, to swim its Bosphorus, to fathom its Atlantic, and from this cause they forget its green pastures and still waters. I would have every convicted sinner here listen to my words this morning. Friend, you have to do with the plain Truth of the Gospelnamely, this, Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinnerssinners such as you are, and faith links you to that Savior.

When you have learned that lesson, then you shall discover that God has chosen you from the beginning, that He has ordained you unto eternal life. But as yet you can not solve that matter. Leave that glorious doctrine till first your soul is saved by faith in Jesus Christ. It is plain, however, that this appetite for strong meat takes off the babe from the unadulterated milk of the Word. These questions help to confuse, trouble, worry, and distract the seeker for Jesus.

At this hour, too, to make confusion more confounded, Satan is quite sure to assail the soul with his diabolical insinuations and suggestions, with strong temptations and despairing thoughts. No king will willingly lose his subjects, and Satan, when he sees his captives about to turn runaways, sets extra guards around them. He will set others on to tempt them, or he will come himself personally and inject into the soul the most horrible thoughts, the most blasphemous suggestions, and the most despairing forebodings that can be conceived of.

Having felt this, I speak tenderly to such as may now be exercised with them. Marvel not at them, neither be dismayed. If you can, by the Holy Spirits help, resist Satanhe will flee from you. If you can assail him with, it is written, he will leave you. But be not astonished if now, for awhile, the fiery darts fly thick as hail. He has his military from which he can vomit ten thousand shots at once upon a poor lost soul, and make it feel as though it were broken in pieces all asunder with horror and dismay.

You will triumph over him yet if you believethe Lord will bruise Satan under your feet shortly. Be of good courage! Though you fall, you shall rise again! Faith will lift you up in the power of Jesus. I marvel not that when that dog of Hell howls in your ears, your spirit is sorely put to it for comfort. It may be, also, that when the soul is seeking for Jesus, it is at the same time much grieved to find it cannot even now cease from sin. My old sins, says the heart, I would be rid of them, but how can I hope for forgiveness, for I have sinned this very day? I went to my chamber, and I bowed my knee, and said, God be merciful to me, a sinner!

And I came down stairs resolved to be watchful, but something vexed me, and I spoke unadvisedly. How can I think God will have mercy on me? Or says another, I was seeking the Savior this morning. But I went out to my business, and I met with worldly company, and I forgot my LordI am afraid I mingled with them so closely as to participate in their sinful mirth, and now how can the Lord have any pity upon such a hypocritical seeker as I have been? As if that poor heart expected to be perfect before it had even found pardon! As if a patient expected to be perfectly well before he had followed the advice of his physician!

My dear Hearer, if you were able to cease from all sin for a single day, I am sure you would be out of place on earth, for Heaven is the place for perfect people, and not this sinful earth. If a fountain sent forth nothing but pure water for one whole day, we might conclude that it was completely purified. The bearing of good fruit for one season would prove the tree to be good. If your heart abstained from sin of itself throughout one day, it might for another, and so on forever, and where would be the need of a Savior?

What? Do you not know that Christ came to save you from your new sins as well as from your old transgressions? Is His arm too short to reach your daily needs? His blood of too little power to wash away your fresh pollutions? Have you still some hope of bettering yourself? Have done with this trifling! Confess yourself a helpless sinner, shaped in iniquity, conceived in sin, depraved in heart, and, therefore, needing the never-ceasing mercy of the Lord your God. Come, wash now in the fountain filled with blood, and if sin returns, ask Jesus to wash your feet again.

Make Jesus your sole reliance. Cry to Him, Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean! Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Nothing else can end your perplexities. You cannot untie the Gordian knot of your difficulties! Cut it, then, by leaving all to Jesus. You cannot overcome your sins except by the blood of the Lamb. You cannot be what you should be, nor what you would be, except by taking Jesus to be your All in All. Here is a song for you

*At last I own it cannot be   
That I should fit myself for You.   
Here, then, to You I all resign;   
Yours is the work, and only Yours.  
What shall I say Your Grace to move?   
I give up every plea beside,   
Lord I am sin, but You are love   
Lord, I am lostbut You have died!*

III. And now, in the third place, let me warn you of THE DANGERS OF THE STATE of seeking for Jesus. I have already told you that there is much of hopefulness, but there is much of peril in your condition. Dear

Seeker, what a sad thing it is that you should be wasting so much time, and losing so much comfort, by this long-continued seeking, when it might all end so happily even now at this present hour. Had you believed in Jesus at the very first, you had had light at once.

How often would He have gathered you, as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, but you would not! If you will trust Him now, the day star shall shine in your heart. You are like Hopeful and Christian in Giant Despairs Castle. They lamented and bemoaned their common sorrow and planned many unavailable methods of escape. But at last Christian, as one half amazed, broke out into this passionate speechWhat a fool, said he, am I to lie in this stinking dungeon, when I may as well walk at liberty! I have a key in my bosom called Promise, that will, I am persuaded, open any lock in Doubting Castle. Then said Hopeful, Thats good news, good Brother, pluck it out of your bosom, and try.

My awakened Hearer, this is your condition. You have in your bosom, and you have in Gods Word that which will unlock every door in your prison. Up, Man, and try it now! Can you not believe that Jesus is the Christ, and that God has sent Jesus to bear your sin? Can you not trust in Him? If you can, you are freeyour sins are forgiven youyou are saved!

You have, perhaps, heard the incident of a dove, pursued by a hawk, which flew into the bosom of a man who was walking in the fields. And you remember that it was safely protected by him whom it had trusted. The dove would not of itself have flown there, but under the terror of the hawk it sought a shelter. You have been afraid of Jesus, you have thought He would not receive you. But now that Hell pursues you, be venturesome, and fly to Him! Say as our hymn puts it

*I can but perish if I go   
I am resolved to try.   
For if I stay away, I know   
I must forever die.*

If Christ stood with a drawn sword in His hand, you had better run on the point of His sword than perish without Him. O come to Him, driven by desperation itself, if by nothing elsecome into His bosom! You shall have peace at once. But all the while you remain seeking, I know not in what distracted manner you are wasting time, you are missing comfort, you are losing opportunities of happiness. Cease your seeking, for there is the Man whom you seek. He stands revealed before you. Reach here your finger and put it into the print of the nails. Or if that is too bold, touch but the hem of His garment, and you shall be made whole!

Another evil is not only the losing present peace and comfort, but the danger of being driven to despair. I do not doubt that some persons who were once sincere but unrenewed seekers, have now given up all thought of seeking Christ, because they continued to seek when He was near them, to look for Him instead of looking to Him. And they have waited so long in prayer and Bible reading, and so on, that now they utterly despair, and give all up as hopeless.

It is no wonder. If you will try to do a thing in a wrong way, you cannot hope to succeed. If a man will not plow and sow, neither shall he reap. If you will not believe, neither shall you be established. A person may be very industrious, indeed, in what he does, but if he follows a method which never can produce the result he desires, he must not be surprised when he is disappointed. You are a seeker, and I am glad you are. But if you will not put your trust in Jesus, and lay your burden down at the Cross where He offered the great Sacrifice, it is no marvel if you continue to seek in vain.

It will be a great sorrow, but it will not be a great wonder, if you become at last despairing, and are shut up in the iron cage. O Man, O Woman, break away from this! May Gods Holy Spirit come to your rescue now! Give up your own ideas of how to get peacetake Gods method of salvationand lay hold on eternal life by trusting in the slain Savior.

Another danger is that in some cases seeking at length dies out in indifference. Having sought after a fashion by prayer, and failing to find peace at once, temptations to go back to the worlds pleasure attack the soul, and too often it becomes, from now on, impervious to exhortations and expostulations. The unbroken, unrenewed heart grows sullen, and declares, I tried, but I did not succeed. I may as well have what pleasure I can have, for spiritual joys are denied me. If the world to come cannot be mine, I will have this world and take my fill of it.

I pray you may never be driven to that, but my fear is that if you tarry long in this border land, seeking but yet halting between two opinions, undecided and unbelievingat last you will relapse into your former state of spiritual slumberand your last end will be worse than the first.

Another danger is lest you should take up with something short of Jesus Christ. I have known persons who have been content to remain seekers all their days. They have felt comforted by the thought that they are seekers. Now, such comfort is daubing with untempered mortar. A man out of employment has been walking up and down the London streets to find something to do. His family is in need, and he must find a situation. He is quite right to seek, but he will not be satisfied with seeking, he wants to find.

Tramping the street will not feed his children. He is not contented with having called at many shops. He will not rest till he finds what he is afterand he would be very foolish if he did. So to be a seeker after Christ, walking up and down the streets, as it were, will not fill your hungry soul. You must get Christ Himself. If any unemployed father of a family were to say, Well, I walk about so many days in the week, and so many hours in the day, and I am quite satisfied, though I do not find anything to do, you would think him a great simpleton. And so with you.

It is a good sign when there is an appetite. But a mere appetite does not satisfy a manhe must eat the food provided. Your seeking Christ will not save you, except it leads you in very deed to believe in Jesus. It is an ill sign when a man says, Well, I am doing my best. I am always at a place of worship, I am a Bible reader, I practice prayer at home, I do my best. My dear Friend, if you settle down in that idea, you are self-righteous, and are off the road altogether. Besides, you are lying to your own heart, for after all you are at enmity with God, and the sign of that enmity is this that you refuse to believe on His dear Son.

If you were reconciled to God you would love Jesus Christ, and trust in Him. I see what it isyou have resolved, after all, to be your own savior. You still think that there is something in outward religion to produce salvation. I solemnly assure you that if you stand out against believing in

Christ, if you will not fly to those dear wounds of His, if you will not hide beneath the shelter of the Atonement, you will go to Hell as well from a place of worship as from the haunts of sin, and will perish as certainly with a Bible read as with a Bible burned

*None but Jesus, none but Jesus,   
Can do helpless sinners good.*

Oh, but, you say, I feel my sins so much! Yes, but if you trust in your feelings you will perish in them as much as though you wallowed in your sins. O Soul, resolve with Toplady

*He that suffered in my place,   
Shall my Physician be   
I will not be comforted   
Till Jesus comforts me.*

Never hope to be saved except by Gods way of salvation. O that the Holy Spirit would enable you in your heart to say, Now I come to You, O Jesus! Guilty as I am, I lift my eye to You, and this is my prayerHelp me for Your mercys sake. Have pity upon me and cleanse me in Your blood, for I put all my trust in You. Resolve, O Seeker, to have no refuge of liesno Savior but the Lamb of God.

I will confess to you, dear Seeker, that often and often I am myself personally driven to do what I trust you may be led to do today. I look back upon my past life, and while I have much to thank God for, much in which to see His Spirits hand, yet when I feel my responsibilities and my shortcomings, my heart sinks within me. When I think of my transgressions, better known to myself than to anyone else, and remember, too, that they are not known even to me as they are to God, I feel all hope swept away and my soul left in utter despair.

But by His Grace I come anew to the Cross and think of Who it was that died there, and why He died, and what designs of infinite mercy are answered by His death. It is so sweet to look up to the Crucified One again, and say, I have nothing but You, my Lord, no confidence but You. If You are not accepted as my Substitute I must perish. If Gods appointed Savior is not enough I have no other, but I know You are the Fathers Well-Beloved, and I am accepted in You. You are all I want, and all I have.

How I desire, with intense longing, that you may do the same. It would be a blessed day for you, and for me a joyful occasion. The Jews in the present chapter asked our Savior, What shall we do that we may work the works of God? and He said, This is the work of God, that you believe on Him whom He has sent. The greatest of all works, the most Godlike work, is to leave off self-righteous seeking, and trust in Jesus.

IV. Now I will conclude by delivering one or two DIRECTIONS TO THOSE WHO ARE SEEKING FOR JESUS. Very brief shall these be. The first direction isgive attention, dear Friend, to the Object of faith. The only way by which you can be saved is by faith. Take that to be settled. Now if a man says, I cannot believe such a thingwhat then? What is his wisest course?

Suppose you find a difficulty in believing a reportwhat do you do? Why, you consider the probabilities of it. Suppose it had been rumored that the Emperor Napoleon had shot himself. Shall I believe the report? I will ask from where the rumor comes, what intelligence corroborates it, upon what authority it is statedand soon, by that meansI arrive at a conclusion whether it is probably true, or is a mere idle tale.

Now if you earnestly desire to believe, faith is the gift of God, and a work of the Spirit, but God works according to the laws of mind, and faith in Christ will most readily come to you in conformity with those laws. Faith comes by hearing, why by hearing? Why, because by hearing I learn the Truth concerning Christ, and what I hear commends itself to my judgment and understanding, and so I come to believe.

Faith comes to us by reading, which is another form of hearing. Read what the Scripture has to say about the Messiah and His work and you will be helped to believe Gods Testimony, by knowing what it is and on what authority it comes to you. Let your hearing and your reading be accompanied with meditationlike the Virgin Maryponder these things in your heart. Incline your ear, says the Spirit, and come unto Me. Hear, and your soul shall live.

Now, that inclining of the ear means a devout and diligent attention to the Good News, and a weighing of it in your inmost heart. Now look at it you have sinnedand God must punish sin. These two facts are clear enough to your conscience. Is it not a marvelous system that God should be pleased to put away sin through an Atonement, by laying the sin upon Another, and punishing it in the Person of His Son?

Do you know of any other system that would meet the case so well, that would be so suitable to you? I believe that the authenticity of Scripture is better proved by the very existence of this doctrine than by anything elsefor no human mind could ever have contrived or conceived of a way so just to Godand yet so infinitely gracious. I feel sure it is true, I am certain of it.

Then I find it promised over and over again by God Himself, that if I trust Christ I shall have the benefit of all His work. I therefore believe the thing is reasonable, it is proclaimed by Divine authority. I have Gods promise for it, I know that the Almighty One cannot lie. I cheerfully accept what He provides for me, and I am saved. My dear Hearer, if you find it hard to believe, shut yourself up this afternoon in your room, and come not out again till you have pictured to your minds eye the everlasting God unveiling Himself of His ineffable splendors, and taking upon Himself the nature of Man.

Behold that glorious One nailed to Calvarys tree, forsaken of God, crying out in anguish, and dying without a friendand all to make an Atonement to the Law of God! As you are fixing your eyes upon this, and bowing in humble prayer, faith will come to you. The Holy Spirit will overshadow you and beget it in your soulfaith will drop in your soul like the dew from Heaven! You will wonder to find the hardness of your heart all gone, and your unbelief all departed, and you will say, Lord, I believe! Help You my unbelief.

Another direction, however, istake care, my dear Friend, to clear away as far as possible everything that would hinder your believing. Now you may depend upon it that going into sin hinders believing. You cannot continue in willful sin and yet become a Believer. Sin cherished in the heart is an effectual hindrance. A man cannot be tied to a post and yet run away at the same time. If you bind yourself to your sin, you cannot escape.

Withdraw at once from evil companyit is a very deadly mischief to young seekers. You hear an impressive sermon, but then you go away talking with idle gossips and you fall into frivolous chit-chat on the Sunday afternoon. You cannot expect your soul to grow in the right direction under such influences. Get on your knees, get alone, get to your God, get to Jesus Christ. This it is that will roll away the stone which blocks the door.

And, once again, do remember that till you have believed, your danger is of the most imminent kind. You are not in danger of something future onlyyou are in peril even now, for the wrath of God abides on you. You are not like a city which is to be attacked by troops yet at a distancethe Judge is even at the door. You are actually besieged. The foes have encompassed you round about. They lift the scaling ladders, they will soon scale the walls.

Beware, O Sinner, beware! Your present state is terrible! Your future state will be hopeless. Today is the accepted time. Now or never it is with some of younow escape for your livesnow seek, but seek in the right way, by BELIEVING in Him who is the Savior of the sons of men.

How I have longed, this morning, for a tongue like the pen of a ready writer! How I have opened my mouth and panted to speak these things in passionate earnest, for I hunger for your salvation! Speak from my soul I do, but I cannot preach as I would, else would I saturate this sermon with my tears. O that the Master might bless even my weakness of speech to carry home the Truth of God to your hearts and consciences! I do not like to let one of you go unless you have thought over these things, and have given your hearts to Jesus.

I shall probably never address many of you again, certainly not all of you. You have come across the sea and you are going to the ends of the earth, some of you. I speak in Gods name. O now, before you have gone from under the sound of the Word, now let the believing look be given Look unto Me, and be you saved, all the ends of the earth. It is the cry of the crucified Savior! Turn not away from that dear voice so full of anguish! Hide not your eyes from that brow still marked with the crown of thorns!

Despise not those nailed hands and feet, but yield to Him as again He cries in agony of love, Look unto Me, and be you saved, all the ends of the earth. O Lord, turn them! And they shall be turned. Amen.

Adapted from The C.H. Spurgeon Collection, Version 1.0, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307 Sermon #1521 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

A PLAIN ANSWER TO AN IMPORTANT ENQUIRY   
NO. 1521

DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that you believe on Him whom He has sent.   
John 6:29.**

NOTICE the connection or you will miss the meaning of the words, for, at first sight it looks as if our Savior taught us that it is the work of God for us to believe on Him. Now, that would be quite true and it is very plainly taught in other parts of Scripture that faith is the work of God, but that is not the teaching in this particular instance, as will be very plain if you look at the context. First, our Savior said to the people, See how you labor after the bread of your bodies. You have been running all round the coast to find Me in order that I might feed you again with loaves and fishes. Now, He says, let your labor run after something better. Labor not for the meat that perishes, but for that which endures to life eternal.

He gently rebukes them, Do not spend all your strength in seeking after temporal good, but think about your immortal natures. Satisfy the hunger of your spirits, the better part of you. They immediately answered, You tell us to labor after the bread that does not perish. What shall we do that we might work the work of God and so obtain it? Our translation fails to let us see that they used precisely the same words as the Savior had done. He said, labor, and they said, What shall we do that we may labor this labor of God? What is it? They took Him at His word and they put a question in accordance. When men begin to be awakened about spiritual things, they naturally cry, What must we do to be saved? What must we do that we may work the work of God?

It is a faulty questionit is a question very much shaped by their ignorance and error. They suppose that there are works to be done, and merit to be earned by doing and obeying a law. And so they put it in that shapeWhat shall we do? What shall we work that we may work the work of God? The Savior did not chide them for the shape of the question. It was not the time to expect accuracy, but He gave them such Truth as they could understand and He replied, You want to know what work you must do that shall be the work of God, or a work pleasing to God? This, then, is the work of God, the work most pleasing to God of all the works that can be done by men, that you believe on Him whom He has sent.

The teaching here is not that faith is worked in us by God, which I have already said is a great Truth of God, but it is thisthat if men desire to work, the first and chief of all work is that they believe on Jesus Christ whom God has sent! Does any man object to faith being called the work of man? If he does, I ask him why he objects. It is true that faith is the gift of God, but this does not change, for a moment, the other Truth of God that faith is the work of manfor it is and must be the act of man. No one in his senses can deny that! Will you venture to say that man does not believe? Then I venture to tell you that he who does not personally believe in Jesus is a lost man! And if there is such a thing as a faith which is not a mans own act and deed it will not save him.

The man must, himself, believe or perish! This is the plain doctrine of Scripture. Repentance is worked in us by the Holy Spirit, but we must, ourselves, repent or we shall never be saved. Faith is worked in us by the Holy Spirit, but the Holy Spirit does not believe, or repentthese are a mans own acts! With our hearts we believe unto righteousness. If we do not believe, then we are not partakers of the promise which is given to those who do believe! Faith is, therefore, the work of man and it is the chief of works, the work most pleasing to God, the most godlike work, or, as the text puts it, This is the work of God, that you believe on Him whom He has sent.

To open up this one thought I pray for help from on highit is just thisthat faith is the most pleasing of all the works that man can do. It is here called, the work, but not strictly and properly, for it can never be ranged with the works of the Law, from which it essentially differs. But the Savior took up the word which they used and spoke to their ignorance that He might instruct them.

I. Regarding it as a work, faith is most pleasing to God, for, first, IT IS THE COMPREHENSIVE SUMMARY OF ALL TRUE WORK. There lies within the loins of faith every possible form of holiness. As a forest may lie asleep within an acorn, so within the bounds of faith, little though it is, every virtue lies hidden. It may be microscopic in form, but it is certainly there and only needs development. Repentance dwells in faith, for he that believes in Jesus Christ unto salvation knows that he is a sinner and he must have some hatred of sin, or else he would not have taken Christ to deliver him from his sin.

Love to God is there, for, most assuredly, when I trust a man completely trust himit would be impossible for me to do so unless I felt some leaning of my spirit towards him. The complete trusting of the soul to Christ, which is faith, has had in it no small measure of love to Christ. If I had before me a list of all the Graces of the Spirit of God and I were to take them up one by one and then analyze faith, I should find some measure of all these good works of the Spirit hidden away in the simple act of believing in Jesus Christ. I know what some of you have saidIs that all that I am to do in order to be saved? Am I simply and only to believe in Christ, that is, trust myself with Him?

Yes, that is all and it is so small an act that the most uneducated heart can perform it! But yet, within it there are inconceivable mysteries of goodness! Just as sometimes inside a walnut shell I have seen packed away with careful art all sorts of gems and jewels, with my ladys gloves to wear, so within this little walnut shell of, believe and live, there will be found by any careful eye all the Graces of the Spirit of God. What is more, all the Graces come out of faith in due time, for faith sums up the whole of a Christians life!

Now, my Brothers and Sisters, I challenge you to read the 11th chapter of Hebrews and see if you can think of anything noble, brave, glorious which has not its counterpart in that chapter. But remember, it is a description of the heroismnot of this virtue or of that, but of faith. In the long list, beginning with Abel and going down to the last, faith worked all. From faith comes the power that stops the mouths of lions, quenches the violence of flames! Out of weakness men become strong. It is faith that tramples on temptation. It is faith that overcomes the world. It is faith that attains to holiness. Within the compass of that little babe whom you hold in your hand, a slender weight that you can scarcely feel, there are all the elements of yonder man of six feet who leads the van in the royal host and so the true Christian man in the perfection of the stature of Christ is all within the babe in Grace who cries, Lord, I believe. Help You my unbelief.

I can well understand why our Savior should say, If you wish to work the work of God, you must believe in Jesus Christ whom He has sent, for in that act lies all the virtues and out of that act will grow all the virtues in due time.

II. But now, secondly, this simple matter of trusting Jesus Christ which is called FAITH, IS, IN ITSELF, MOST PLEASING TO GOD. First, it is the creature acknowledging its God. While a man says, I do not care about my soul, he lives in atheism, disowning God, living as if there were no God. When a man says, I need no saving, that is contradicting Gods testimony wherein He declares that we are all gone out of the way and have altogether become abominable. When a man says, I may be wrong, but I can get right by myself. My own good deeds will save me, he is setting himself up in independence of his God. In fact, he is making himself his own god and so, practically, setting up another god.

But when the man cries, I have sinned, there is an acknowledgment that the Law is good and holy and just! When he then adds, I have so sinned that I deserve punishment and I submit myself to it, there is a recognition of the court of Heaven and an admission of the righteousness of its sentences! The rebellious heart submits itself to the authority of God! When he further says, But I have heard, great God, that You have given Your Son to bleed and die for sinners and that He is able to save to the uttermost them that trust Him and I do trust Him, the submission of the man to God is complete. Before, he said, I do not believe it. It does not stand to reasonthat is proud Reason still a rebel. Or he said, It may or may not be so, but I do not see the peculiar beauty of an atoning Sacrifice. There, again, is the proud heart kicking against God.

But the man comes into his right place when he believes. When he believes in Jesus Christ and accepts mercy through the great Sacrifice, God is well-pleased because His poor erring creature has come into its right place and God sees in the act of faith the restitution of rectitude. Again, God is pleased with faith because it accepts Gods way of reconciliation. God has given Christ that He might reconcile us to Himself by Him. When a man says, I take Christ to be my Savior, he accepts Gods way of reconciliation and then God must be reconciled, for He has promised to be so. As He longs to be reconciled and wills not that any should perish, but that they should come to repentance, so does He rejoice when they are willing to make peace with Him in His own appointed way. It shows a submission to His wisdom, a confidence in His love, a yielding to His Divine will and that is what He seeks after. All this, I say, is included in faith and makes it well pleasing to God.

Perhaps the most acceptable element in faith to the eyes of God is the fact that it puts honor upon Jesus Christ, for He dearly loves His Son. We cannot tell how deep is the love of the Father towards His only begotten Son. That which dishonors Jesus must be very obnoxious to the Father and your self-confidence, my Friend, is a dishonor to the merit and salvation of Christ and God abhors it! But when you fling that all away and have no hope but in the great Atonement which He has made, then, I say, because your faith honors Jesus, therefore God delights in it and He will honor your faith. It is not possible that He should cast a soul away that clings to the great High Priest. Oh, if you look to Jesus, you shall never lose your sight! If your heart clings to Jesus, that heart of yours shall never lose its life! If your soul joys in Jesus, that soul of yours shall never lose its joy!

The fact is, that faith puts us into a right relationship with God, for what is the right relationship of a creature to his God but that of dependence? Is it not most suitable that since God made us and He has all power and all strength, we should depend upon Him for our being, as well as for our well-being? See how He hangs the world upon nothing! This round globe never starts nor falters, but is steadily upheld in its mighty march by the unseen hand of God! Yonder stars, mighty worlds though they are, have no power to keep themselves in their places but the power of God which established them. All things hang upon Him and the only position for a created being is that of entire dependencewhat is that but faith?

I believe that there is faith in Heaven. Do not tell me there is no faith there. I believe it to be the essence of Heaven that the glorified exercise unquestioning faith and never feel a doubt. It will be the joy of every spirit before the Throne of God to depend every moment for its immortality and bliss upon God and to be quite confident that He will never fail it. Some sorts of faith will be turned to sightbut if faith is confidence in God, I bless God I shall have a great deal more of it in Heaven than I can have here! A perfect child must have a perfect faith in a perfect Father. Because faith brings the creature back to conscious dependence, God is wellpleased with it.

Faith restores us by putting us into a place of childlike rest. If a son has fallen into the hands of a malicious individual who has whispered into his ear that his father hates himthat he is doing all he possibly can to ruin himat first the youth will not believe the accusation, but perhaps, after a while, he begins to think it is true. From that time forward every action that his father makes will be interpreted the wrong wayand if there is anything in the fathers life which is more kind than usual, it is highly probable that this poor misled boy will see a deeper subtlety of malice in it than in his fathers ordinary actions! The lad will break his fathers commands and vex and anger him. What is the first thing to be done to set that youth right?

You may make him dread his father and then he will behave properly in his outward actions, but he will only be waiting his time to break loose. Suppose it to be possible to make him believe in his father and to be assured that his father loved him and had, all along, been the kindest man on earth? Why he would run into his fathers arms! He will be willing enough to obey a parent whom he trustsit will be his delight to do so! You have won his confidence and everything is right now. This is what faith does to us. The devil and our own corrupt nature say, God is unkind, for He has made an awful Hell, and so on. Faith interposes and cries, He has put away His wrath. He has made full atonement for sin. He is willing to receive us.

Then faith says, Trust Him. Trust Him implicitly. And when the soul has done that, then faith testifies, He has loved you with an everlasting love. Jesus died for you and He has provided a Heaven for you. Let this be known and felt and what a change takes place! Oh, then you hate your sin! Oh, then you are ready to say, How could I play the fool against One so kind, so good, so right? Under this impulse you will serve Him and live for Him! That simple matter of believing Him has done it all! It is the hinge on which character turns. Hard thoughts of God lead to acts of rebellion, but a childlike confidence in Infinite Love softens the heart and sanctifies it and makes the man a true child towards the great Father.

Do you wonder, then, that there is much in faith, in itself, which is pleasing to God? And if you ask what great works you are to do to please God, we shall not tell you to build a row of almshouses, or endow an orphanage, or give your body to be burnedbelieve in Jesus Christ and you have done more than all these things put together!

III. And now a third reason why faith is so great a thing is thisFAITH IN JESUS CHRIST IS THE TEST OF WORKING FOR GOD, for all the works that ever were, without faith in Jesus Christ, are not works for God at all. Let me explain and prove my point. Suppose that a person should say, But I mean to live for the great God and work for Him. Without faith the spirit of work is wrong. My Friend, suppose you said to me, I will live for you and spend my life in your service, but I am not going to believe what you say? There would be a point of disagreement between us which would render it impossible for you to be of any service to me, or for anything that you did to be of any value to me. You call me a liar to begin with and then say you serve me?

Many of you that have heard the Gospel may, perhaps, think that you are serving God, though you have never believed in Christ. But, I tell you, your best actions are nothing but whitewashed sins! All that you do must be destitute of real excellence because you begin by making God a liar! It is a hard word, you say. I cannot help itit is the word of John, the most gentle spirit among all Biblical characters. John says, He that believes not has made God a liar because he has not believed on the Son of God. If you begin by calling God a liar, I do not care much what you do after that. I would a great deal rather you should be moral than immoral and sober than drunk, but, after all, you will be lost in either case if you persevere in calling God a liar!

All your holiness will be a sham if you will not believe in Jesus. The test of true work for God is thisThat you believe on Jesus Christ whom He has sent. Without faith the motive of work fails. But, cries another person, I believe I have deserved well of God! I have kept myself pretty right and I have performed many good deeds. What have you done them for? I have been working for my salvation, says one. In other words, you have been working for yourself. Pay yourself, then! Self is first and lastyour works are selfishness from top to bottom! You have been trying to be good to get to Heaven by it. It is a mean, beggarly life that begins and ends with self! Your Maker, whom you were bound to love with all your heart, you have not loved at all except that you have meanly pretended to love Him in order to save yourself!

You had a kind of cupboard love to Him, such as an ass or an ox might have to a corn bin, or a stall, but no real affection. How can you perform a virtuous act while self is your tyrant lord? When you have once believed in Jesus Christ

then you are saved and from that day on you live to glorify the name of the Lordyou live to work out that which He has worked in youto will and to do of His own good pleasure. But until you are saved by faith, self is necessarily your first thought. No man is capable of virtue as long as self is his objective and every man must make self his objective till he is saved! When he is saved, he rises into a nobler atmosphere altogether and then his works are acceptable to God. Do you not see that you have to get out of self-righteousness and to be saved by believing in Christ before you can begin to do anything that will be really working for God? Up to that point it will be all working for yourself and that is a poor, poor thing which cannot please the most high God.

Beloved Friends, living by faith in Jesus Christ is the evidence of your sincerity in any work that you do for God, for can there be any real working for God while your own pride is uppermost? God tells you that your best works are imperfect and will not save you and He hangs His own dear Son upon the Cross to save you because you are a sinner. You turn your back to the Crossyou say, My own merits are good enough, and then you talk about serving God after that? Can He accept anything at your hands after you have rejected His Son and insulted Him? You have touched the Lord in the most tender point when you have taken your own detestable righteousness which is just a heap of infected ragsa mass of abominable filth in the sight of Godand have preferred it to the blood and righteousness of His only Son!

After such an atrocious crime as this, how dare you talk about doing service to God! It is impossible, Sir! There is a lie in the bottom of your heart. Get rid of it! How can you serve the Lord while your pride thus angers Him? He tells you that you must bow before His Son and trust in Him and you reply, No, I must feel something or do something. That is as much as saying, I will be saved in my own way. You talk about serving God after that evil, I will, of yours has been defying Him? Suppose that one of your family will not do what you tell him? He defies you to your face. He says he will have his own way and then he goes into the garden and he plucks you a flowerand he expects that the gift will please you.

What? Brought in a rebellious hand? While he is in a willful state and boiling over with bad temper? Does he think to please you by such a trifle? You say, No, my child, that cannot be. You must first bow before your father and acknowledge that you have done wrong. He may pout his lips and say he will never obey you and then ask to kiss you. Will he have his kiss? Assuredly not till first of all he will submit! That is just the condition of many a seeker after God. He has a wicked pride in his heart and a rebellious will and if he will believe in Jesus it will be a proof that his pride and rebellion are given up. But if he will not yield and trust, neither can he expect that God will save him!

IV. I would say, in the fourth place, that faith in God is a most blessed and acceptable thing because IT IS THE SEAL OF ALL OTHER BLESSINGS. Notice that faith in God is the sealfirst, of our election. Read the 37th verse, All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me. Now, if you come to Christ, dear Friend, you are one that His Father gave Him! You are one of His elect! Oh, what a blessing this is. The doctrine of Election is full of rich comfort to all who are interested in it and election, itself, is the greatest of all favors. But how am I to know that I am one of Gods elect? By this testimony, All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me. Every elect soul that reaches adult age is brought to believe in Jesus Christ and as sure as ever you are brought to believe in Jesus Christ, you may be absolutely certain that you are predestinated to eternal life!

In the next place, faith seals our effectual calling. If you look a little farther down you will see, No man can come unto Me except the Father which has sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day. These are the express words of Christ and they show that every man that comes to Christ must have been drawn by the Father. That is to say, that effectual calling has exerted its Divine power upon him. No man need say, Am I drawn of the Father? after he is once sure that he has faith in Jesus Christ, for you never could have believed in Jesus Christ unless this had been given you from Heaven. The 44th verse is as plain as possible, No man can come to Me except the Father which has sent Me draws him. You have come to him and, therefore, the Father must have drawn you.

The next thing that faith assures us of is final perseverance. Read the 47th verseHe that believes on Me has everlasting life. You need not raise the question, Have I received everlasting life? Raise this question, first, Have I believed in Jesus Christ? If so, you have everlasting life. Not a life, mark you, that will last you up to the end of the quarter when you take a new ticketnor a life that will preserve you to old age and then leave you to temptation and death. No, He that believes on Him has everlasting life And it is not everlasting life if it does not last forever. Herein he that believes has the guarantee of final perseverance.

Did not Jesus say, I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of My hands? Are we not told of him that believes in Christ that there shall be in him a well of water springing up unto everlasting life? Or, as Christ puts it in this very chapter, He shall never hunger and he shall never thirst. He has drunk a draught of eternal life in Christ Jesus and he shall never thirst again! This is a great deal for faith to bring to us, but it is not all, for two or three times over we are told here that whoever believes in Christ shall be raised up again at the last dayso that faith secures resurrection! Read the 39th verse and then the 49th verseThis is the will of Him that sent Me, that everyone which sees the Son and believes on Him may have everlasting life and I will raise him up at the last day.

How do I know that I shall have a blessed resurrection? How can I be certain that though the worms devour this body, yet when Christ shall stand in the latter day upon the earth, in my flesh I shall see God? I may be quite sure of it because I believe in Jesus Christ whom He has sent! Beloved, faith is the seal at the bottom of the title deed which secures all things for time and eternity to the man that has it! If you are a Believer, all the wheels of Providence revolve for you! If you are a Believer, every angel spreads his wings for you! If you are a Believer, life is yours and the death which seems to close it is only the appointed janitor to open the door of another and a brighter chamber! If you believe, God Himself is yours and Christ, His Son, is yours! If you believe, Heaven, with its eternity and infinity of joy which your eye has not seen, nor your heart conceived of, is yours!

Nothing shall be kept back from the man that believes his God and trusts his Redeemer! Oh that the Lord would give faith to you all! Alas, you say, I do not feel right. Never mind your feelings, trust in Christ! Oh, but I am such a sinner. Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. Alas, but I have tried before. Away with all your trying before! Have done with trying and accept the finished work! Trust Jesus now! Do you mean that if I now trust myself with Christ, I shall be saved while sitting in the pew? I mean even so! Be you whoever you may be, this night look to Jesus and be saved! If you will have done with yourself and will trust your soul in the hands of Jesus who has sworn to save those that rest themselves upon Him, you are saved!

Oh, that those who have heard this Gospel many times would now, for the first time, really understand it and say, Is this, after all, the greatest of all worksthat I believe in Jesus Christ whom He has sent? Lord, I believehelp You my unbelief and save me now. O God, help many to breathe the prayer of faith at this moment, for Jesus sake. Amen.

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SOUL-SATISFYING BREAD   
NO. 1112

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, MAY 18, 1873, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that comes to Me shall never hunger; and he that believes on Me shall never thirst. John 6:35.**

OUR Savior used expressions concerning Himself which might be turned to another meaning than He intended. He did not guard His words by saying, I am like bread, and faith is like eating and drinking, but He said, I am the bread of life, and, except a man eat My flesh and drink My blood there is no life in him. He did this not only because from His own sincerity of heart it was not in Him to be forever fencing around all His speeches, but also with a set purpose, because His speech was so plain that if any man misunderstood Him it would be the result of his own perversity of mind and not the effect of any obscurity in the Lords language. Thus by fixing a low and sensual meaning upon elevated spiritual language the men of His time would be discovered to be none of the Lords chosenand the thoughts of many hearts would be revealed.

While He was preaching, His words were like a refiners fire, bringing out the pure metal, but separating it from the dross and making that dross to appear the worthless thing which it really was. It would clearly appear that men hated the light when they perverted the clearest expressions of the Lord of Light into foolishness or mystery. Our Lords mission was not so much to save all whom He addressed as to save out of them as many as His Father gave Him. And He used His mode of speaking as a testthose who were His understood Him. Those who were not His and were not taught of the Father, viciously put a

literal meaning upon His spiritual words and so missed His Divine teaching. To this day the memorable expressions of our Lord in this chapter remain a stumbling block to some, while they are full of glorious instruction to others!

We see the world every day parting more and more definitely into two campsthe camp of the chosen of God, to whom is made known the mystery of the kingdom, the babes in Grace who read the simple teaching of the Gospel and rejoice in itand on the other side the carnal host who hear the Word, but look no deeper than its outward letter, to whom it becomes a savor of death unto death, because they pervert the Lords spiritual Word to a carnal meaning and straightway heap unto themselves abounding ceremonies and pierce themselves through with deadly errors. I scarcely think that the prominence of Sacramentarianism nowadays is to be altogether regrettedit is only a more clear and manifest severing of

the precious from the vile.   
There is a division as marked as between death and life, and as deep as   
Hell, between the spiritual Church which believes in Jesus and the carnal  
Church which believes in sacramentsbetween the regenerate who look   
to Christ upon the Crossand the twice dead who believe in a piece of  
bread and pay reverence to a wine cup. The Savior spoke in symbols, that   
the proud might hear in vainthat hearing they might not hear and seeing they might not perceiveexecuting upon that self-conceited generation which rejected Him the judicial sentence of the Lord, for their hearts   
were waxen gross, their ears were dull of hearing and their eyes had they  
closed.   
But now, speaking to those to whom the Lord has given to understand   
His meaning, let me say our Savior uses very simple figures. Think of His   
calling Himself bread! How condescending, that the most common article   
upon the table should be the fullest type of Christ! Think of His calling   
our faith an eating and a drinking of Himself! Nothing could be more instructive! At the same time nothing could better set forth His gentleness   
and humility of spirit that He does not object to speak thus of our receiving Him. God be thanked for the simplicity of the Gospel! The longer I live   
the more I bless God that we have not received a classical Gospel, or a   
mathematical Gospel, or a metaphysical Gospel! It is not a Gospel confined to scholars and men of genius, but a poor mans Gospel, a plowmans Gospeland that is the kind of Gospel which we can live upon and   
die upon.   
It is to us not the luxury of refinement, but the staple food of life. We   
need no fine words when the heart is heavy, neither do we need deep   
problems when we are lying upon the verge of eternity, weak in body and   
tempted in mind. At such times we magnify the blessed simplicity of the   
Gospel! Jesus in the flesh made manifest becomes our souls bread. Jesus  
bleeding on the Cross, a Substitute for sinners, is our souls drink. This is  
the Gospel for babesand strong men need no more.   
Again, it strikes me as being very noteworthy, and especially very worthy of thanks, that our Savior has taken metaphors of a very common  
character so that if our hearts are but right we cannot go anywhere but  
what we are reminded of Him. At our tables we are very apt to forget the   
best things. The indulgence of the appetite is not very promotive of spirituality, yet we cannot sit down to table but what the piece of bread speaks   
to us and says, Poor Soul, you need even bread to be given you. You are   
so needy that your bread must be the gift of heavenly charity. Jesus has   
come down from Heaven to keep you from absolute starvation. He has   
come down to be bread and water to you. As you take up that loaf and   
think of the processes through which it has passed before it has become   
bread, it preaches a thousand sermons to you!   
The sowing of Jesus as a grain of wheat in the earth. His grinding between the millstones of Divine wrath. His passing through the fiery oven. We see the sufferings of Jesus in every crumb we put into our mouths. Why, the Lord has hung the heavens with His name and made them tell of His love! Yon sun proclaims the Sun of Righteousness and every star speaks of the Star of Bethlehem. You cannot walk your garden, or go into the streets, or open a door, or put on your clothes without being reminded  
of the Lord Jesus!   
I remember once visiting a poor Christian in the hospital who had often   
attended my ministry, and he said, Why, Sir, you have given us so many   
illustrations, that as I lie in bed everything I see, or hear, or read of,  
brings to mind something in your sermons. How much more true is this   
of our Great Teacher! We are glad that He has hung up the Gospel everywhere till every dewdrop reflects Him and every wind whispers His name.   
Day and Night talk to each other of Him and the hours commune concerning things to come.   
With this as a preface, let us come to our subject. Our text in a very  
simple way tells us, first, that Jesus Christ is to be received. That reception is here describedI am the bread of life: he that comes to Me shall  
never hunger; and he that believes on Me shall never thirst. The second   
doctrine of the text is that when Jesus Christ is received, he is superlatively satisfying to the soulShall never hungerShall never thirst. I.THE LORD JESUS CHRIST IS TO BE RECEIVED BY EACH ONE OF  
US PERSONALLY FOR HIMSELF. An unappropriated Christ is no Christ   
to any man. Bread which is not eaten will not stop our hunger. The water   
in the cup may sparkle like purest crystal, but it cannot slake thirst   
unless we drink it. To get a personal hold of the Savior is the main thing   
and the question is how is this to be done. How is Jesus Christ to become   
a Savior to me? You will observe that in this chapter and, indeed, everywhere else, the mode of obtaining an interest in Christ is never mixed up  
with the idea of fitness, merit, preparation, or worth.   
The text says, He that comes to Me. It says nothing of preparation before coming, nor of any meritorious actions. It is a simple coming, as a  
beggar for alms, or a child for its fathers help. The other description is,  
He that believes on Me. There is nothing there of merit. In fact, faith   
stands in direct opposition to meritorious working. And if we read of eating Christ and drinking Christ, the act is entirely a receptive one, nothing  
given forth, but everything received, reminding us of that memorable passage, To as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the   
sons of God, even to them that believed on His name. It is all a matter of   
receiving, not of bringing to Christ! We come to Him empty-handed. We  
believe in Him without any deserving of our own and in that way, and in  
that way only, Jesus Christ becomes our Savior.   
Let us dwell on these expressions for a few minutes. The first is, that   
we come to Him. He that comes unto Me shall never hunger. I suppose this represents the first act of faith by which men enter into spiritual lifewe are alienated from Christ, but after hearing the Gospel we are, by the Holy Spirit, led to think of Him, to consider Him, to study Him and to judge that He is the Savior whom we need. Our alienation from Him is turned into desire for Him and we come to Him beseeching Him to be our Savior. We come to Him. It is a motion of the heart towards Him, not a motion of the feet, for many came to Jesus in body and yet never came to Him in truth. They were close to Him in the crowd, but they never touched Him so that virtue came out of Him. The coming here meant is performed by desire, prayer, assent, consent, trust, obedience. It means that I hear what Christ is and learn what God says He isthat He is God and that He is Manthat He came into the world to take the sins of men upon Himself  
and to be punished in their place.   
I hear all this and assent to it. I believe in Jesus and I say, If He died   
for all those who trust Him, I will trust Him. If He has offered so great a   
Sacrifice upon the tree for guilty men, I will rely upon that Sacrifice and   
make it the basis of my hope. That is coming to Jesus Christ! The term is   
very simple, yet it is not so very easily explained to others because of its  
being so simple. If you are taught of the Father you will know full well  
what it is, but if not I fear that the most plain words will not make you   
understand. Perhaps I may illustrate coming to Jesus by an incident connected with the hymn which we sang just now.   
I think I have read somewhere that Mr. Wesley was one morning dressing. His window looked out towards the sea and there was a heavy wind   
blowing. The waves were very boisterous and the rain was falling heavily.  
Just then a little bird, overtaken by the tempest, flew in at the open window and nestled in his bosom. Of course he cherished it there, and then  
bade it go on its way when the storm was over. Impressed by the interesting occurrence, he sat down and wrote the verse   
*Jesus, lover of my soul,   
Let me to your bosom fly   
While the raging billows roll,   
While the tempest still is high.   
Hide me, O my Savior, hide me   
Till the storm of life is past.*   
Imitate that poor little bird if you would have Christfly away from the   
wrath of God, fly away from your own convictions of sin, fly away from   
your dark forebodings of judgment to comeright into the bosom of Jesus   
which is warm with love to sinners   
*Come, guilty souls, and flee away   
Like doves to Jesus wounds;   
This is the accepted Gospel day   
Wherein free Grace abounds.*   
The second description given us of the way in which Christ becomes   
ours is by believing on Him. Here, again, I have to explain a word which  
needs no explanation except one flash of light from the Holy Spirit. And I   
question whether any other light was ever sufficient to make it clear. And that not because of any real obscurity, but because of the willful blindness of unrenewed nature. To believe on Christ means to believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and the Savior of men. But it includes far more than that. You may be very orthodox in your notions about Christ. In fact, you may believe what the Bible states about Him and yet you may not have saving faith in Him. He that believes on Me. What if I put the word trusts instead? He that trusts in Me. Or he who leans all his weight on Me, who, knowing such and such things to be true, acts as if they were true and shows the reality of his belief by the simplicity of his

reliance.  
Knowing that Christ came to save sinners, the Believer says, Then I   
depend upon Him to save me. Knowing that Jesus was the Substitute for   
human guilt, he says, He is the Substitute for my guilt. If He came and  
took sin upon Himself, then I trust Him and therefore know that He took   
my sin, that He bore, that I might never bear, His Fathers righteous ire.   
And is Christ really a mans Savior the moment he believes? Yes, the moment he believes! But suppose his former life has been scandalous? It is   
forgiven him for Christs name sake. But suppose that the moment before   
he so trusted Christ there was no good thing in him whatever? Jesus Christ died for the ungodly and He is able to save to the uttermost them that come unto God by Him. But suppose he should be imperfect afterwards? It is no supposition, he will be! But, the blood of Jesus   
Christ, Gods dear Son, cleanses us from all sin. A very blessed text assures us that, There is a fountain opened for the house of David and for  
the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness. It is not a   
fountain merely for common sinners, but for those who are Gods people   
and yet sin. They still find cleansing where they found it at the first. If   
any man sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the   
Righteous. Faith is an act of reliance upon Christs great Sacrifice and   
wherever the Holy Spirit works it in men it makes Christ to be theirsso  
that they shall never hunger and shall never thirst.   
But I pass on to the third way in which we are said to receive Christ. It   
is not in the text in so many words, but we must consider it, because,  
though not there literally, it is there spiritually. It is eating and drinking.   
We are to eat Christ and to drink Christ. Oh, it is monstrous, it is monstrous that out of bedlam there should live men who should dream that   
Jesus taught us literally to eat His flesh and to drink His blood! I am more   
and more astounded at this 19th century. I have heard it praised for its   
enlightenment and progress till I am sick to death of the 19th century and   
am right glad that it is nearing its close. I hope the 20th century will be   
something better. Surely no period of time has been more given to superstition!   
Even the age of witchcraft bids fair to be outdone by the age of Ritualists. Here you have idiots in high placesabsolute, stark, staring idiots  
who preach to men that they are to turn cannibals in order to be saved. Surely such an act, if it could be perpetrated, must rather be the nearest way to be damned! What greater crime could there be than for men literally to eat the flesh of their own Savior? I cannot speak too strongly against so extraordinary, so monstrous a perversion of the teaching of our Lord. What He meant by our eating His flesh and blood is just thiswe believingly receive Him into our hearts and our minds feed upon Him. We hear of Jesus Christ as the Son of God and as the Substitute for sinners we believe it and so receive the Truth of God as men receive bread into the   
mouth.   
Now, in eating we first put the food into our mouths. As a whole it goes  
into the mouth and even thus, as a whole, Christ Jesus is received into  
our belief and trust. The food being in the mouth, we proceed to chew it. It   
is broken up, it is dissolved. Our taste finds out its secret essence and flavorand even in this way the believing mind thinks of Jesus, contemplates Him, meditates upon Him and discovers His preciousness. We see   
far more of our Lord after conversion than we did at first. We have believed in Him knowing but little of Him. But by-and-by we comprehend  
with all the saints what are the heights and depths and know the love of  
Christ which passes knowledge. Jesus becomes more comforting, and   
more delightful as we comprehend more clearly who and what He is. Our  
faith, which we placed implicitly upon Him, now sees a thousand reasons   
for a yet fuller confidence and so is strengthened.   
For instance, the ordinary Believer believes in Jesus Christ because He   
is a Divine Savior. But the instructed Believer sees in Jesus Christ fitness,   
fullness, variety of offices, glory of Character, completeness of work, Immutability and a thousand other things which endear Him. In this way   
the Truth concerning the Lord is, as it were, masticated and enjoyed. But   
the process of eating goes furtherthe food descends into the inward   
parts to be digestedand there is a further breaking up and dissolving of   
it. So the great Truths of Incarnation and Sacrifice are made to dwell in   
the memory, to lie upon the heart, to rest in the affections till their essence, comfort and force are fully drawn forth. Oh, it is unbelieveably refreshing to let these grand Truths of God dwell in us richly, to be inwardly   
digested!  
Have you ever chewed the cud with the Truths of the Gospel, turning   
them over, and over, and over again as delicious morsels for your spiritual  
taste? Can you say with David, How precious, also, are Your thoughts   
unto me, O God? If so you know what spiritual eating is. When that is   
done the food is next assimilated and taken into the substance of the   
body. It passes from the digesting organs to those which assimilate it.   
Each portion of the body draws forth, in its turn, proper nutriment from   
the food and so the whole man is built up. It is just so with the great  
Truths, that Christ became Man and died in mans placethese are inwardly received by us till our whole nature draws from them a satisfying   
and strengthening influence. By a sort of mystic sympathy the Truth of God is being fitted to the mind and the mind requiring just such Truth, our whole nature drinks in Christ, and His Person and work become our minds joy, delight, strength, and life. As a man thinks in his heart so he is, and therefore our thoughts of Jesus, and faith in Him, build us up into  
Him in all things.   
Now, as a man who has feasted well and is no more hungry, rises from   
the table satisfied, so we feel that in Jesus our entire nature has all that it   
needs. Christ is All and we are filled in Him, complete in Him. This is to   
receive Christ. Beloved, if you want to have Christ altogether your own,  
you must receive Him by this process. Merely to trust Him gives you   
Christ as food in your mouth. To contemplate, to meditate, to commune   
with Him is to understand Him, even as food is digested and is ours. Further prayer and fellowship and meditation assimilate Christ so that He  
becomes part and parcel of our very selves. Christ lives in us and we in  
Him! We ought not to forget, as we are dwelling upon this, that the two   
points about Jesus Christ which He says are to us meat and drink, are   
His flesh and his blood.   
We understand by His flesh, His Humanityour soul feeds upon the  
literal, real, historical fact that God was in Christ. That, the Word was   
made flesh and dwelt among usand men beheld His Glory, the Glory as  
of the Only-Begotten of the Father, full of Grace and Truth. My souls   
main comfort today is not a doctrine. I get a great deal of comfort out of   
many doctrines, but the bottom comfort of my soul is not a doctrine but a   
fact. And it is this factthat He who made the heavens and the earth, and   
without whom was not anything made that was made, was born of the   
Virgin Mary at Bethlehem and for 30 years and more did actually, not in   
fiction or romance, but in very deed, dwell as a Man among men! That fact   
is my souls food!   
The historical fact that Christ Jesus was flesh and blood, bone of our   
bone, flesh of our flesh, a Man like ourselvesthis, I say, is nourishment   
to our spirits, and believing it we feel a joy unutterable, for we know that  
He who sits upon the Throne of God is a Man. Jesus was made a little   
lower than the angels, but now, in the Person of Christ, He is crowned   
with glory and honor! We now know that God cannot hate manhood, because Christ is a Man. Christ has reconciled God to manhood because He   
represented manhood and the thoughts of God towards man are, for  
Christs sake, thoughts of love and not of evil!   
The other point in which Jesus is food to our mind is His blood. This   
most clearly refers to His sufferings and to His vicarious death. Bread and   
wine are put upon the communion table as separate symbolsnot bread   
and wine mixed togetherthat would destroy the teaching. The wine is   
distinct from the bread, because when the blood is separated from the   
flesh there is before you the sure evidence of death. Now the true drink of  
a thirsty sinner is the fact that Christ died in his place. I will repeat what I  
saidmy great hope as a sinner does not lie in a doctrine and my consolation as a trembling criminal before the bar of God is not founded in any  
opinion or doctrinal statementbut in a FACT.   
He who is very God of very God did hang upon a Cross of wood, upon   
the little mount of Calvary just outside the gates of Jerusalem, and there  
in unutterable agonies beneath the wrath of God made expiation for the  
sins of all who believe in Him! There is my hope! There is yours, my  
Brothers and Sisters. Yes, there is all our hope. Very well, then, do you   
not see that the way to obtain the benefits of the Lord Jesus Christ is to   
believe in His being God and Man, to believe in His dying as the God-Man,  
and to rest upon this, and to contemplate this, and to turn to it again and   
again and again, so that, having marked and learned, you may also inwardly digest those unspeakably glorious mysteries of Incarnation and of  
Sacrifice?   
I have set the Gospel before you now, for if any man among you will do   
this, Christ is yours! Here is Christ to be had for nothing! Christ to be had   
simply by trusting Him, by coming to Him! As the vessel obtains its fullness by its emptiness being placed under the flowing stream. As the beggars needs are relieved by putting out his empty hand to accept an alms,   
so you are to obtain Christ by coming to Him as empty sinners. He is  
given to you for nothingfreely given to you of Godand whoever will,

may have Him! And if you have Him not, it is not because He has rejected  
you, for He has never rejected one that has come to Him, but because you   
have rejected Him. Dear fellow Sinners, may God the Holy Spirit grant you   
Grace to receive Jesus and to be saved by Him!   
II. The second part of our subject is this. WHERE JESUS IS RECEIVED   
HE IS SUPREMELY SATISFYING. He is supremely satisfying, mark you, to  
our highest and deepest needs, not to mere fancies and whims. Christ   
compares the needs of men to hungering and thirsting. Now hungering is   
no sham. Those who have ever felt it know what a real need it indicates  
and what bitter pangs it brings. Thirst, also, is not a sentimental matter,   
it is a trial, indeed. What pain can be worse beneath the skies than thirst? Now Jesus has come to meet the deep, real, pressing, vital needs and   
pains of your nature. Your fear of Hell, your terror of death, your sense of  
sinall these Jesus has come to meet and all these He does meet in the   
case of all who come to Himas everyone who has tried Him will bear  
witness. Jesus Christ meets the hungering of conscience. Every man with   
an awakened conscience feels that God must punish him for sin, but as   
soon as he perceives that the Son of God was punished instead of him, his   
conscience is perfectly appeased and will never hunger again. Until men  
know the Truth of the Substitution of Jesus you may preach to them what  
you will and they may go through all the sacraments, and they may suffer  
many bodily mortificationsbut their conscience will still hunger. My God, whom I offended, became a Man and for my sake He suffered   
what I ought to have suffered. Therefore my conscience rests gratefully  
contented with so divinely gracious a way of satisfying justice. Men, when once awakened, have a hunger of fear. They look forward to the future and they scarcely know why, but they feel a dread of something indefinable and full of terror. And especially if they are near to die, horror takes hold upon them, for they know not what is yet to comebut when they find that Jesus Christ, who is God, became Man and died for men, that whoever trusts Him might be savedthen fear expires and love takes its place. The dove in the cleft of the rock feels no more rude alarms. Terror cannot live beneath the Cross, for there hope reigns supreme. Nor shall fear ever return, for the work of Jesus is finished and, therefore, no hiding  
place for fear is left.   
The heart, also, has its hunger, for almost unknown to itself it cries, O   
that someone loved me and that I could love someone whose love would   
fill my nature to the brim. Mens hearts are gluttons after love. Yes, like   
death and the grave they are insatiable. They hunt here and there, but are   
bitterly disappointed, for earth holds not an object worthy of all the love of  
a human heart. But when they hear that Jesus Christ loved them before   
the world was, and died for them, their roving affections find rest. Like as   
Ruth found rest in the house of a husband, do we come to peace in Jesus.  
The love of Jesus casts out all hankering for other loves and fills the soul!   
He becomes the Bridegroom of our heart, our best Beloved, and we bid the   
meaner things depart.   
In the love of the Father and the Son we dwell in sweet content, hungering and thirsting no more. If the ocean of Divine Love cannot fill us,  
what can? What more can a man need or wish for?   
*My God, I am Yours.   
What a comfort Divine,   
What a blessing to know   
That my Savior is mine!   
In the Heavenly Lamb   
Thrice happy I am,   
And my heart it does dance   
At the sound of His name.*   
The hearts hunger is removed eternally by Jesus. Then there are vast desires in us all and when we are quickened those desires expand and   
enlarge. Man feels that he is not in his element and is not what he was intended to be. He is like a bird in the shell, he feels a life within him too   
great to be forever confined within such narrow bounds. Do you not, dear   
Friends, feel great longings? Does not your soul seethe with high ambitions? Our immortal nature frets beneath the burden of mortality! Its   
spiritual nature is weary of the chains of materialism.   
That hungering will never be hushed into content till we receive Christ,   
but when we have Him we learn that we are the sons of God, heirs of God,  
joint heirs with Christ and that it does not yet appear what we shall be,   
but when He shall appear we shall be like He is, for we shall see Him as   
He is. This opens up before us a splendid future of unfading glory and   
unbounded blissand we feel that we need no more. Since we are Christs and Christ is Gods, all things are ours and our hunger is forever over. The only contented man in the whole world is he who has believed in Jesus and he is contented just because he has obtained all that his nature needs   
*Let others stretch their arms like seas,   
And grasp in all the shore,   
Grant me the blessings of Your Grace,   
And I desire no more.*   
Because I could not desire more than all and Christ is All in All. My Beloved, this perfect satisfying of our nature is to be found nowhere  
else but in Christ. Some have tried to be satisfied with themselves and   
their own doings. They have despised the bread of Heaven, for they  
dreamed that they could live without breadthey would be self-contained   
menthey would make themselves happy with themselves. But it is a   
wretched failure. The poor Bushmen, when they have nothing to eat, tie a   
girdle around them and call it the hunger belt. And when they have gone a   
few days they pull it tighter and tighter still, in order to enable them to  
bear hungerso any man who has to live upon himself will have to draw   
the hunger belt very tight, indeed. A soul cannot be persuaded by philosophy to content itself without its necessary food. Eloquence may try all   
its charms to that end, but it will be in vain.   
Who can convince a hungry man that he needs not eat? Some have  
gone to Moses for bread and, mark you, the two greatest bread-givers in   
the world are Moses and Christ. Moses fed the tribes in the wilderness for  
40 years and Jesus feeds His people always. But Moses bread never satisfies. Those who eat it, before long call it light bread. And if they have been  
satisfied with it for a time, yet there is the mournful reflection that their   
fathers did eat it and are dead. There is no life in the bread of the Law.  
But he who gets Christ has a bread of which he shall eat forever and ever,   
and shall never die. I am told that there is countryI think it is Patagoniawhere men in times of need eat clay in great lumps. They fill themselves with it, so as to deaden their hunger. I know that many people in  
England do the same.   
There is a kind of yellow clay which is much cried up for staying spiritual hungerheavy stuff it is, but many have a vast appetite for it. They  
prefer it to the choicest dainties. When a man fills his heart with it, it   
presses him down to the very earth and prevents his rising into life. Some   
have tried to stay their hunger by the narcotics of skepticism and have   
dosed themselves into lethargy. Others have endeavored to get ease   
through the drugs of fatalism. Many stave off hunger by indifference, like   
the bears in winter which are not hungry because they are asleep. Such  
persons come to the House of God asleep. They would not like to be   
aroused, for if they were to do so they would wake up to an awful hunger.  
I wish they could be awakened, for that hunger which they dread would   
drive them to a soul-satisfying Savior. But, depend upon it, the only way to meet hunger is to eat bread, and the only way to meet your souls need is to get Christ in whom there is enough and to spare, but nowhere   
else.   
I shall close by saying that all Believers bear witness that Jesus Christ   
is satisfying bread to them. When do you get most satisfied on a Sunday,   
Beloved? I do not know whom you may happen to hear, but what Sundays  
are the best to you? When your minister rides the high horse and gives   
you a splendid oration, and you say, Dear me, it is wonderfulhave you   
ever felt satisfied to think it over on Monday? Have you ever felt satisfied   
with sermons composed of politics and morality, or very nice essays which  
would suit the Saturday Review if they were a little more caustic? Do you  
enjoy such meat? I will tell you when I enjoy a Sunday mostwhen I   
preach Christ mostor when I can sit and hear a humble village preacher   
exalt the Lord Jesus.   
It does not matter if the grammar is poor, so long as Jesus is there!  
What some call platitudes are dainties to me if they glorify my Lord Jesus  
Christ. Anything about Him is satisfying to a renewed spiritcannot you   
bear witness to that? When I have preached up Jesus Christand I think   
I generally do so, for the fact is, I do not know anything but Him, and I am   
determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and Him   
Crucified. Then, I say, I know you go away and say, After all, that is what   
we needChrist Crucified, Christ the sinners substitutionary Sacrifice,  
no sham Christ, no mere talk about Christ as an example, but His flesh   
and blood, a dying, bleeding, suffering Christthat is what we need. Now   
I have the witness of every Christian here to that! You are never satisfied   
with anything but thatare you? No matter how cleverly the doctrine   
might be analyzed, or however orthodox it might be, you cannot be content with ityou must have the Person of Christ, the flesh and the blood  
of Christor else you are not content.   
And, Beloved, those who have once eaten and drunk Christ never seek   
additional ground of trust beyond Christ. They never say, I am resting   
upon Christ, but still I should like to be able to depend a little on my Baptism. I never heard a Christian talk in that fashion in my life! I never   
heard a man say, I rest in the blood of Jesus, but still, I wish that I could   
have a bishops hands put upon my head so as to give me a confirmation  
of my faith. I never heard that in my life and I do not expect I ever shall!

We are perfectly satisfied without priests, and without sacraments! Jesus   
Christ is the one sole Foundation upon which we build!   
Again, I have never found those who rest in Christ needing to shift their   
confidence. Those who need something new every Sunday are those who   
know not the Savior. Truly, if you have not the bread from Heaven, you   
may well cry out for all manner of dishes, for each one will soon spoil. But  
if you have the bread of Heaven, you need Christ on the first of January  
and every day till the last of December. I have never heard a Christian assert that Christ did not satisfy them in the days of sickness or in the hour of death. I came to you this morning fresh from the sick bed of a venerable Christian man, close upon his 80th year, and I said to him, Now, dear Sir, here are three or four young people around your bed. We are going forth on our pilgrimage relying on Christ, believing that He is faithful and true. You have gone a great deal further than we have. Will you, therefore, kindly correct us if we are under a mistake? Have you found that the Lord has not fulfilled His Word? Have you found that He has not  
been true?   
It was a blessed sight to see the man of God and hear him say, Not one   
good thing has failed of all that the Lord God has promised. And then he  
added, I will sing of mercy, for it has been mercy, all mercy, all the way   
through. Do you feel any fear about departure? I said to him. Oh! dear,  
no, he said. I am willing to wait, or willing to go. But I am full of the expectation of beholding Him who loved me and gave Himself for me. Ah,   
the bridge of Grace will bear your weight, Brothers and Sisters! Thousands of big sinners have gone across that bridge, yes, tens of thousands   
have gone over it! I can hear their tramping, now, as they traverse the   
great arches of the bridge of Salvation.   
They come by the thousands, by the myriads! Ever since the day when   
Christ first entered into His Glory, they come, and yet never a stone has   
sprung in that mighty bridge. Some have been the chief of sinners and   
some have come at the very last of their days, but the arch has never  
yielded beneath their weight! I will go with them trusting to the same support! It will bear me over as it has borne them! They who have eaten  
Christ and drunk Christ shall not hunger or thirst in their last hour, trying as it will be.   
Saints have died saying, Yes, though I walk through the valley of the   
shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for You are with me. Your rod and   
Your staff they comfort me. You prepare a table for me in the presence of   
my enemies. You anoint my head with oil. My cup runs over. God grant  
us Grace to live upon Christ evermore. Amen.

PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMONJohn 6:26-63.   
Adapted from The C.H. Spurgeon Collection, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307. Sermon #1762 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

HIGH DOCTRINE AND BROAD DOCTRINE   
NO. 1762

DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON, AT EXETER HALL.

**All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me, and him that comes to Me I will by no means cast out.   
John 6:37.**

THESE two sentences have been looked upon as representing two sides of Christian doctrine. They enable us to see it from two standpointsthe Godward and the manward. The first sentence contains what some call high doctrine. If by high they mean glorious towards God, I fully agree with them, for it is a grand, God-honoring Truth which our Lord Jesus declares in these wordsAll that the Father gives Me shall come to Me. Some have styled this side of the Truth of God Calvinistic, but while it is true that Calvin taught it, so, also, did Augustine, Paul and our Lord, Himself, whose Words are these. However, I will not quarrel with those who see in this sentence a statement of the great Truth of God of predestinating Grace.

The second sentence sets forth blessed, encouraging, evangelical doctrine and is, in effect, a promise and an invitationHim that comes to Me I will by no means cast out. This is a statement without limitation of any kind. It has been thought to leave the free Grace of God open to the free will of man, so that whoever pleases my come and may be sure that he will not be refused. We have no permission to pare down either sentence, nor is there the slightest need to do so. The first sentence appears to me to say that God has chosen a people and has given these people to Christand these people must and shall come to Christand shall be saved. The second Truth of God declares that every man who comes to Christ shall be saved, since he shall not be cast outand that implies that he shall be received and accepted. These are two great Truths of Godlet us carry them both with us and they will balance each other.

I was once asked to reconcile these two statements and I answered, No, I never reconcile friends. These two passages never fell outthey are perfectly agreed! It is folly to imagine a difference and then set about removing it! It is like making a man of straw and then going out to fight with it. The grand declaration of the purpose of God that He will save His own is quite consistent with the widest declaration that whoever will come to Christ shall be saved! The pity is that it should ever be thought to be a difficulty in the two Truths, or that, supposing there is a difficulty, we should have thought it our duty to remove it.

Believe me, my dear Hearers, the business of removing religious difficulties is the least remunerative labor under Heaven. The truest way is to accept the difficulty, wherever you find it in Gods Word, and to exercise your faith upon it. It is unreasonable to suppose that faith is to be exempted from trialsall the other Divine Graces are exercisedand why should not faith be put to the test? I often feel a joy within my spirit in having to believe what I cannot understand! And sometimes, when I have to say to myself, How can it be? I find a joy in replying that it is so written and, therefore, it must be so. In spite of all reasoning stands the utterance of Godour Father speaks and doubts are silencedHis Spirit writes and we believe! I feel great pleasure in gliding down the river of Revelation upon a voyage of discovery and, hour by hour, obtaining fresh knowledge of Divine Truths.

But when I come to an end of progress and see my way blocked up by a sublimely awful difficulty, I find equal pleasure in casting anchor under the lee of the obstacle and waiting till the Pilot tells me what to do next. When we cannot go through a Truth of God, we may be led over it, or around it and what does that matter? Our highest benefit comes not of answering riddles, but of obeying commands by the power of love! Suppose we can see no further into the subjectwhat then? Shall we be troubled about that? Must there not be an end of human knowledge somewhere? May we not be perfectly satisfied for God to appoint the boundary of understanding? Let us not, therefore, run our heads against difficulties of our own inventionand certainly not against those which God has seen fit to leave for us.

Take, then, these two Truths of God, and know that they are equally precious portions of one harmonious whole! Let us not quibble over them, or indulge a foolish favoritism for one and a prejudice against the other, but let us receive both with a candid, large-hearted love of the Truth of God such as children of God should exhibit. We are not called upon to explain, but to accept! Let us believe if we cannot reconcile! Here are two jewelslet us wear them both. As surely as this Book is true, God has a people whom He has chosen and whom Christ has redeemed from among men! And these must and shall, by Sovereign Grace, be brought, in due time, to repentance and faith, for not one of them shall ever perish.

But yet is it equally true that whoever among the sons of men shall come and put his trust in Christ shall receive eternal life. Whoever will, let him take the Water of Life freely.

*None are excluded but those   
Who do themselves exclude.   
Welcome the learned and polite,   
The ignorant and rude.*

The two Truths of my text are by no means inconsistent with each other they are perfectly agreed. Happy is the man who can believe them both, whether he sees their agreement or does not see it. I was cruising, one day, in the western Highlands. It had been a splendid day and the glorious scenery had made our journey like an excursion to Fairy Land. But it came to an end, for darkness and night asserted their primeval sovereignty. Right ahead was a vast headland of the isle of Arran. How it frowned against the evening sky! The mighty rock seemed to overhang the sea. Just at its base was a little bay and into this we steamed and there we lay at anchorage all night, safe from every wind that might happen to be seeking out its prey. In that calm loch we seemed to lie in the mountains lap while its broad shoulders screened us from the wind.

Now, the first part of my text, All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me, rises like a huge headland high into the heavens. Who shall scale its height? Upon some it seems to frown darkly. But here at the bottom lies the placid, glassy lake of Infinite Love and MercyHim that comes to Me I will by no means cast out. Steam into it and be safe under the shadow of the great rock! You will be the better for the mountain-truth as your boat snugly reposes within the glittering waters at its footwhile you may thank God that the text is not all mountain to repel youyou will be grateful that there is enough of it to secure you.

First, I shall bid you view that goodly mountain and then we shall sail into that pleasant loch.   
I. Consider, then, with reverential joy THE ETERNAL PURPOSE. Our Lord Jesus Christ, when He found that the mass of the people rejected Him, turned round upon them and said, You believe not, because you are not of My sheep. He knew in His own heart that even if they refused Him, all would not do soa number would assuredly believe on Him. Therefore He boldly said, All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me. He threw this grand fact in the teeth of His fierce revilers! It was His own comfort and their rebuke.

Now, I do not want to throw it at anybody tonight! On the contrary, I desire to use it as a beckoning finger to any troubled heart that longs to come to Jesus and be saved. I saw the other day, round a gentlemans park, a very strong and lofty palisadeand to recomplete the exclusive apparatus, a superabundant number of tenter-hooks were nailed upon the top of the fence and a liberal quantity half-way up. I somewhat jokingly observed upon the kindness of the proprietor, in placing so many nails for the boys to climb up byand so many more for them to hold on by when once they were up. Why, said my companion, those tenterhooks would tear fingers and clothes to pieces! They are no help to climbers. No, I replied, No more help to climbers than the remarks which your minister made upon the Sovereignty of God could be considered to be no help to seekers of the Lord Jesus.   
The good man set forth the truth in the most awkward and pernicious manner possible; not making, thereof, steps for earnest climbers, but tenter-hooks for unwelcome intruders. I never yet saw such a crowd desirous of salvation that there was the slightest call for fences and tenter-hooks to keep them outbut I do see so many tremblers needing encouragement and so many doubters needing instruction that I delight to turn every Word, promise and doctrine of the Lord into sweet invitations to all around me to come and welcome to the great heart of the Crucified! I am not afraid that too many will comemy fears are all in the opposite direction! Oh, that I could hope that all my present hearers would come to Jesus at once!   
First, notice carefully, that if all that the Father gives to Christ shall come to Him, then some people shall most surely come to Christand why should not you be among them? This seems to me to be a sweet suggestion for the help of despondency when she is at her worstsome must come to Christ, why should not I come? When the devil says to you, You cannot come to Christ, and you, yourself, feel as if you could not come. When sin hampers you, when doubt drags you down, when you cannot do what you want to dostill it is decreed and determined that some people must comethen why not you? By Divine decree they shall come! Why should not you be among them? Does not that help you? If God blesses it, you will no longer sit on the borders of despair!   
Suppose there is a plague in the city, but there are some people predestinated to be healed? I would be glad to know of that fact! I would be almost glad of it if it was sure that I was not one of the favored ones, for I rejoice in the good of othersbut I would be still more glad to press to the physician with this assurance upon my mindsome must be healed, why should not I? There is a famine in the land. I hear that it is revealed by a sure prophet that a certain number never shall die of famine. Then why should not I outlive the dreadful days and be among them? Why not? I hear one say, Suppose I am not one of Gods elect? To Him I answer, Suppose you are? Better still, suppose that you leave off supposing altogether and just go to Jesus Christ and see!   
To go to Him is your wisdomyour immediate business, as laid down in His Wordtherefore, delay not! Instead of shutting myself out, as some do, because it is written, All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me I shut myself in and sayThen I will be among them. Why should I not? Oh, Lord, if You have ordained that some shall come, then I see that to them no difficulties can be insuperable and I will, therefore, come to You, myself, and in Your name enter in where every coming one is welcome!   
In the next place, I find that those that come to Christ, according to this text, come because of the Father and the Son. Read it. All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me. That is, they come to Jesus. Why is it that they are made to come? Because the Father has given them to Christ! Why is it that they shall come? Is it because there is some good thing in them? No, there is nothing said upon that point either one way or the other. Is it because they have strong wills and firm determinations and, therefore, come? The Scripture is equally silent upon that point, except that it says elsewhere that the New Birth is not of the will of man! The reason that is given why they shall come to Jesus is because something was done for them by the Father and by the Son. Why, then, should I not come?   
Suppose I am weak? Suppose I am sinful? Suppose I am seven times more sinful than anybody else? Yet, since this shall come depends not on the character of those to whom the promise is made, but upon a certain something done for them by the Father and the Son, why should I not be among those for whom the Father and the Son have done this certain thing? And why should I not, therefore, be made to come to Jesus? There never was a soul that really wanted to come to Jesus but what it could come and did come! There never was a pining, longing sinner that was long kept away from Christ! When he wanted Christ, Christ wanted him a hundred times as much!   
If you have the least desire or the faintest longing after the Lord Jesus Christ, then the cords of love are about you and His mighty hands are drawing home those cords! Yield to the sweet pressure and you shall come, not because of what you are, or what you have ever been, but because of what the Father is doing and because of what the Son is doing! It is written, No man can come to Me except the Father which has sent Me draws him. And when He is drawing, you can come. The Father is drawing you since you are longing to come and are anxious to find a Savior! Now, do not turn this Truth of God about so as to set it edgeways and make a chevaux de frise of it to keep yourself from getting to Christ. The doctrine of the Divine Purpose is not a thorn hedge to keep you off from the Tree of Lifeon the contrary, you are bound to regard it as an open door! Some must come. Why not I? Those that come do so because of something done for them by the Father and of the Sonwhy should not that have been done for me? Why should I not draw near to God?   
Notice, thirdly, that these people are, all of them, saved because they come to Christ. Observe the wordsAll that the Father gives Me shall come to Me. They are not saved in any other way than by coming to Christ. Here are certain people that are different from others, for the Father has given them to Christ. Yes, but it does not matter how different they are from othersthey have to be saved in the same way as other people. There is no way of salvation specially prepared for these peculiar peoplethey must still follow the Kings highway. The one common way of salvation is by coming to Christand all that the Father has given to Christ must come in by this gate! This is the one door that God has openedthere is no otherthere shall never be any other!   
Come! Pluck up heart, my dear Friendyou that are bowing your head like a bulrushthe best saint in Heaven found his way there by a simple trust in Jesus Christ! Why cannot you get there in the same way? Many sinners of the deepest dye have been saved through Jesus Christand why should not you be saved in the same way? Ask Peter, and James, and John, and Paul and all the rest of them, whether they entered into Heaven by a private bridge thrown across for them, aloneand they will tell you that they were saved by the one Redeemer! As no Scripture is of private interpretation, so be sure that there is no private and secret Savior for a few favored persons!   
Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Gods elect can only be saved by coming to Christ. Jesus says, All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me, for they cannot be saved any other way! Coming to Christ is the one essential thing. Oh, says one, I sometimes wish that I knew whether I was one of Gods elect. Why should you wish to know anything out of its turn, when you can learn every Truth that you need by studying other Truths which lead up to it? You come to Christ and you will know that you were given to Christfor none come to Him but those who are Hisand by their coming to Him

they give the best evidence of their election.

You know what the Brother in Cornwall said to Malachi, who was rather a stout Calvinist? He said, Now, Malachi, I owe you £2. Before I discharge the debt I need you to tell me whether I am predestinated to pay you. Malachi opened wide his hand and said, Put the £2 there and I will tell you directly. Like most sensible folk, he preferred to prophesy after the eventand there are many advantages in keeping to that method! It is evidently the natural order of things for uninspired folk. Whether the Father gave me to Christ or not, I cannot discover till I know whether I have come to Christ! When I know that I have truly come to Christ with all my heart, then I am certain that I was given to Christ and I find no difficulty in so believing! Yes, my heart is glad to think that I am saved in the same way as others are saved!

Yet, once again, from this text it is most clear that if I come to Christ, the Father gave me to Christ. If I, whoever I may be, do but simply trust Jesusfor that is the coming, here, meantthen I am one whom the Father gave to His Son. If, just as I am, I cast myself upon His blood and righteousness and become His disciple, sworn to follow Him, hoping, by His help, to tread in His footstepsthen I may know that, long before the daystar knew its place, or planets ran their round, the Eternal Father had looked upon me with eyes of everlasting loveand that He still accepts me and will never cast me away! Is it not so? All that the Father gives Me shall come to me and, if I have come, then the Father has given me to Christ! The great question is answered; the eternal mystery is unveiled and my spirit may rejoice in God, my Savior, and in all the precious things of that Everlasting Covenant which is ordered in all things and sure!

So much about that huge, overhanging mass of rock! Of that I am going to say no more. Only under its lee I have anchored long ago and at that anchorage I mean, still, to remain. Since I have come to Jesus, I know that I belong to Him by the Great Fathers giftand I am right well assured that the purpose of God shall be fulfilled in meand that He will assuredly bring me, with all the rest of His elect, to His Kingdom and Glory, where we shall see His face forever! This may be called oldfashioned doctrineI care not what it is calledit is my

life and I dare rest my souls weight upon it for time and for eternity!

II. Now we enter into smooth waterthe mystery is opened, let us partake of the joy of it. We have, in the second place, to speak to you for a little time on THE EVERLASTING GOSPELHim that comes to Me I will by no means cast out. You may forget my first head if you like, especially if you are troubled by it, but I earnestly beseech you remember the second. Him that comes to Me I will by no means cast out. This is one of the most generous Gospel texts that I remember to have met with between the covers of this Book. Generous, first, as to the character to whom the promise is made. Him that comes to Methat is the character. The man may have been guilty of an atrocious sin, too black to mention, but if he comes to Christ, he shall not be cast out!

To that atrocious sin he may have added many others, till the condemning list is full and longbut if he comes to Christ, he shall not be cast out. He may have hardened his neck against the remonstrances of prudence and the entreaties of mercy. He may have sinned deeply and willfullybut if he comes to Christ, he shall not be cast out! He may have made himself as black as nightas black as Hellbut if he shall come to Christ, the Lord will not cast him out! I cannot tell what kind of persons may have come into this Hall tonightbut if burglars, murderers and dynamite-men were here, I would still bid them come to Christ, for He will not cast them out!

I suppose that the most of you are tolerably decent as to moral character and to you I say, if you come to Christ, He will not cast you out. Children of godly parents, hearers of the Word of God, He will not cast you out! You who lack only one thing, but that the one thing necessary, He will not cast you out! Backsliders! Are there some such here who have almost forgotten the way to Gods sanctuaryfor whom the Sabbath bell proclaims no Sabbath now? Come to Jesus and He will not cast you out! Oh, you Londoners, you have grown weary of Gods House and of Gods Daymillions of you, but if with all your irreligion you are here tonight, this Truth of God holds good for you, alsoif you trust in Jesus, He will not cast you out!

If, amidst this company, there should be some whose characters we had better not describe and who already shrink into themselves at the very idea of being picked out and mentioned by nameyet if such persons come to Jesus, He will gladly receive them! Be your character what it may, you who are wrapped in mysteryyou shall not be cast out! I wish that I could convince those who are troubled about a life of grievous sin, for to the life-long transgressor the text is still true! My Lord proclaims an act of oblivion concerning all the past. It shall be as though it had never been! Through Jesus Christ, if you will but believe in Him, the whole past shall be rolled up and put away as though it had never known an existence and you, yourself, shall be born again!

When Naaman came up from washing in the Jordan we read that, His flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child and he was clean. And so it shall be with you. The old man took the fair-haired child upon his knee and ran his fingers through its locks, and said, Young child, God keep you from the sin into which I have plunged. My old life is full of evil. It is now almost over and I am past hope. Would God I were a child again! Lo, the Angel of Mercy whispers to anyone in that condition, You may be a child again! The man a hundred years of age may yet be made a child! And he that is a gray-beard in infamy may yet become a babe in innocence through the cleansing power of the water and the blood which flowed from the side of Jesus!

Go and write it across the brow of night! Write it in new stars if you canHim that comes to Me I will by no means cast out. Then hang it up over the midday heavens and let the sun cast all his beams upon it, till it seems written in the splendor of GodHim that comes to Me I will by no means cast out. The character who will be received is not mentioned, lest in mentioning one sinner, another should seem to be excluded. No limit is set to the extent of sinany him in all the worldany blaspheming, devilish him that comes to Christ shall be welcomed! I use strong words that I may open wide the gate of mercy. Any him that comes to Christ though he come from slum or taproom, betting ring or gambling hall, prison or brothelJesus will by no means cast out!

Further, this text is a very generous one because it gives no limit to the coming. The only limit to the way of coming is that they come to Christ. I have known some come to Christ running to Hima willing, speedy, earnest pace. You read of that in the Gospels. They were so glad to hear of a Savior that they flew to Him at once! Many young children and young people do this and they are blessed in the deed. Come along with you, you lively and tender spirits! He will not cast you out if you leap and rush to Him! If you run all of a sudden to Him tonightif you make a dash for ChristHe will not cast you out. Alas, a great many, when they come to Christ, advance very limpingly. They are burdened with a huge load of sin and fettered with doubts and fearsand so they make slow progress. They do not look to Jesus and live all at once. They keep looking here and looking there, instead of looking to Him. They are a long while in coming, for they are afraid, ignorant and dull.

Never mind, Brothers and Sisters. The snail got into the Ark! And if you come to Christ, He will not cast you out though your pace is sadly sluggish. Some look to Christ as soon as they hear of Him, with clear, bright eyes like those of Rachel. Oh, such a look! They seem to drink in Christ and His salvation all at once with those bright eyes. But I have met with many whose look is like that of Leah, who had tender eyesthey look through the mists of their doubt and the showers of their tearsand they do not half see Christ as they should. Yes, but that half-clouded look will save them! Any looking will save you if it is looking to Christand any coming, if it is coming to Chris, will save you!

Coming to sacraments may condemn you! Coming to priests will ruin you! But coming to Christ will save you! If your simple faith takes hold of Christs salvation, there is life in that grip. If your thoughts think of Him, if your heart embraces Him, if your soul trusts Him, however weakly and imperfectly you do it, He will not cast you out! Oh, this is glorious truth to my mindis it not so to yours? So long as we but come to Him, our Savior will not cast us away! I feel glad to be preaching this Gospel in Exeter Hallare you not glad to hear it? If you are not, you are a sorry lot.

Thirdly, there is no limit, here, as to time. Him that comes to Me I will by no means cast out is a glorious, free utterance, compassing every age. There may be some little children hereindeed, I am glad to see boys and girls mingling with the congregation. Listen to me, my children! I am always glad to see you and we preachers make a great mistake if we do not preach to you. Oh, dear John and Jane, Mary and ThomasI wish you would come to Christ while you are yet youngand put your trust in Him and become young Christians. There is no reason why you should not! You are old enough to die; and you are old enough to sin; and you are old enough to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ! Why should you not do so at once?

When I was just about 15 years of age I was helped by Gods Spirit to cast myself upon Christ. And have I ever regretted that I came to Jesus so soon? No! I wish that I could have come 15 years before and that I had known Christ as soon as I learned to know my mother! Some of you have heard about Jesus from your infancy. His name was part of the music with which your mother sang you to sleep. Oh, that you may know Jesus by faith as well as by hearing! Do not think that you have to wait till you are grown up before you may come to Jesus. We have baptized quite a number of boys and girls of 10, 11 and twelve. I spoke the other day with a little boy nine years of age and I tell you that he knew more about Christ than many gray-headed men doand he loved Jesus most heartily!

As the sweet child talked to me about what Christ had done for him, he brought tears into my eyes, to see how happily and brightly he could speak of what he had felt in his own soul, of the Saviors power to bless. You young children are like rosebuds and you know everybody likes a rosebud better than a full-blown rose. My Lord Jesus will gladly receive you as rosebuds! Offer yourselves to Him, for He will not cast you away! I am sure He never will. If any here are in the opposite extremity of life, I would remind them that, him that comes to Me I will by no means cast out applies to the aged as well as to the young!

I heard it said by a ministera very earnest manthat if persons were not converted before they were 45, he hardly believed that they would ever be converted afterwards. And he gave it as a note of his observation that he had not seen any persons converted after forty-five. I wished that I had been in his pulpit. I should not have questioned his statements, but I would have overlaid them with others of another character. Surely this Brother had been living in some minute hamlet or other, or else he had never preached the Gospel, in its fullness, to every creature! Perhaps he did not believe in the conversion of the aged and, consequently, no aged persons were converted by his means. I have seen as many people converted of one age as anotherthat is to say, in proportion to the number of themfor there are not so many people in the world over 50 as there are under 50 and, consequently, a large proportion of those persons who make up our congregations are young.

We have in our regular gatherings a fair number of all ages. And as to the additions to the Church, I have noticed that there is about the same proportion of very young children as of very old men and women. We have baptized, upon profession of faith, men and women over 80 years of age, about whose conversion we had as firm a conviction as we had about the conversions of the little onesneither more nor less. Who shall dare say that there is an age after which Gods Grace does not work? I challenge anyone to bring a text which looks that way! Furthermore, I challenge the truth of any observations which arrive at such a result. My own preaching has been such that young and old in equal proportions have attended it and in equal proportions they have been saved. However old you may be, my Master bids me say to you, him that comes to Me I will by no means cast out.

Come along, come along, dear old Friend, though you cannot come without your cane! Come along, though your eyes are failingcome in your spectacles! Though you cannot do much for my Master, He can do everything for you! Though you have only a little time to live on earth, you will have all eternity in Heaven through which you can praise Him! I am sure you will be one of the most eager at that work. I think you will be like an old woman of my acquaintance. When I spoke to her about her conversion at an advanced age, she said, Sir, if the Lord Jesus Christ ever does save such a poor old sinner as I am, He shall never hear the last of it. That is just why I want Him to save youfor then He will never hear the last of it! You will praise Him forever and forever for what He has done for you! Will you not?

Oh, my dear Hearers, come to Jesus! Come in the morning when the dew is on your branch, for He will not cast you out. Come in the heat of noon, when the drought of care parches youand He will not cast you out. Come when the shadows have grown long and the darkness of the night is gathering about you, for He will not cast you out! The door is not shut, for the gate of Mercy closes not, so long as the gate of Life is open! Oh, fly to Christ and find mercy, now!

Once again, dear Friends, I want you to notice in my text the blessed certainty of this salvation. Him that comes to Me I will by no means cast out. Two or three negatives in the Greek language make a negation stronger, though they would have no such effect in the English tongue. It is a very strong negative here. Him that comes to Me I will not not cast out, or, I will never never cast out. As much as to sayOn no account, or for no reason, or on no pretence, or from no motive whatever will I ever, in time or in eternity, cast out the soul that comes to Me. That is how it standsa declaration of absolute certainty from which there can be no escaping! What a blessed thing it is to get your foot on certainties!

Certain preachers, who are much cried up nowadays, are very uncertain preachers, for they do not, themselves, know what they will be propounding tomorrow! They make their creed as they go along and a very poor one it is when they make it. I believe in something sure and certain, namely, in Infallible Scripture and that which the Lord has written therein, never to be altered while the world stands. My text is certain as the Truth of Christ Jesus and if we have ever seen that beautiful face of His, we could not distrust Him! Can your imagination picture, for a minute, the ever-blessed face of the Son of God? Could you look into that face and suspect Him of a lie? And when He says, Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believes in Me has everlasting life, the saying must be true! If you believe in Him, you have everlasting life!

When He says, him that comes to Me I will never never cast out, the declaration must be true. He never, never, can cast you out, whoever you may be, however long you may live, or whatever else may happenif you but come to Him! There are plenty of reasons, apparently, why He should cast you out, but He has knocked them all on the head by saying, I will by no means cast out! That is, In no way, and under no pretext, will I ever cast out a soul that comes to Me. Now, if Christ does not cast us out, then He receives usand if He receives us, we are received into the heart of God! We are received into eternal life and, by-and-by, we shall be received into everlasting blessedness! Oh, the joy of my text, in that it is so certain!

So I shall close here, dear Friends, with just a word or two of further encouragement by noticing the personality of my text, for in this, a part of the liberality consists. Do you observe that the first part of the text began with, All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me? Yes, but when Christ began to deal with sinners with broken hearts, He dropped the, all, and every form of general statement, and He came to the personal singular pronoun him that comes to Me I will by no means cast out. Now, herein He meant to say to everyone in this Hall, If you come to Me, I will not cast you out. It is not, If you and another come, for, if so, it would be put in the pluralIf you come. But it is, him that comes. You alone! Your servant alone! Your child alone! But specially yourself alone

if   
YOU come to the Lord Jesus, He will not cast you out!

You cannot doubt this. Come, then, my dear Hearers, believe your Savior! I am not talking, tonight, to persons who doubt the veracity of the Son of God. I am not talking to persons who think Christ a liar. You know that He would receive you if you would come. Then, why do you not come? But you mean to come, do you, by-and-by? Then why not now? What is it that holds you back? How dare you delay! Will you be alive next week? How can you be sure of a day, or an hour? When money is to be given away, I do not find that persons generally delay to receive it, and say, I should rather have it next year. No, they say, A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.

Oh, to have Christ in the hand and to get Him now! And why not now? Is it because you really do not understand what it is to receive Him, or to believe in Him? It is, indeed, the simplest thing in the worldand that is the only reason why it is so difficult! It is so exceedingly simple that men cannot believe that it can be as we put it. Indeed, it is so! Faith is simply to trust Christ! And trusting Christ brings with it the new life and salvation from sin. I sometimes put it in Watts way

*A guilty, weak, and helpless worm,   
On Christs kind arms I fall.*

But after I had once been preaching, a young man said to me, Sir, I cannot fall. Oh dear, I said, then I do not know how to talk; for I meant not a thing you could do, but the cessation of all your efforts! Just falling, or if you will see it better, just tumbling downbecause you cannot stand upright. Because I cannot save myself, I fall into Christs arms. Ceasing to hold to anything of my own, I just drop upon Him. Still, you say, there must be something more than that.

There is nothing more than that! If you believe that Jesus is the Christ, you are born of God. He that believes and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believes not shall be damned. He that with his heart believes, and with his mouth makes confession of Him, shall be saved. Oh, but I mustI mustI must do something mysterious, or feel something which at present is far beyond me. Thus you call God a liar and put away from you eternal life! Have you never read the story of the good ship that had been a long time at sea and the captain had lost his reckoning? He drifted up the mouth of the great Amazon River and, after he had been sailing for a long time up the river without knowing that he was in a river at all, they ran short of water.

When another vessel was seen, they signaled her, and when they got near enough for speaking they cried, Water! We are dying for water! They were greatly surprised when the answer came back, Dip it up! Dip it up! You are in a river. It is all around you. They had nothing to do but to fling a bucket overboard and have as much water as they liked! And here are poor souls crying out, Lord, what must I do to be saved? when the great work is done and all that remains for them is to receive the free gift of eternal life! What must you do? You have done enough for one lifetime, for you have undone yourself by your doing! That is not the question! It is, Lord, what have You done? And the answer is, It is finished! I have done it all. Only come and trust Me.

Sinner, you are in a river of Grace and mercy! Over with the bucket, man! And drink to the full, for you will never exhaust the stream of Grace. A river is free to every dog that runs along the bankevery cow that stands by the river may drink to the full! So is the mercy of God free to every sinner, be he who he may, that does but come to Jesus! That river runs near to you tonight! Stoop down, you thirsty ones, and drink and live! But you say, I must feel different from what I do now. You need not come with your bad feelings. Oh, I have not yet a broken heart, says one. Come to Christ and He will break your heart. But I do not feel my need as I ought. Come to Christ and He will help you to feel your need. Oh, but I am nobody! You are the very person that Christ delights in, for to you He will be everybody!

Do you see that beautiful tree in the orchard loaded with fruit? It is a pear tree. From top to bottom it is covered with fruit. I think I never saw such a sightevery branch is bowing down. Some boughs are ready to break with the luscious burden. As I listen to the creaking boughs, I can hear the tree speak. What does it say? It says, Baskets, baskets, baskets! Bring baskets! Now, then, who has a basket? I have one, cries yonder friend, but it is of no use, for there is nothing in it. Bring it here, man! That is the very kind of basket the tree needs! A person over there says, Oh, I have a basketa splendid basket. It is just the thing. It is full from top to bottom.   
You may keep your basket to yourself. It is of no use to my loaded tree.Where is there an empty basket? Who has an empty basket? Come along with you! Come and pick from the tree as long as you like. Bring all your baskets. Bring thousands and thousands of baskets, all empty, and fill them all! Do you notice as we fill the baskets that the fruit begins to multiply? There is more when we have filled the baskets than there was at first, for this inexhaustible tree produces more and more fruit, as fast as we pluck from it. What is wanted by the Lord Jesus is an empty soul to receive out of the fullness which God has treasured up in Him!

God bless every one of you, for His names sake. Amen.

LETTER FROM MR. SPURGEON   
DEAR FRIENDSIt is with very sincere regret that I find myself obliged to prolong my absence. I have been exceedingly full of pain and have been very much a prisoner to my room, or I should have returned upon the appointed day. The deacons judged it better for me to remain till I could recover and certainly there is a far better hope for a man here in the sunshine than in a London fog. I rejoice to say that I already feel much better. Though I cannot quite maintain the erect figure which is becoming an upright man, yet the pains of lumbago are less acute than they were. I am full of confidence that I shall soon be well, in answer to your prayers. My heart is at home. I long to be preaching Christ and winning souls. May

your work be blessed while I am silenced. Innumerable are the forms of your holy activitymay the Holy Spirit fill them all with His power. I send my love to all who are in Christ Jesus. As for those who are not in Him what shall I say? No blessing can come to the soul which refuses the Lord Jesus. May there be none such among us. Wishing you a glorious Sabbath, I am your willing but suffering Pastor.   
*C. H. SPURGEON*   
Mentone, France   
January 17, 1884

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Sermon #2349 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

ALL COMERS TO CHRIST WELCOMED   
NO. 2349

**A SERMON INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS DAY, FEBRUARY 25, 1894.   
DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, NOVEMBER 17, 1889.

**Him that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out. John 6:37.**

EOD CHRIST will not die in vain. His Father gave Him a certain number to be the reward of His soul travail and He will have every one of them, as He said, All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me. Almighty Grace shall sweetly constrain them all to come. My father recently gave me some letters which I wrote to him when I began to preach. They are almost boyish epistles, but, in reading through them, again, I noticed in one of them this expression, How I long to see thousands of men saved, but my great comfort is that some will be saved, must be saved, shall be saved, for it is written, All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me.

The question for each of you to ask is, Do I belong in that number? I am going to preach with the view of helping you to find out whether you belong to that, all, whom the Father gave to Christthe all who shall come to Him. We can use the second part of the verse to help us to understand the first. Him that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out, will explain our Saviors previous Words, All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me.

I shall have no time for any further preface. I must at once get to my subject and try to put everything in a condensed form. Kindly give heed to the word, think about it, pray over itand may God the Holy Spirit apply it to all your hearts!

I. First, notice in the text THE NECESSITY OF CHARACTERHim that comes to Me. If you want to be saved, you must come to Christ. There is no other way of salvation under Heaven but coming to Christ. Go wherever else you will, you will be disappointed and lostit is only by coming to Him that you can by any possibility have eternal life!

What is it to come to Christ? Well, it implies leaving all other confidences. To come to anybody is to leave everybody else. To come to Christ is to leave everything elseto leave every other hope, every other trust. Are you trusting to your own works? Are you trusting to a priest? Are you trusting to the merits of the Virgin Mary, or the saints and angels in Heaven? Are you trusting to anything but the Lord Jesus Christ? If so, leave it, and have done with it! Come away from every other reliance and trust to Christ Crucified, for this is the only way of salvation, as Peter said to the rulers and elders of Israel, Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under Heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

*To Jesus bleeding on the tree,   
Turn you your eye, your heart,*   
and come to Him at once and your soul shall live forever!

To come to Jesus means, in brief, trusting Him. He is a Saviorthat is His businesscome to Him and trust Him to save you. If you could save yourself, you would not need a Savior, and now that Christ has set up to be a Savior, let Him do the business. He will. Come and lay all your needs at His feet and trust Him. Resolve that, if lost, you will be lost trusting alone in Jesus, and that can never be! Tie up all your hopes into one bundle and put that bundle upon Christ. Let Him be all your salvation, all your desire and you will be surely saved!

I have sometimes tried to explain to you what the life of faith is like. It is very much like a man walking on a tight rope. The Believer is told that he shall not fall, He trusts in God that he shall not, but every now and then he says, What a way it is down there if I did fall! I have often had this experience. I have gone up an invisible staircaseI could not see the next step, but when I put my foot down on it, I found that it was solid granite. I could not see the next step and it seemed as if I should plunge into an abyss. Yet have I gone on upward, steadily, one step at a time, never able to see farther into absolute darkness, as it seemed, and yet always with a light just where the light was needed.

When I used to hold a candle for my father, in the evening, when he was sawing wood out in the yard, he used to say, Boy, hold the candle where I am sawing, dont look over there. And I have often thought to myself, when I wanted to see something in the middle of next week, or next year, that the Lord seemed to say to me, Hold your candle on the piece of work which you have to do todayand if you can see that, be satisfied, for that is all the light you need just now. Suppose that you could see into next week? It would be a great mercy if you lost your sight a while, for a far-seeing gaze into care and trouble is no gain! Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereofas sufficient unto the day will be the good thereof.

But the Lord does train His people for the skies by testing their faith in the matter of His daily care of them. Often a mans reliance upon God for the supply of his earthly needs proves that he has trusted the Lord for the weightier affairs relating to his souls salvation. Do not draw a line between the temporal and the spiritual and say, God will go just so far and I must not take such and such a thing to Him in prayer. I remember hearing of a certain good man, of whom one said, Why, he is a very curious manhe prayed about a key the other day! Why not pray about a key? Why not pray about a pin? Sometimes it may be as important to pray about a pin as to pray about a kingdom! Little things are often the linchpins of great events. Take care that you bring everything to God in faith and prayer. Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

I have turned aside from my subject for a minute, but let us now think, again, of this matter of coming to Christ. To come to Jesus not only implies leaving all other confidences and trusting Christ, it also means following Him. If you trust Him, you must obey Him. If you leave your soul in His hands, you must take Him to be your Master, and your Lord, as well as your Savior. Christ has come to save you from sin, not in sin. He will, therefore, help you to leave your sin, whatever it is. He will give you the victory over it! He will make you holy. He will help you to do whatever you should do in the sight of God. He is able to save unto the uttermost them who come unto God by Himbut you must come to Him if you would be saved by Him.

To put together all I have saidyou must quit every other hope; you must take Jesus to be your sole confidenceand then you must be obedient to His command and take Him to be your Master and Lord. Will you do that? If not, I have nothing to say to you except thisHe that believes not in Him will perish without hope! If you will not have Gods remedy for your soul malady, the only remedy that there is, there remains for you nothing but blackness and dismal darkness forever and ever for you!

II. But, now, secondly, while there is this necessity of character, notice, also, THE UNIVERSALITY OF PERSONSHim that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out.

Granted that he comes to Christ, that is all that is needed. Does someone say, Sir, I am a very obscure person. Nobody knows me. My name was never in the papers and never will be. I am a nobody? Well, if Mr. Nobody comes to Christ, He will not cast him out! Come along, you unknown person, you anonymous individual, you that everybody but Christ forgets! If even you come to Jesus, He will not cast you out.

Another says, I am so very odd. Do not say much about that, for I am odd, too. But, dear Friends, however odd we are, though we may be thought very eccentric and some may even consider us a little touched in the head, yet, nevertheless, for all that, Jesus says, Him that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out. Come along with you, Mr. Oddman! You shall not be lost for lack of brains, nor even for having too manythough that is not a very common misfortune! If you will but come to Christ, though you have no talent, though you are but poor and will never make much headway in the world, Jesus says, Him that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out.

Ah, says a third friend, I do not mind about being obscure, or being eccentric, but it is the greatness of my sin that keeps me back from Christ. Let us read the text againHim that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out. If he had been guilty of seven murders and all the whoredoms and adulteries that ever defiled mortal man! If impossible sins could be charged against himyet if he came to Christ, mark you, if he came to Christthe promise of Jesus would be fulfilled even in his case, Him that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out.

But, says another, I am completely worn out. I am good for nothing. I have spent all my days and years in sin. I have come to the very end of the chapter, I am not worth anybodys having. Come along with you, you derelict of life! Jesus says, Him that comes to Me, I will in no wise cast out. You have to walk with two sticks, do you? Never mind, come to Jesus! You are so feeble that you wonder that you are alive at your advanced age? My Lord will receive you if you are a hundred years of agethere have been many cases in which persons have been brought to Christ even after that age! There are some very remarkable instances of that fact on record. Christ says, Him that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out. If he were as old as Methuselah, if he did but come to Christ, he would not be cast out!

Alas, says one, I am in a worse case than even that aged friend, for beside being old, I have resisted the Spirit of God! I have been many years troubled in my conscience, but I have tried to cover it all up. I have stifled every godly thought. Yes, yes, and it is a very sad thing, too. But for all that, if you come to Christ, if you can even make a dash for salvation and come to Jesus, He cannot cast you out!

Perhaps One friend says, I am afraid that I have committed the unpardonable sin. If you come to Christ, you have not, I knowfor him that comes to Him, Jesus will in no wise cast out! He cannot, therefore, you have not committed the unpardonable sin. Come along with you, man, and if you are blacker than all the rest of the sinners in the world, so much the more glorious shall be the Grace of God when it shall have proved its power by washing you whiter than snow in the precious blood of Jesus!

Ah, says one, you do not know me, Sir. No, dear Friend, I do not. But, perhaps, one of these days I may have that pleasure. It will not be any pleasure to you, Sir, for I am an apostate. I used to be a professor of religion, but I have given it all up, and I have gone back to the world, willfully and wickedly doing all manner of evil things. Ah, well, if you can but come to Christ, though there were seven apostasies piled, one upon another, still His promise stands true, Him that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out. Whatever the past, or whatever the present, backslider, return to Christ, for He stands to His solemn promise, and there are no exceptions mentioned in my textHim that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out.

Well, Sir, cries another, I should like to come to Christ, but I do not feel fit to come. Then, come all unfit, just as you are! Jesus says, Him that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out. If I were awakened in the middle of the night by a cry of, Fire! and I saw that someone was at the window with a ladder, I do not think that I would stay in bed, and say, I have not my black necktie on, or, I have not my best waistcoat on. I would not speak in that way at all! I would be out of the window as quickly as ever I could, and down the ladder! Why do you talk about your fitness, fitness, fitness? I have heard of a cavalier, who lost his life because he stopped to curl his hair when Cromwells soldiers were after him. Some of you may laugh at the mans foolishness, but that is all that your talk about fitness is! What is all your fitness but the curling of your hair when you are in imminent danger of losing your soul? Your fitness is nothing to Christ. Remember what we sang at the beginning of the service

*Let not conscience make you linger,   
Nor of fitness fondly dream!   
All the fitness He requires   
Is to feel your need of him!   
This He gives you   
Tis the Spirits rising beam!*

Come to Christ just as you arefoul, vile, careless, godless, Christless! Come now, even now, for Jesus said, Him that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out.

Is there not a glorious width about my text? Him that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out. What, him, is this? It is, him that comes! What, him that comes? Any him that comes in all the world! If he comes to Christ, he shall not be cast out! A red man, or a black man, or a white man, or a yellow man, or a copper-colored manwhatever he is, if he comes to Jesus, he shall in no wise be cast out!

When you mean to put a thing broadly, it is always best to state it and leave it. Do not go into details! The Savior does not. Some years ago there was a man, a kind, loving husband, who wished to leave to his wife all his property. Whatever he had, he intended her to have it all, as she ought. So he put down in his will, I leave to my beloved wife, Elizabeth, all that I have. That was all right. Then he went on to describe in detail what he was leaving her, and he wrote, All my freehold and personal estate. The most of his property happened to be leasehold, so the wife did not get it because her husband gave a detailed description! It was in the detail that the property slipped away from the good woman.

Now, there is no detail at all hereHim that comes. That means that every man, woman and child beneath the broad heavens, who will but come and trust in Christ, shall in no wise be cast out! I thank God that there is no allusion to any particular character, in order especially to say, People of that character shall be received, for then the characters left out might be supposed to be excluded. But the text clearly means that every soul that comes to Christ shall be received by Him!

III. The flight of time hurries me on! I therefore beg you to listen earnestly while I speak to you, in the third place, about THE UNMISTAKEABLENESS OF THE PROMISEHim that comes to Me I will in no wise that is, for no reason, under no circumstances, at no time, under no conditions whateverI will in no wise cast out. And which means, being interpreted, I will receive him, I will save him, I will bless him.

Then if you, my dear Friend, come to Christ, how could the Lord cast you out? How could He do it in consistency with His truthfulness? Imagine my Lord Jesus making this declaration and giving it to us as an inspired Scripture, Him that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out, and yet casting out somebody, even that unknown somebody up in the corner! Why, it would be a lie! It would be a gross lie! I pray you, blaspheme not my Lord, the truthful Christ, by supposing that He could be guilty of such conduct as that! He could do as He liked about whom He would receive until He made the promisebut after He had pledged His word, He bound Himself by the veracity of His Nature to keep it and, as long as Christ is the truthful Christ, He must receive every soul that comes to Him.

But let me also ask you, suppose that you came to Jesus and He cast you out, with what hands could He do it? With His own hands, you answer. What? Christ coming forward to cast out a sinner who has come to Him? I ask again, with what hands could He do it? Would He do it with those pierced hands that still bear the marks of the nails? The Crucified rejecting a sinner? Ah, no, He has no hand with which to do such a cruel work as that, for He has given both His hands to be nailed to the tree for guilty men! He has neither hand, nor foot, nor heart with which to reject sinners, for all these have been pierced in His death for them! Therefore He cannot cast them out if they come to Him.

Let me ask you another question, What profit would it be to Christ if He did cast you out? If my dear Lord, with the crown of thorns, the pierced side and the wounded hands, were to cast you away, what glory would it bring to Him? If He cast you into Hell, you who have come to Him, what happiness would that bring to Him? If He were to cast you away, you who have sought His face, you who trust His love and His blood, by what conceivable method could that ever render Him the happier or the greater? It cannot be!

What would such a supposition involve? Imagine for a moment that Jesus did cast away one who came to Him. If it were ascertained that one soul came to Christ and yet He had cast him away, what would happen? Why, there are thousands of us who would never preach again! For one, I would have done with the business. If my Lord can cast away a sinner who comes to Him, I cannot, with a clear conscience, go and preach from His Words, Him that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out. Moreover, I should feel that if He failed in one promise, He might fail in others! I could not go and preach a possible but doubtful Gospel! I must have, shalls, and, wills, from the eternal Throne of Godbut if it is not so, our preaching is in vainand your faith is also in vain.

See what would follow if one soul came to Christ and Christ cast him out. All the saints would lose their confidence in Him. If a man breaks his promise once, it is of no use for him to say, Well, I am generally truthful. You have caught him false to his word, once, and you will not trust Him again, will you? No! And if our dear Lord, whose every Word is Truth, could break one of His promises only once, He would not be trusted by His people any moreand His Church would lose the faith that is her very life.

Ah, me, and then they would hear of it up in Heaven. And one soul that came to Christ, and was cast away, would stop the music of the harps of Heaven, would dim the luster of the Glory Land, and take away its joy, for it would be whispered among the glorified, Jesus has broken His promise! He cast away a praying, believing soul! He may break His promise to usHe may drive us out of Heaven! When they began to praise Him, this one act of His would make a lump come in their throats and they would be unable to sing. They would be thinking of that poor soul that trusted Him and was cast awayhow could they sing, Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, if they had to addBut He did not wash all that came to Him, though He promised that He would?

I do not even like to talk of all that the supposition would involve! It is something so dreadful to me, for they would hear of it in Helland they would tell it to one another and an awful glee would take possession of the fiendish hearts of the devil and all his companions! And they would say, The Christ is not true to His Word! The boasted Savior rejected one who came to Him. He used to receive even harlotsHe even let one wash His feet with her tears! And publicans and sinners came and gathered about Him and He spoke to them in tones of love. But here is onewell, he was too vile for the Savior to bless! He was too far gone, Jesus could not restore him! Christ could not cleanse him. He could save little sinners, but not great ones! He could save sinners eighteen hundred years ago. Oh, He made a fine show of them, but His power is now exhausted! He cannot save a sinner now! Oh, in the halls of Hell, what jests and ridicule would be poured upon that dear name and, I had almost said,

justly, if Christ cast out one who came to Him! But, Beloved, that can never be! It is as sure as Gods oath, as certain as Jehovahs Being that he who comes to Christ shall in no wise be cast out! I gladly bear my own witness before this assembled throng that

*I came to Jesus as I was   
Weary and worn, and sad.   
I found in Him a resting place,   
And He has made me glad.*

Come, each one of you, and prove the text to be true in your own experience, for the Lord Jesus Christs sake! Amen.   
EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **Psalm 89:1-37; John 6:22-40.**

Psalm 89. Maschil of Ethan the Ezrahite. That is to say, an instructive Psalm, written by or for one Ethan, one of the great singers of Davids day. He sings of the Covenant, the Covenant with David, ordered in all things and sure. There is no higher theme for song than the Covenant of Gods Grace. One marvels that it has not more often been sung by those who are the gifted children of poesy.

Verse 1. I will sing of the mercies of the LORD forever. Another subject might wear out, but this glorious topic will never be exhausted! Here is a theme which we can sing of in eternity as well as in time. Let others choose what subject they may, I will sing of the mercies of Jehovah forever.

1. With my mouth will I make known Your faithfulness to all generations.

Gods faithfulness is the mercy of His mercy! It is the center point of His goodness that His goodness endures forever. We are not only to sing, we are to teach. The Psalmist says, With my mouth will I make known Your faithfulness to all generations. In telling his own experience, narrating what he had observed, as well as what he had proved of Gods faithfulness to His promise and His Covenant, he would do this so that following generations should know about it. We are the schoolmasters of the ages to comeI mean, saints who have experienced the mercy and the faithfulness of God. We ought to make known Jehovahs faithfulness to all generations that are yet to come.

2. For I have said, Mercy shall be built up forever. What a building Mercy! Gods mercy is to be built up forever.   
2. Your faithfulness shall You establish in the very heavens. Like the great arch you see in the firmament on high, unbuttressed and unpillared, yet it stands fast. So shall Gods faithfulness be built up, settled and established in the very heavens. And now God speaks   
3. I have made a Covenant with My chosen, I have sworn unto David My servant. Well might the Psalmist say, in the second verse, I have said, when God in the third verse says, I have sworn. It is ours to say, but it is Gods to say with such tremendous solemnity that doubt cannot be tolerated! I have made a Covenant with My chosen, King David, who is, however, but the type of his greater Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, the heir of the dynasty of David. With Him is this Covenant made forever.   
4. Your seed will I establish forever, and build up your throne to all generations. Selah. Whatever may happen in the world, Davids Seed is always reigning. Whatever kings may lose their crowns, King Jesus will never lose the many crowns that are on His head! God has sworn itYour seed will I establish forever, and build up your throne to all generations. Then comes the word, Selah. Rest. Meditate. And truly, here is enough to rest and meditate upon for many a day, if we went no farther into the Psalm!   
5. And the heavens shall praise Your wonder, O LORD: Your faithfulness, also, in the congregation of the saints. The Psalmist meant to praise God at such a rate that the sun, moon and stars should hear his song, while angels and the host redeemed by blood should learn to praise God better than ever. Your faithfulness also in the congregation of the saintsone saint begins to sing of Gods faithfulness and the others take it upfor God is not faithful to one, only, but to all His people. This is a subject which, when once started, will produce an echo in every Believers heart.   
6, 7. For who in the Heaven can be compared unto the LORD? Who among the lions of the mighty can be likened unto the LORD? God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints. The holiest are always the most reverent. There is no fear of God in the assembly of the sinners, but, He is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints.   
7. And to be had in reverence of all them that are about Him. The nearer they came to Him, the more is their awe of Him! The greater their love, the deeper is their humility. God will not have those about Him who are flippant and irreverent! He is to be had in reverence of all them that are about Him.   
8. O LORD God of Hosts, who is a strong LORD like unto You? Or to Your faithfulness round about You? Note how the Psalmist harps upon that one stringfaithfulness. Ah, dear Friends, there are times when this is the sweetest note in the whole scale! Your faithfulnesswe have a God who never forgets His promises, but keeps them to the momenta God who never changes! We have a God who never turns away from His Word. Your faithfulness. Oh, what a blessed virtue is this in God! Let us praise Him for it forever. Your faithfulness round about Youas if the Lord never went outside the ring of faithfulness, never did anything that broke His promises, or that made any of His children to doubt. And it is even so!  
9. You rule the raging of the sea: when the waves thereof rise, You still them. Are you now in a storm, my Brother? My Sister, are you now tempest-tossed? Listen to this Word of God and remember the Lord High Admiral of the fleet on the Lake of Galilee and how, after He had been asleep for awhile, He arose and rebuked the winds and the waves! You rule the raging of the sea: when the waves thereof rise, You still them.   
10. You have broken Rahab in pieces, as one that is slain; You have scattered Your enemies with Your strong arm. Rahab was Egypt. The word means, strong, mighty, proudall of which were the characteristics of Egyptwhich God broke in pieces at the Red Sea. Pharaoh was the greatest of monarchs at the time, but, oh, how soon he had to yield when Gods right arm was bared for war!   
11. The heavens are Yours, the earth also is Yours: as for the world and the fullness thereof, You have founded them. Sometimes we are tempted to think that the earth cannot be Godsall over the globe man is the master. He claims everything. If men could map out the heavens, we would have owners for every single twinkling star and, if they could have their way, we would have to buy our light by measure, and our sunshine by weight. But, the earth is the Lords, and the fullness thereof. And the heavens are also His.   
12. The north and the south You have created them: Tabor and Hermon. East and West, as well as North and South   
12. Shall rejoice in Your name. There is not a place where God is not to be found! All the points of the compass are compassed by God. You cannot go where the Lords love reigns not, nor where Providence will not follow you.   
13-15. You have a mighty arm: strong is Your hand, and high is Your right hand. Justice and judgment are the habitation of Your Throne: mercy and truth shall go before Your face. Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound. There are some who hear it and yet are not blessed. Blessed are they who know it, know its peculiar accent, know its inward power, know its Omnipotence, know its unchangeableness, know it by having tried it and proved it and rested in it! Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound.

15. They shall walk, O LORD, in the light of Your Countenance. It is all the light they need. Let God but smile, it makes their day! If every candle were blown out, yet the favor of God would make life bright enough for them.

16. In Your name shall they rejoice all the day: and in Your righteousness shall they be exalted. Even in Gods righteousness! Until we know the Lord, we are afraid of His righteousness, but when we come to know Him, His righteousness, which once frowned upon us, becomes our Heaven! God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love. God is not unrighteous to cast away a soul that puts its trust in Christ. God is one with His people. When we rejoice all the day in His name, we are exalted in His righteousness.

17-19. For You are the glory of their strength: and in Your favor our horn shall be exalted. For the LORD is our defense; and the Holy One of Israel is our King. Then You spoke in Vision to Your holy one, and said, I have laid help upon one that is mighty; I have exalted one chosen out of the people. This is David first, but it is Christ high above David. One of ourselves, the carpenters Son, yet has God made Him to be the Head over all things for His ChurchI have exalted one chosen out of the people.

20, 21. I have found David, My servant, with My holy oil have I anointed him: with whom My hand shall be established: My arm, also, shall strengthen him. The full power of God is with Christ. That same arm that bears up the earths huge pillars and spreads the heavens abroad, is engaged on behalf of the cause and Kingdom of the Son of David.

22. The enemy shall not exact upon Him; nor the son of wickedness afflict Him. He had enough of that when He was upon the earth, but it is all over now. He has gone into His Glory and the enemy cannot touch Him.

23. And I will beat down His foes before His face and plague them that hate Him. This is the portion of all haters of Christ. God will, somehow or other, in the order of His Providence, bring the evil home to them. If they will not have Gods Son, they shall not have His mercythey shall, sooner or later, be beaten down before His face.

24, 25. But My faithfulness and My mercy shall be with Him: and in My name shall His horn be exalted. I will set His hand also in the sea, and His right hand in the rivers. He shall reign from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth. We may go on to fight for Him, for His triumph is sure!

26, 27. He shall cry unto Me, You are My Father, My God, and the rock of my salvation. Also I will make Him My first-born, higher than the kings of the earth. So He is! First-born among men, first-born of kings, His Throne is loftier than the most imperial power on the earth. Blessed be His name! Let us adore Him tonight and here, in the midst of His people, let us crown Him Lord of All!

28-36. My mercy will I keep for him forevermore, and My Covenant shall stand fast with him. His seed also will I make to endure forever, and his throne as the days of Heaven. If his children forsake My Law, and walk not in My judgments; if they break My statutes, and keep not My Commandments; then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless My loving kindness will I not utterly take from them, nor suffer My faithfulness to fail. My Covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of My lips. Once have I sworn by My holiness that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before Me. The Son of David is still King in the midst of the true Israel. Still Jesus reigns and on and on, forever and forever, great Davids greater Son shall be King of Kings, and Lord of Lords!

37. It shall be established forever as the moon, and as a faithful witness in Heaven. Selah. Now let us read a passage from the New Testament showing how the Lord Jesus dealt with the crowds that came to Him.

John 6:22-26. The day following, when the people which stood on the other side of the sea saw that there was no other boat there, save that one whereunto His disciples were entered, and that Jesus went not with His disciples into the boat, but that His disciples were gone away alone; (howbeit there came other boats from Tiberius near unto the place where they did eat bread, after that the Lord had given thanks) when the people therefore saw that Jesus was not there neither His disciples, they also took shipping and came to Capernaum, seeking for Jesus. And when they had found Him on the other side of the sea, they said unto Him, Rabbi, when did You comer here? Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, You seek Me not because you saw the miracles, but because you did eat of the loaves, and were filled. Mixed motives bring multitudes together. How true our Master was! How outspoken! He never tried to win a disciple by holding back the truthand often He spoke very plainly, indeed, as on this occasionYou seek Me not because you saw the miracles, but because you did eat of the loaves, and were filled.

27. Labor not for the meat which perishes, but for that meat which endures unto everlasting life, which the Son of Man shall give unto you: for Him has God the Father sealed. He seemed to say to them, Do not come to Me for bread and fish. I have given you that. Come for something better. Come to Me for spiritual foodfood for your soulsfood for eternity! It is with that objective that we should go to the House of Godnot to listen to this preacher or thatbut to hear the Word of God, that we may live thereby.

28. Then said they unto Him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? What are the best works that we can do? What are the most acceptable? I wonder what they expected Christ to say? I am sure they did not look for the answer that they received.

29. Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that you believe on Him whom He has sent. The greatest, the best, the most acceptable work in all the world is that you come and trust Christ! This saves younothing else will do so. This is the work of God, that you believe on Him whom He has sent.

30, 31. They said therefore unto Him, What sign do You show, then, that we may see and believe You? What do You work? Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from Heaven to eat. See how they came round to the old subject, againbread to eat? The Lord Jesus Christ may point them to something higher and better, but their carnal minds always return to that congenial topicsomething to eat. Their stomach was lord of their heart!

32. Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from Heaven; but My Father gives you the true Bread from Heaven. That which will really feed you and feed you for all eternity. Moses could not give the people that breadonly the Father can give the true Bread from Heaven.

33. For the Bread of God is He which comes down from Heaven and gives life unto the world. The Bread of God is He. What a strange expression, yet what a true one! The Bread of Heaven is Christ, Himself! You must come and take Him to yourself and trust Him for your salvation and in that way feed upon Him, or you can never have the heavenly Bread which both gives life and sustains life.

34-39. Then said they unto Him, Lord, evermore give us this bread. And Jesus said unto them, I am the Bread of life. He that comes to Me shall never hunger; and He that believes on Me shall never thirst. But I said unto you, That you also have seen Me and believe not. All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me, and him that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from Heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him that sent Me. And this is the Fathers will which has sent Me, that of all which He has given Me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. See how the salvation of Christ reaches right to the end of all things? You and I may die, but though we lie a while in the grave, the salvation of Christ will preserve us, to raise us up, again, at the Last Day! There shall not be a bone nor a piece of a bone, of a true Believer, left in the enemies land. All Israel and all that belongs to Israel shall come out of this Egypt, through the blood of the Lambnot a hoof shall be left behind.

40. And this is the will of Him that sent Me that everyone which sees the Son, and believes on Him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the Last Day. May all of us see the Son and believe on Him, that we may have everlasting life, and that He may raise us up at the Last Day, for His dear names sake! Amen.

HYMNS FROM OUR OWN HYMN BOOK492, 538, 658.   
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THE BIG GATES WIDE OPEN   
NO. 2954

A SERMON   
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 1905.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, JUNE 6, 1875.

**All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me; and him that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out.   
John 6:37.**

A COUNTRY gentleman is expecting a number of persons to come and dine with him. He has as little side swing-gate at the entrance to the park through which people generally come, but, on the day when he expects company, he says to one of his men, John, be sure that you set the big gates wide open, for we are expecting several people to come in. And that is the order which I have received from my MasterHe is expecting company! The evangelistic services in the South of London will, I trust, bring large numbers of people to feast with my Lord at His banqueting table and I believe it is His will that I should set the big gates wide open so that some sinners who might be passing by, would take that act as an invitation to them to come in! I feel sure that they will come in, for God is going to bring them in! He is about to stretch forth His almighty arm and to compel them to come in, that His House may be filled! So my objective in this discourse is to proclaim the fullness and freeness of the Grace of Godin the hope that some may be led to come to Christ and so to obtain eternal life!

But, first, our text sets before us a rather knotty point, yet it reveals to us an excellent way of untying the knot. This is the knotty point. It would seem from the text that the Father has given some souls to Christ and not only from this text, but also from a great many other passages of Scripture it is clear that God has a people whom He has chosen unto eternal lifeand that Christ has redeemed a people from among men. It is no use trying to shut your eyes to this Truth of God, as some do, for it is there. And unless we really wish to twist the plain meaning of words and to make something out of Scripture which Scripture does not naturally teach, we shall never be able to escape from the Doctrine of Divine Predestinationthe Doctrine that God has foreordained certain people unto eternal life!

Now, if you like you can make any number of difficulties out of that Truth of God. If you wish to do so, here is a whole forest before you and you can easily find wood enough to make a gallows to hang yourself! It is true that if you wish to wrest the Scriptures to your own destruction, you will have to use very bad reasoning in order to do itbut it will be no worse reasoning than many other people have used before you. It is true that everything is predestinated and that everything that happens is ordered according to the unfailing purpose and will of Godyet you will go to bed tonight and get up tomorrow morning and go about your business, never thinking of that predestination, but, acting like people of common sense, guided by the ordinary rules of sound judgment. That is to say, you will do that in ordinary matters, but there are some of you who will not act in the same sensible way in spiritual thingsyou will twist this Doctrine around and look at it in all manner of strange ways till you are dizzy with gazing at it and trying to make some excuse out of it for not coming to Jesus Christ!

My text, however, cuts the ground from under your feet, if you seek to act thus, for it tells you this, which is all you need to know, that all who are Gods chosen ones may be known by this markthat they come to Christ. Just as He said, All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me. So that those who come to Christ are Gods chosen people and those who live and die without coming to Christ are not Gods people. If you come to Christ and trust in Him, you are one of those whom the Father gave to His Son. If you refuse to come to Christit matters not what excuse you may makeyour blood will be upon your own head. You will perish if you do not come to Christ! And if you do not come to Him, it will be because you were not one of His sheep and neither did the Father give you to Christ. Rowland Hill, when he was asked to preach only to the elect, said that he would do so if somebody would chalk them on the back. That cannot be done. But God does, in process of time, mark them allnot on the back, but on the heart! He that believes on the Son has everlasting life and his faith proves that he was chosen of God to that life! But he that believes not on the Son, if he persists in that unbelief, will assuredly perish, for there shall be no deviation from this Divine declaration, He that believes and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believes not shall be damned. That is the matter with which we have to deal. May God help us, like prudent men, to deal with it earnestly!

I. Leaving that knotty point altogether, I notice in our gloriously free and open text, Him that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out, that there is A NECESSARY ACT and that is, that we come to Christ.

Before we go any further, let me ask, How many of us have come to Christ? I believe that by far the larger proportion of those now present have done so and I am grateful that I am able to believe that. If any of you who have thought of coming to the Lords Table have never come to Christ, I implore you not to come to the Communion until you are truly converted. None have any right to the sacred emblems but those who have already enjoyed true communion with Christ by believing in Him! If you have not come to Christ, you must not act as if you had done so, for that would not benefit you and it would insult the Lord and bring great guilt upon your own conscience. No, Brothers and Sisters, we must came to Jesus Christthat is our one business if we would be savedto come to Christ is not only the main point in it, but it is the top, bottom, middle and whole of it!

What is it to come to Christ? asks someone. Here I feel a solemn trembling come over me, for too often in trying to explain what faith is, and what coming to Christ is, we darken counsel by words without knowledge and God forbid that I should do that! Look at the words which Christ used, Him, that comes to Me. He speaks of an action, a movement, but not of an action or movement of the body, for there were many who came to Christ in a physical sense, but they were not saved by such a coming as that. This coming is an action, or movement, or turning of the mind. You know readily enough what it is for the mind to come to such-and-such a point. But observe that the pith of the matter lies here, Him that comes to Me. Saving faith is a coming to Christto the Person of Christit is not merely to believe that Christ is God, though you must believe that if you would be saved. It is not merely to believe that Christ is a Sacrifice for sin, though you must believe that, too. It is not merely to believe that Christ lived, and died, and rose again for our salvation, though those three blessed facts must be believed. But it is to COME TO HIM. If you had seen Him when He uttered these words, perhaps you would have understood them better, for there He stood, the Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with griefthe very Person of whom John the Baptist had said, Behold the Lamb of God which takes away the sin of the world.

Jesus Christ says, Him that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out. Everybody knows what it is for the mind to trust in a Doctrine, but you will perish if you trust only to Doctrine! The true way of salivation is trusting to the living Person of Jesus Christ who is the God-appointed Savior. Perhaps some of you know what it is to trust to Baptism, Confirmation, sacramentbut you will perish if you trust only to them. You must come, not to them, to sprinkling or immersion, or the mass or to the Communionbut to HIM, to the Christ who, upon the accursed Cross, has made expiation for all who trust in Him! You must come, by faith, to that Cross and accept Him as your Substitute. He has gone up into Heaven, but He is pleading there for sinnersand you must dart the eyes of your mind upwards to Him in such a way that you will trust in Him who has risen from the dead and gone up into Glory. That is coming to Christthe mind resting in His Person and in His atoning Sacrifice.

It is clear, too, that when we come to a certain thing, we come from something else, so that coming to Christ implies that you leave something behind. And he who would be saved must leave behind the sins he formerly loved. He must come to the Holy Savior to be made holy. He must come to sit at Jesus feet to learn His commands and to be willing to obey them. Jesus Christ will not save any man who abides in his sinsHe came to save His people from their sins. The salvation of Jesus Christ is a salvation not merely from the guilt and the penalty of sin, but from the sin, itselffrom the foulness and degradation of it. If we would come to Christ, we must come away from sin. Repentance must make us turn from sin, and faith must make us turn to Christand we must also come away from self-righteousness if we are to come to Christ. It is very difficult for some people to part with their self-righteousness. They have looked in the mirror till they are in love with themselves and they cannot bear to be separated from their beloved self. They feel so good, so proper, so respectable, so excellent, so amiable, so lovely and so dear to themselves that they would gladly hang their self-righteousness about their neck and embrace it as long as they can! But, Sirs, you must come away from it! You must learn to look at it as a loathsome thing and such it would appear to you if you could see it in the light in which God sees it! And you must give up every trust except trust in the Lord Jesus Christ. This, then, is coming to Himcoming away from your sinful self and your righteous selfand putting your trust alone in the one great Surety and Substitute for sinners!

When we come to a person in the full sense of the word, come, we also stay with that person. If I walk past a man in the street, I have certainly come to him in a sense. But I have also gone beyond him and so I have also gone from him. But when a soul really comes to Christ, that soul stays with Christ and rests in Him. Does it not need anything else? No. Surely it needs some more holiness? No. Does it not need a fuller pardon? No. Does it not need additional support? No. Does it not need some addition to its robe of righteousness? No. Does it not need another washing? No, for the Apostle says to those who have come to Christ, You are compete in Him. Having come to Him, you stay with Him and rest in Him. The saved soul does not take temporary lodgings with Christ, but abides in Him!

Now, dear Friends, I cannot put this question personally to everyone of you, but you can, each one, put it to yourselves, Have you come to Jesus Christ? That is to say, is He your only confidence, or have you any other hope? Are you trusting in Jesus Christ alone? If so, you have come to Him and the promise in the text is yoursHim that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out.

II. This brings us to the next point which is A NEEDLESS FEAR BANISHED.   
There are some persons who say that they would gladly come to Christ but they fear that if they did come to Him, He would reject them. Ask them why and one of them says, I am too old to come to Christ. Will you kindly read the text, my venerable Friend? Him that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out. Now, if Christ cast out anyone who came to Him because he was too old, the text would not be true! There is nothing written between the linesyou may look as long as you like, but you will not find there anything like this, Him that comes to Me up to 75 years of age, I will in no wise cast out. Christ says nothing of the kind! If you were a 100 years oldif you were two hundredit would make no difference to Him! He would still say, Him that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out.   
Perhaps another says, I am too young to come to Christ. Possibly there are some children here who have had the thought in their minds, We are too young to come to Christ. But that cannot be, for He said, They that seek Me early shall find Me. And He also said, Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not. You cannot possibly be to too young to come to Christ, for He says, Him that comes to Meand He intends that the youngest one who comes should be includedI will in no wise cast out.   
Many persons, however, see no difficulty as far as they are concerned, but they suppose that there is some difficulty because of their position. May I come? one asks, I am so very poor. The poorer you are, the more welcome you are to come! There is not a syllable here about property. Christ simply says, Him that comes to Me. It does not matter though you come in rags, or though you come in the workhouse suit whatever your outward appearance may be is of no consequence to our blessed Lord! Though you are as poor as poverty, itself, if anybody has any preference, I think that you will be all the more welcome to Jesus Christ because of that very poverty, for of old it was especially mentioned that the poor had the Gospel preached to them! And God has often chosen the poor of this world and made them, by His Grace, rich in faith. Come along with you, my poor Brothers and Sisters!   
Oh! says another, but it is not poverty that is the difficulty with me, it is my lack of education. Well, my Friend, I am very sorry for you if you cannot read or write. That is a misfortune for you in many ways, but it has nothing to do with your salvation! I should think that there were very few of the early Christians who could read or write. Certainly, those who put up the inscriptions over the tombs in the Catacombs made all sorts of mistakes in spelling and grammarand I suppose that they were as well educated as the most of the Christians who were buried there. What has the Gospel of Christ to do with education? You do not need a degree from a universityyou do not need to be a master of arts, or bachelor of arts, in order to find Christ! Knowledge sometimes misleads in spiritual things. I would not commend ignorance, but certainly it is a fact that the shepherds of Bethlehem, when they wanted to see the newborn King, went straight to Him, but the wise men from the East went a long way round before they came to Him. Augustine used to say, While Pharisees and philosophers are fumbling to find the latch of Gods door, the poor and illiterate have entered into the Kingdom of Heaven. If you did but believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and did but rest yourself wholly upon Him, even if you were half an idiot, Christ would not cast you out! Yes, if there were only a faint glimmer of intelligence within your soul, yet if there were enough to catch the flame of faith, you would be savedso let not that matter keep any of you back!

Ah, says another, I should not be kept back by such a thing as that, but it is my past character that is my hindrance. Well, dear Friend, I will not enquire into your past character, but will take it for granted that it has been as bad as it could be. Yet, even then, what does Christ say in our text? Does He say anything about character? No, He simply says, Him that comes to Me. And if the person who comes to Him should have committed every crime of which it is possible for humanity to be guilty, my text would not allow even him to be excluded! I do bless my Lord and Master that He did not put any exclusions or exceptions here. Neither thief, nor drunk, nor harlot, nor adulterer, nor even murderer is shut out here! Him that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out. So it stands and so it shall remain. If he will but come to Christ, he cannot be cast out on account of his sins! But his sins, which are many, shall all be forgiven himhe shall be pressed to the heart of everlasting Love and the kiss of pardon shall be imprinted upon his cheek!   
I fancy that I hear someone else say, I have not been guilty of any of those gross sins. I have almost wishedthough perhaps it is a wicked wishthat I had been, for then I think I could feel more than I do now. Through the gracious arrangements of Providence I have been kept from gross outward sin and I cannot feel what I want to feel of repentance. No, dear Friend, but the Lord does not ask you to repent of sins that you have not committed. Just look at what you have done and do not wish that your sin was any greater than it is, for that would, indeed, be a wrong thing. I do look at what I have done, says one, yet I cannot repent. And do you expect to repent before you come to Christ? Is that your idea of the Gospel plan? The Gospel, as I understand it, isto quote Joseph Harts well known lines   
*True belief and true repentance,   
Every Grace that brings us nigh,   
Without money,   
Come to Jesus Christ and buy.*   
I also remember that Peter said to the high priest concerning Christ, Him has God exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, for to give (mark that term, to give) repentance. It is not for you to bring repentance to Him, but to come to Him for it! Some of you have been looking to the Law to make you conscious of your sin. Do you not know that   
*Law and terrors do but harden   
All the while they work alone?*   
But if you will come to Jesus and trust in Him, then   
*A sense of blood-bought pardon   
Will dissolve the heart of stone.*   
You are to trust Jesus for a new heart, for repentance, for a tender conscienceif you cannot come to Him with them, come to Him for them. O you broken-hearted, come to Christ but do not plead your broken hearts! And you who want to have your hearts broken, come to Christ to break them! He is able, with the mighty hammer of His Gospel Grace, to break the heart of stone!   
Ah, says another, I believe I have come to Christ. I know that I do wish to have Him as my only trust, but I have not the experience that I have read about in others. I have read of some people being dreadfully cut up, distressed and alarmed under a sessions of sin, but I have not been like that. Whoever said that you should be? Listen again to the text, Him that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out. Does Christ say anything about experience, law-work and all that sort of thing? Blessed be God, though men may set up those barriers around the Cross of Christ, the Lord has not set them up! If you come to Him, if you are trusting in Him, whatever your experience may be or may not be, He will notHe cannot cast you out! There are certain preachers whom I have heard who seem to me to be wonderfully busy trying to shut sinners out of the Kingdom of God! They are terribly afraid that more people should get saved than ought to be. They look upon Heaven as a sort of close borough into which a certain number of £10 householders may be admitted, but nobody else! They are dreadfully afraid lest there should be found in the Heavenly fold one that is not the Lord Jesus Christs sheep. Such a fear as that never yet penetrated my heartI bless His name that I have an ardent longing that many may come to Jesusand I think that kind of spirit ought to be in all Christians, for Christs words suggest it, Him that comes to menot one special sort of him or any other sort, but any him who comes, whoever he may beI will in no wise cast out.   
Ah, says another, but I have such a little faith. Bless God that you have even a little! Have I not often told you that if you have only starlight, you should bless God for it and He will give you moonlight? And if you have moonlight and bless God for it, He will give you daylight? Be thankful for any genuine faith that you possess! Does Christ say, Him that comes to Me with a great faith? No, Brothers and Sisters, if you come to Christ with only a grain of faith in your heart, the text must shut you init cannot shut you out! Do but come to Christ. Do but trust in Him and, however feeble your faith, if it is but sincere faith in Jesus, you are saved by Him, for He is all your salvation and all your desire! It is not the strength of your faith that saves you, but the strength of Him upon whom you rely! Christ is able to save you if you come to Himbe your faith weak or be it strong.   
But, I think I hear another say, I am afraid I am not one of the elect. I have already answered that objection. If you believe in Jesus Christ, you are one of the elect! Beyond all doubt, if you come to Him, He cannot shut you out because of some secret reason, for He has said, I will in no wise that is, for no reason and in no way, and nevercast you out. Therefore, there cannot be any secret reason in that unopened book of destiny for your being shut out. If you do but come to Christ, He must receive you, or He will have broken His Wordand that He can never do!   
But, says another, if I come to Christ, I should never hold on to Him. That is very likely, but suppose He held you on, what then? Ah, but I should not have the strength to persevere. But suppose that nobody on earth or in Hell can separate you from Him, for, He keeps the feet of His saints, what then? Suppose when you come to Him, He says to you, I give unto you eternal life and you shall never perish, neither shall any pluck you out of My hands? Why, Soul, as you have not to take the first step in salvation of yourself without Christ, so you have not to take the second, or the third, or the fourth, or any other step! You must rest only in Him for the whole of the way between here and Heaven! I believe that if you and I were to get as far as the very doorstep of Heavenif we were to get our fingers on the latch of the gatewe would never get in if the Grace of God did not take us the last inch of the way! But then, the Grace of God will do this. Trust in Jesus, for   
*His honor is engaged to save   
The meanest of His sheep   
All that His Heavenly Father gave,   
His hands securely keep.   
Not death, nor Hell, shall ever remove   
His favorites from His breast   
In the dear bosom of His love   
They must forever rest.*   
So, any him in all the world and any her, also, if they do but come to Christ shall not be cast out!   
III. We have seen, in the text, first, a necessary act. And next, a needless fear banished. Now we are to see A MOST REASONABLE CONFIDENCE SUGGESTED.   
I hope that there are many here who desire to be saved. If so, let them remember what the Apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthians, Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation. I trust that you all understand that the whole process of salvation, so far as you are concerned, is for you to give up every reliance except reliance upon the Lord Jesus Christ and His finished work. It has often been said that there are but two steps to Heavenand that those two are but oneout of self and into Christ. If you are, at this moment, holding on to any other confidence, I pray you to let go of it and drop into the arms of Jesus! And knowfor God has said itthat the instant you believe in Jesus, you are saved! At that instant there is conferred upon you a share in the Divine Life which will never die out. At the same moment there is taken from you the whole mass of your sin so that it cannot condemn you and will never return upon you. There is also imputed to you a perfect righteousness which shall never be taken from youand in this spotless robe you may boldly stand even at the last Great Judgment Day!   
Can we not all come, just now, and trust Jesus Christ? I mean not only you who have never trusted Christ before, but I would gladly hope that all of us who have believed in Jesus Christ would begin trusting in Him again. I wonder how many times I have had to begin my spiritual life over again at the foot of the Cross? I am always doing it and I am never so happy, so safe, or, I believe, so holy, as when I stand just as I did at firstat the foot of the Cross and look up, and say to my dear Lord and Savior   
*Nothing in my hands I bring   
Simply to Your Cross I cling.*   
If any Brother or Sister thinks that he has become perfect, he can appear in that character better than I can, for I cannot go to God in that fashion. The moment I think I am getting on in the higher life, if I go back to the Cross, my higher life all vanishes! In fact I have no higher life. I have nothing but what Christ gives meI am a wretched, miserable beggar dependent upon Him for everything! And I am never so right before Him as when I feel that it is so and just look to Him as I did when I first came to Him and put my trust in Him. Some brethren have a dreadful tumble because they have been building up their pretty little fancied experiences something like what I have seen on the top of a mountain. Certain people always want to see a little further than anyone else can, so they build a little wooden platform and stand on that. It is, no doubt, very delightful to stand up there and feel that you are so many feet higher than anybody else. But that platform gets rotten, in time, and all of a sudden it breaksand all on it come down with it and they are very apt to say that the mountain itself is crumbling! Nonsense, the mountain is all right, but you tried to get above the mountain! If you had kept down where you ought to have beenon the granite rockyou would not have tumbled. I charge every child of God to strive after perfect holiness with all his might, but never to think that he has gotten any further then this Jesus Christ is All-in-All to me and I am nothing at all apart from Him. On Him do I hang and in Him alone do I trust.

The comfortable assurance of the text is this, If Jesus Christ will not cast me out, He will take me in. He must do either the one or the other, there is no middle course. I never read of anybody but those He blesses and those He cursesthose to whom He is a savor of life and those to whom He is a savor of death. Then, as I just said, if He will not cast me out, I know what He will doHe will take me in, He will wash me, He will cleanse me, He will clothe me, He will feed me, He will reveal Himself to me, He will make me His brother and His friend, He will keep me in life, keep me in death and bring me to be with Him where He is, that I may behold His Glory!   
Now, who will begin with Jesus, or begin again with Jesus? By His Grace, I will! Savior, I have no confidence but in Your precious blood. I have preached Your Gospel for many a year and, by so doing, have been the means of bringing many sinners to Youbut this I count less than nothing as the groundwork of my hope of eternal lifefor that I rest on You, and on You alone!   
Now, Sinners, come along, and may the Holy Spirit graciously lead you to do as we are now doing. And then, as you go your way, each one of you can say, He will never cast me out, for I have come to Him. Trust Jesus, I implore you. He is worthy of your trust, for He is the Son of God and He has died to put away the guilt of all who trust Him! I wish someone would say, I have tried to save myself, but I cannot do it. I will trust Him to do it and I believe that He can, and that He will. Ah, my Friend, you will never be disappointed if you make such a blessed resolve as that! May God, by His Grace, enable you to do itand to Him shall be praise forever and ever! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON:   
**ISAIAH 55.**

Verse 1. Ho, everyone that thirsts, come you to the waters, and he that has no money; come you, buy, and eat; yes, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. The description of Gospel blessings grows sweeter as it advances. Waters first. Wine and milk nextand still all without money and without price.

2. Why do you spend money for that which is not bread? And your labor for that which satisfies not? Hearken diligently unto Me, and eat that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. All your largest desires you long for, you will find in Christ! You shall have not only necessities, but delicacies, delights that shall satisfy you to the fullest! You shall not be able to conceive of anything that shall be more rich and full than the Grace of God.

3. Incline your ear and come unto Me. This is the gate by which salvation enters into manEar Gate, by hearing and believingIncline your ear, bend it forward as if you would catch every word and come unto Me.

3. Hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an Everlasting Covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David. Only think of a Covenant made with needy sinners, thirsty sinners. God shaking hands with guilty men in the Person of Jesus Christ. It is a sure Covenant, too. Not made up of ifs and, buts and, perhapsesbut a Covenant sealed with blood and signed by Him who gives an oath with it that He will never turn from it, that you may have strong consolation.

4. Behold, I have given Him for a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people. He who is our greater David comes to us to bear witness of the Immutable Love of God and to be to us our Captain and our King. Happy are the souls that accept this David to be their Leader. You remember how David, in the cave Adullam, gathered to himself everyone that was in distress, and everyone that was in debt, and everyone that was discontented, and he became a captain over them. Even so, the great Antitype, Davids Son and Davids Lord is now willing to gather to Himself those who are spiritually bankrupt, discontented and weary with the world! And God says, I have given Him for a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people.

5. Behold, You shall call a nation that You know not, and nations that knew You not shall run unto You because of the LORD Your God, and for the Holy One of Israel; for He has glorified You. What joy this gives to you who love Him! Jehovah has glorified His Son and given to Him the power to call to Himself a people that He knew not in a saving sense, and He shall so call nations that knew Him not that they shall run to Him. We do not preach the Gospel, dear Brothers, at haphazardwe are sure of results. If we speak in faith, in the name of Christ men must be saved! They must run to Christ. It is not left to their optionthere is a Divine hand that secretly touches the springs of the will of men so that when Christ calls them, they run to Him! Oh, that He would just now call them, even those that are furthest off, that they may run to Him and that He may be glorified!

6. Seek you the LORD while He may be found. In these happy Gospel times when Christ is set forth on purpose that He may be found.   
6. Call you upon Him while He is near. And He is very near when the Gospel is preached with holy unction, when Christians are praying, when hearts are breaking for the conversion of sinners and when His Spirit is working in their hearts that they may repent of sin!   
7. Let the wicked forsake his way. It is a bad way. It is a downward way. It is a way that will end in destruction! Do not follow it any longer Let the wicked forsake his way.   
7. And the unrighteous man his thoughts. Thoughts! says one, we shall not be hanged for our thoughts. Oh, but you may be damned for your thoughts! No man has really forsaken the way of wickedness until he hates the very thought of wickedness! If your thoughts run after evil, your tongues will soon utter evil and your hands will soon do evil.   
7. And let him return. He is like one who has wandered from his fathers houselet him return. He is like the dove that flew away from Noahs ark and was ready to faintlet him return.   
7. Unto the LORD, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon. What a blessed word, abundantly, is here! Abundant pardon to cover abundant sin! Abundant provocation, abundant rejection of His Word!   
8. ForSays God, as if He would not leave the Prophet to speak any longer on His behalf, He Himself appears upon the scene and speaks! For  
8. My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, says the LORD. No doubt He refers here to the pardon of sin. Our thoughts are narrow. We find it hard to forgive great offenses, to forgive many offenses, to forgive many offenders, to continue completely to forgiveall this is very difficult to men.   
9. For as the Heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts. Think of the biggest thought you ever had concerning Gods forgiveness of sins. Try again. Let your thoughts rise still higheryou cannot have reached the utmost height, for as the Heavens are higher than the earth, so are His thoughts and ways higher than yours!   
10, 11. For as the rain comes down, and the snow from Heaven, and returns not there, but waters the earth, and makes it bring forth and bud, and gives seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: so shall My word be that goes forth out of My mouth: it shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it. If you believe this great promise, you shall have the full benefit of it. Let this gracious rain drop on you and it must refresh you! Let these blessed snowflakes come down on you, and they shall melt into your bosom and remain there to bless you forever! They shall not go back to God with their mission unfulfilled. As for us who preach that Word, or teach it in the Sunday school, we may have a full assurance that we shall not labor in vain nor spend our strength for nothing. No, no, the raindrops go not on an errand that can fail and the snowflakes that fall to the earth accomplish the end for which they are sent! Much more shall the purpose of Gods Word be accomplished! Behold, it drops like the gentle rain! The messages of mercy fly like snowflakes from the lips of the Lord, Himself, and they shall not fall in vain, blessed be His holy name!   
12. For you shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. There shall seem to be joy everywhere when there is joy in your heart. When you receive Christ, you have put everything around you into its true position. The whole Creation is a vast organ and man puts his tiny fingers on the keys and evokes thunders of harmony to the praise of God! When the heart is filled with joy and peace, mountains and hills break forth before us into singing and all the trees of the field clap their hands!   
13. Instead of the thorn. Which is everywhere today, pricking our feet and maiming our handInstead of the thorn   
13. Shall come up the fir tree. There is the thorn? I see it upon the bleeding brows of Christ! He has taken it away and worn it as a crown!   
13. And instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to Jehovah for a name. It shall make men know what He is like, what gracious power He has, what goodness dwells in Him! It shall be to Jehovah for a name.   
13. For an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off. That sign is exhibited today in the eyes of men. An evil and adulterous generation called for a sign and this is the sign that God has givenHis converting Grace in His Church. Instead of miracles, we have the work of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of sinners and if any will not believe when this sign is sent to them, neither would they believe though one rose from the dead! It stands as an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.

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**NO. 3000 OR, COME AND WELCOME   
NO. 3000**

**A SERMON   
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, AUGUST 9, 1906.**

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON** ,   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON THURSDAY EVENING, AUGUST 19, 1876.

*Him that comes to Me, I will in no wise cast out. John 6:37.*

[This Sermon is the 3000th that has been published in regular weekly succession since No. 1, The Immutability of God, was issued in January, 1856. The Lords-Day morning Sermons, with many of those preached in the evening, were published during Mr. Spurgeons lifetime. The rest of the evening Sermons are now being issued and there are still sufficient unpublished manuscripts to last for some years. The whole of the 3000 Sermons are kept in stock, and any quantity of any of them can be obtained of the publishers, Messrs. Passmore a Alabaster, Paternoster Buildings, London, EC. No. 3000 has been especially selected in harmony with Mr. Spurgeons custom of issuing, on such memorable occasions, a striking and simple Sermon that might be even more widely distributed than the ordinary issues. Those previously published have been as follows: Volume 17, NUMBER ONE THOUSANDOR, BREAD ENOUGH AND TO SPARE; Volume 25, NUMBER 1500OR, LIFTING UP THE BRONZE SERPENT; Volume 33, NUMBER 2000OR, HEALING BY THE STRIPES OF JESUS; Volume 43, NUMBER 2500OR, ENTRANCE AND EXCLUSION. The publishers are always pleased to quote special terms for quantities, and to send post free to all applicants their Textual Index of over 2900 Sermons, and a full List of C. H. Spurgeons books at reduced prices. It is almost needless to say that in the whole history of religious literature, there has never before been such an event as the issue of 3000 of one Preachers Sermons in weekly numbers for nearly 52 years! It is a remarkable fact that more than 750 of these Sermons have been published since Dr. Spurgeon was called Home on January 31, 1892. Will all believing readers pray for the Lords blessing upon the whole of the 3000 Sermons now issued?] [Thought you might enjoy this quote of the publishers EOD]

WHILE I was trying to prepare a sermon for this evening, someone called at my doorI daresay the friend is here tonight, (I hope so)and left this little noteI entreat you to pray, especially this evening, for a most unhappy casefor one who is in great agony of mind, that God, in His Infinite Mercy, would send one ray of light into the dark soul. Please ask all the converted ones in your congregation to pray for me, that Grace may be restored to a most unhappy soul. Well, I am sure that all Christians here will earnestly pray that the light may break into the thick darkness and that the troubled spirit may find rest, but, after all, there is a very strong temptation to a heart in trouble to rest in the prayers of others rather than to go immediately to Christ for relief. Yet all the prayers in the world cannot, by themselves, help a man who is in despair. The light can never come into that dungeon except through one windowand that is a window through which the tearful eyes may always lookthe window of everlasting love as revealed in the atoning Sacrifice of Jesus Christ!

I thought that the text which I have selected might, by the blessing of the Spirit of God, be made the means of comfort, not only to that person who wrote to me, but to many others who may be seeking the Savior. There was also another circumstance which led me to select this text. A gentleman who pressed my hand very earnestly one day, said to me, Do you remember preaching at the sawmills in the Old Kent Road? I replied, Yes. I also remember it, he said, indeed, I can never forget it. You preached from this text, There shall in no wise enter into it anything that defiles. My comfort was that towards the close of the sermon, you said, I have preached upon this terrible no wise. Now, before I have done, I will preach upon a blessed no wise, and then you began to talk to us about that text, Him that comes to Me, I will in no wise cast out, and that message yielded me comfort which I have never lost.

Well, medicine that has worked so well in one case may, perhaps, be just as efficacious in another. And if the Holy Spirit blessed the text when it was only brought in at the end of a sermon, perhaps He will bless it even more, now that we set it in the very forefront of our discourse. No, we know that He will, for we have asked His blessing upon it and, therefore, we expect the blessing to come. Dear Friend in trouble of soul, I hope it will come to you!

I. I am going to make five brief observations upon this passage, Him that comes to Me, I will in no wise cast out. The first observation is that OUR TEXT IS FROM THE LIPS OF JESUS HIMSELF.

And because Christ Himself said it, we dare not doubt that it is absolutely true. Imagine that you see Him standing here just nowthat same Jesus who fed the multitude and loved the souls of men even unto death. And then imagine that you hear these words from His lips which are like lilies dropping sweet-smelling myrrh. Oh, with what wondrous accents would He say, Him that comes to Me, I will in no wise cast out! I can but feebly repeat what He must have uttered in the purest heavenly tones, yet I still pray you to remember that it is Jesus who still speaks to you, from His Word, even from Heaven! Do not dare to doubt this, or to question the truth of what He said. It was true before He died, but now that He has sealed His testimony with His most precious blood and proved His love to sinners by laying down His life for them, oh, do not doubt the truth of His utterance, but confide fully in Him who thus speaks to you from Heaven!

The message, Him that comes to Me, I will in no wise cast out, must be true, for it fell from the lips of Jesus! And next, it is eminently consistent with His Character. You cannot conceive of Him as casting out a soul that came to Him! The scribes and Pharisees brought to Him a woman taken in the very act of adultery, yet He did not condemn her, but said to her, Go, and sin no more.

*His heart is made of tenderness;*

*His heart melts with love.*   
He was sometimes angry, but it was with self-sufficient Pharisees and self-righteous hypocrites who flaunted their lies before His facebut He wept over the doomed city of Jerusalem. He had a gentle word for the woman in the city who was a sinner, and tender compassion for the little ones that were brought to Him. To those who would have driven them away, He said, Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not; for of such is the Kingdom of God. Look up into His face and then look upon His hands and His feet which still bear the scars of His passion and ask yourselves, Is it consistent with the Character of Christwith the heart of Christwith the Person of Christwith the great objective for which He came to this earthfor Him to cast out any soul that comes to Him? No, the words of our text must be true, for Jesus uttered them and His whole life tallies with them!

Remember, too, that when Jesus spoke these words, He spoke as One who knew everything. If you and I make a promise, or a statement concerning our future mode of procedure, we may not be aware of the position in which we may one day be placedand it may become impossible for us to keep the promise. Or the course of action which we thought we would surely follow may become too difficult for us. But our Lord Jesus Christ knew all thingsall things about Himself and all things about sinnersand when He said, Him that comes to Me, I will in no wise cast out, He included all possible contingencies with regard to Himselfif there can be any contingencies with Himand all possible contingencies that have to do with those who come to Him. He knew what was in man, and He also knew what was in His own heart and, therefore, when He spoke, He spoke deliberately and accuratelyand with full knowledge of all the surroundings and circumstances of those who would come to Him!

Let me also remind you, Brothers and Sisters, that this message has been true up to now. What Jesus said to these Jews has stood fast for more than 18 Centuries. There is not a sinner, now living, who can bear testimony that he has come to Christ and that Christ has cast him out. There is not a soul in Hell that, with all the fully-developed sin of that dreadful place, dares, even in blasphemy, to say, I came to Jesus and He cast me out. Nor shall there ever live in the universe one soul, however guilty and defiled, that shall be able to truthfully say, I came to Him, but He shut up His heart of compassion against me and cast me out.

Well, if it is sothat Jesus spoke this message and, therefore, it is true. If it is just, like He and exactly according to His whole method of procedure, then let us believe it and let us plead it! If you want to come to Him, but have the haunting fear that He may, perhaps, cast you out, oh, lay hold upon Him and say to Him, Lord, You have said, Him that comes to Me, I will in no wise cast out. Remind Him of His own words! Plead His promise and you will never find Him run back from it, or revoke the word which has gone forth out of His lips! In your direst despair, when it seems as if He frowned upon youwhen you call unto Him and yet receive no answerwhen, as He spoke to the Syrophenician woman, He seems to give you harsh words instead of gracious promiseslay hold upon Him, grasp the hem of His garment and say to Him, I will not let You go, for You have said, Him that comes to Me, I will in no wise cast out. Lo, I come to You! I know You cannot liegive me a welcome, or else I shall die. I know You cannot be false to Your word and here, if I perish, I will perish pleading the precious promise on which my soul would gladly stay herself!

II. The next observation is thisTHESE WORDS WERE SPOKEN IN THE SINGULAR. Him that comes to Me.   
This is all the more remarkable because the first part of the verse is in the pluralAll that the Father gives Me shall come to Me.And, naturally and grammatically, the second clause should run, and those that come to Me I will in no wise cast out. But it is not so worded. There is a change from the plural to the singular and Jesus says,

Him that comes to Me, I will in no wise cast out. And, I think, with admirable reason, for the Lord is always wise even in the choice of numbers and there is a motive for this change.   
It may be thishere is personality recognized. You have been one of a crowd before, but you are all alone now. You used to think of a sort of national Christianity and say, Yes, we are all Christians because we are Englishmen. But you know better than that now. You used to reckon that you might consider yourself a Christian because your father and mother were godly peopleyou belonged to a Christian family. But you know better than that now. You know that the mere hereditary faith which comes to men by natural birth is of no spiritual value, for that which is born of the flesh is flesh. You must be born-again. You feel one by yourselfto use an old metaphor, you are like the wounded stag which retires into the glades of the forest to bleed and die alone. I daresay, when you now hear a sermon, if it is full of threats, you think that it is all meant for you. You have begun to read the Bible and to look for texts that may speak to you. And though, as yet, you have not lighted on a promise that seems like a lone star to shine especially for you, yet you are looking for such a promise and you hope that you will find it. At any rate, you are now cut loose from everything and everybody elseyou feel yourself to be a separate individual that is to be judged, before long, before the bar of God and, you fear to be cast away forever beneath His wrath. Think nowJesus puts this message in the singularHim that comes to Me, I will in no wise cast out, and you, also, are in the singular! Does not this message just suit your personality?   
It is very possible that there is also in you a singularity suspected. You think that there never was anybody exactly like you. If you were like others, you would have hope, but there are certain points about your sin, certain aspects of your character and certain doubts and fears with which you are assailed which set you apart as a lot out of all catalogs. You feel that you are quite aloneyou are the odd man or the odd woman. You cannot think that even the most general promises can relate to you. You consider that the act of indemnity exempts you from its operationseven if it does not exempt anybody else, it exempts you. It is for this very reason that Jesus Christ puts the matter as He does. He speaks to you odd people, to you solitary people, to you singularities, to you odds and ends of the universe and He says, Him that comes to Methough such a man as he has never lived beforethough he is the one exception to all rules, yet, Him that comes to meany him in all the world that comes to Me, I will in no wise cast out. What a blessed thing it is that thus, by using the singular number, Christ seems to meet our suspicions of being singular and calls the singular ones, the odd ones, to come to Him!   
And here, too, perhaps, there may be a kind of desertion supposed. You think you could come to Christ if the friends of your youth were with you. You could come if a beloved teacher or a godly parent could pray with you. But, possibly, you have sinned yourself out of societyyour transgressions have made you to be like the leper whom they put outside the camp and they will not allow you to come in among the tribes of Israel lest you should pollute the rest. Well, poor leper, you that are set apartyou that feel yourself to be given up even by those who once had some sort of hope concerning youyou for whom good people scarcely venture to pray because you seem to have committed the sin which is unto deathyou have staggered their faith and disappointed all their hopes yet here still stands the text and it is addressed to you, deserted and alone as you are! If nobody will help you, and nobody will pray for youif your tears of repentance must fall in secretif everyone who hears about you thinks you are only a hypocrite, trying to whine yourself into favoryet, still come to Christ all alone, for He has said, Him that comes to Me, I will in no wise cast out!   
Perhaps this message is put in the singular for one more reason emptiness confessed. Some people, when they come to Christ, bring with them a great deal that is not worth bringing. That is a false coming. But there are others who are so destitute that they feel that if they do come to Christ, they will have to come alone because they have nothing to bring to Him. Yet Christ does not say, If you come to Me with good feelings. If you come repenting. If you come with this, or that, or another Christian excellence, I will in no wise cast you out. No! If you come to Christ as naked as you were when you were born and as naked as you will have to be when you go back to the earthif you come with nothing whatever as long as you comeChrist puts the word in the singular that it may mean you, and only youbringing with you nothing but that which is your own, namely, your sin and your misery, your emptiness, your needs, your inability, your spiritual death and everything else which now crushes you well-near to despairif you come, you, you, you, you, whoever you may beif you come to Him, He will in no wise cast you out! Thus have we tried to say something which God may bless to the comfort of the singular ones.   
III. Notice, next, that THE TEXT DESCRIBES THE PERSON COMING TO CHRIST WITH VERY WONDERFUL SIMPLICITY. Him that comes to Me. John Bunyan truly says, That means any Him in all the world. And I venture to say that it means anyone in all the world who does but come to Christ. In Christs day there were some who came to Him doubtingly, like that man who said, Lord, I believe; help You my unbelief, yet He did not cast them out! There were some who came to Jesus limping, for they were lame. There were some who came to Him with very great difficulty, for they were paralyzed in part of their bodies but they did come to Him and He did not cast them out. And there were some who came blindly. They could not see who He was, nor what He was, but, nevertheless, they came to Him and He did not cast them out because they were blind. There were some who had to be carried to Him, yet, since it was with their own consent that they were carried, as long as they did but come, He did not cast them out! One man, you remember, came to Him through the ceilinghis friends had to take away the covering of the house to let him down into the Presence of Jesus. Well, if you get to Jesus over hedge or ditch, over the wall, or through the ceiling, or down the chimneyif you do but come to Him, it matters not how you come as long as you do but come!   
IV. My fourth observation shall be thisTHE TEXT CONTAINS AN ABSOLUTE NEGATIVE. Him that comes to Me, I will in no wise cast out.  
Indeed, it is more than one negative, for it might be rendered I will not, not cast out, or, I will never, never cast out. In our language, one negative cancels another, but in the Greek language, negatives strengthen one another. Indeed, we sometimes use similar expressions and do so very properly in order to make our meaning clear and forcible, as when we sing   
*The soul that on Jesus has leaned for repose, He will not, He will not depart to his foes. That soul, though all Hell should endeavor to shake, He will never, no never, no never forsake!*   
The difficulty which many feel is thisperhaps they are not electand if they are not, then, even though they come to Jesus, He must cast them out. Now, that is supposing what never did occur, because no non-elect soul ever came to Jesus! But I need not go into that matter, for my text suffices without any explanation. Read the first part of the verseAll that the Father gives Me shall come to Me. There Christ is speaking about election and with that subject distinctly before His eyes, not forgetting the Predestination of God and His eternal will and Purpose, Jesus, knowing what He was saying, said, Him that comes to Me, I will in no wise cast out. So, Predestination and Election cannot be inconsistent with the Truth of God in this text and, though you may sometimes fear that your ship will split on that rock, it really is not a rock in the harbors mouth when Christ is the harbor! If you come to Him, you need not trouble about the secret decrees and purposes of God. There are such decrees and purposes, but they cannot, any one of them, be contrary to the Truth which Christ so explicitly declares here, Him that comes to Me, I will in no wise cast out. In the prophecy of Isaiah, the Lord says, I have not spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earth: I said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek you Me in vain. I have often blessed the Lord for that textit does not tell us what God has said, but it tells us what He has not said, and that is, that He said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek you Me in vain. He never tantalizes us! He never bids us seek Him with the reserve in His own mind that we shall not find Him. So, speaking broadly, yet truthfully, Christ says, Him that comes to Me, I will in no wise cast out. There is no secret purpose of God, nothing written in the great book of human destiny, nothing in the mysteries of eternity which can ever make this declaration of Christ untrue to you, or anyone else! Him that comes to Me, I will in no wise cast out.   
I am not troubled about that matter, says one. My difficulty is of a more practical kind. I can leave the mysteries, but there is something that I cannot leave, and that is my past sin. Well, Friend, when the Lord Jesus said, Him that comes to Me, I will in no wise cast out, He looked right down the centuries to the end of time. He did not say, Him that comes to me today, I will in no wise cast out. The declaration, Him that comes to Me, I will in no wise cast out, is as true at this moment as it was when the words first fell from Christs lips. He knew then, for He knew all things, what a sinner you would be and you were in His mind then, for that mind of His is Infinite and Divine! And He knew that there would be such a man, or such a woman, as you areand that you would sin just as you have done. Yet, taking all that into consideration, He said, Him that comes to Me, I will in no wise cast out.

I do not know what your special sin may have been. Perhaps it would be wrong for me to try to guess, but this I do know, if you come to Christ, though your sins are as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool. It may be that you have to mourn over long years of aggravated transgressionsins against light and sins against knowledge. I cannot read your life story and I do not want to read itit is sufficient for me that Jesus said, Him that comes to Me, I will in no wise cast out. If you came to Him and He cast you out because of these long years of sin, His declaration would not be true. If you had lived as long as Methuselah. If you had sinned as grossly as Manasseh. If you had lived a life of dishonesty and unchastity, yet, if you really came to Him, He could not, being a true Christ, cast you away! If all the sins that men have ever committed could be laid to the charge of one poor sinner, yet if that sinner came to Christ, He could not cast Him away! The phrase, in no wise, has such a wonderful sweep that it comprehends the grossest of crimes and the most heinous transgressions.   
Ah, says another, it is not my past sins which trouble me so much as my present hardness of heart. My heart is like the nether millstone. My eyes never weep for sin. No, I can even think of sin almost without alarm. So, dear Friend, you judge yourself, but probably your judgment is a great mistake. Yet, even were it true, remember that Christ has not said, Him that comes to Me, I will only cast out because his heart is hard, or, because he refuses to weep. He has not put in any exception! He met your case when He said, Him that comes to Me, I will in no wisenot even for that reasoncast out. If your heart is like iron, where will it ever be softened except in the furnace of His Love?   
Oh, says another, I have been thinking of my sins and I have tried to repent. Yes, but you must remember that   
*Law and terrors do but harden   
All the while they work alone.   
Tis a sense of blood-bought pardon   
That dissolves the heart of stone.*   
When a soul comes to Christ, then it gets repentance, it gets tenderness of heart, it gets all that it really needs! And all attempts to get these things before you come to Christ are like trying to get the effect before you get the causeto get the fruit before you get the root! O Soul, however old your condition may be, come to Christ, for He can cure you! A good deal of preaching has been addressed to persons of a certain character, and sinners who listen to that character-preaching, keep asking, Is that our character? In this way, their eyes are fixed upon themselves and their own characters, instead of upon Christ! That is a gospel which will do them no good. But Christs Gospel turns a mans eyes away from his own character. It says to him, Admit, once and for all, that your character is incorrigibly bad and that you deserve to be sent to the lowest Hell. But, that being the case, the Gospel still says to you, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved. Some gospels might help a man if he could get a certain distance on the way to Heaven, but the good Samaritan came just where the poor wounded traveler wasand Jesus Christ comes to sinners just where they are, and just as they arehard-hearted, callous, thoughtless, careless, yet often conscious of all this and, strange to say, lamenting that they cannot lament, and crying, I would feel if I could! I feel that it is a pain to think I cannot feel. I am sad to think I am not sad, and weary to think I am not weary. Well, then, Jesus says, Just as you now are, come unto Me. Leave your care, just as it is, in My hands, and I will undertake it for you.   
Did I hear somebody say, Oh, but I am so ignorant? Well, my dear Friend, so are all of us! The only difference between a very wise man and a very great fool is that the wise man knows that he is a fool, and the other does not. When all the knowledge of our wisest men is put together, it makes but a very small book compared with the vast volume that contains what they do not know. Why, the most highly-educated man, now living, has only just gone to an A. B. C. school as yet, and as for those very learned divinesthe D. D.s and the LL. D.s, and those doctors who think they know so much that they know better than the Biblewell, after all, their knowledge, as compared with what is yet to be known, is only the information of an ant or a magpienothing more! We are all fools together and what a mercy it is that the Lord Jesus Christ does not require a lot of knowledge of us! It is to know Him that suffices us. To know yourself as a sinner and Christ as your Savior is all the knowledge you really need in order to find eternal life. Never let your ignorance stand in your way, for Christ virtually puts the matter thus, Him that comes to Methough He cannot read a letter in the Bible, and hardly knows that twice two are fourif he does but come to Me, I will in no wise cast him out.   
Ah, yes, says another, but I am so poor! Well, that is the very last thing that you should ever mention as a hindrance to your coming to Christ, for His Gospel is especially preached to the poor. One of the proofs that He gave of His Messiahship was this, the poor have the Gospel preached to them. And, oftentimes, He has chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, to be the heirs of the Kingdom which He has promised to them that love Him. So that you cannot truly say that you are too poor to come to Christ.   
Ah, says another, but I am so tried and troubled. Suppose you are? You do not imagine that the Lord Jesus Christ said, Him that comes to me, I will not cast out unless he is tried and troubled, do you? Why, poor Soul, if there is one who could not be left out, it is just the one who is most troubled! What is it that moves the heart of Jesus towards us? Nothing but His pity and love. And the more trouble you have, the more cause there is for His pity to display itself upon you. Instead of keeping back from Christ because you have so many troubles, come to Him to find comfort under them!   
Everybody has been so unkind to me, says one. My heart is broken. Well, the Savior, who uttered our text, could truly say, Reproach has broken My heart; and I am full of heaviness: and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none. So He understands all about you and He will bind up your broken heart! Ah, but I am so despised, and slandered, and misrepresented. So was He. They called Him a gluttonous man, and a winebibber. He is exactly the Savior you need. Ah, but I have lost my husband and all my friends are dead and gone. I hardly know where to find my daily bread. Christ said, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has not where to lay His head. He can sympathize with you in the deep affliction of your poverty, so go to Him! You should go, above all othersyou who have not a comfortable home, before whom the whole earth seems a desertyou who seem to have been turned out of Paradise and there is nothing before you but the land which brings forth thorns and thistlesit is in your ears that I would especially repeat the ancient promise, The Seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent. You shall overcome all your enemies if you but come to Jesus Christ!   
It is a sweet thing to think that the text is so comprehensiveHim that comes to Me, I will in no wise cast out. Have you ever read Mr. John Bunyans Come and Welcome? He very wonderfully expounds this text and, if I remember rightly, he makes the sinner say, But I am so great a sinner. I will in no wise cast you out. But I have sinned against knowledge. I will in no wise cast you out. But I have been a thief. I will in no wise cast you out. I have been a fornicator and adulterer. I will in no wise cast you out. But I have been a murderer. I will in no wise cast you out. But I cannot believe as I would. I will in no wise cast you out. And he keeps on, page after page, supposing all things that he can well think ofbut I will not keep on so longI will just say thisSuppose what you like and though it is a fact, yet, still my text covers itHim that comes to Me, I will in no wise cast out!   
V. My last observation is this, OUR TEXT PLEDGES OUR LORDS PERSONAL ACTION. Him that comes to Me, I will in no wise cast out.   
He does not say anything here about what His servants will do. Some of them look with disapproval at big sinners. They have been known to do so before now and some of them are still a little like that elder brother who said, As soon as this, your son, was come, which has devoured your living with harlots, you have killed for him the fatted calf. But Christ says to the prodigal, I will not cast you out. Your brother may be unwilling to receive you, but I will welcome you.   
Now, if the Lord Jesus Christ does not cast us out, it really does not matter who else wants to do so. So long as the Master of the feast does not reject us, we may keep our place at the table! It is a very suggestive thing that my text is in the very chapter which records the great feast when thousands sat down upon the grass and were fed by Christ. I daresay they were some very strange characters there that day. None of them were too good, but I expect that among that crowd of loafers around the Saviorfor loafers many of them were, for they had followed for the sake of the loaves and that is just the meaning of the word, loaferthere were some fine gentlemen from Jerusalem who said, Well, if that is the Messiah, He has a pretty following, indeed! On another occasion they called Him a friend of publicans and sinners. And they said, This Man receives sinners, and eats with them. He never denied it, He rather gloried in it! He said that He was sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel and that they that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. He loved to have them about Himloafers and vagabonds as they were. I do not read that He said to Philip, and Peter, and Andrew, Now, look. We are going to give a feast, but it must be on the principle of the Charity Organization Society and we must not give anything to people who are undeserving. It is true that God gives to the unthankful and the unbelieving, but modern charity says, That is wicked! Well, I daresay there is a good deal to be said for that view of the matter, but Jesus Christ did not believe in that view. There were many undeserving people there and He fed them all! Christ did not feed any man there because he was good, but because he was hungry. He saw that they were tired and faint, so he multiplied the loaves and the fishes, and fed them till they were satisfied.

And today, Jesus Christ does not give His mercy to any man because he deserves it, or because there are any good qualities in the man that may merit the display of His GraceHe saves people because He loves to save the unworthyand He would not have them perish. As I live, says the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live. That is His only reason and, blessed be His name that it is His only reason for saving sinners, because you and I, who are among the most unworthy persons who have ever lived, may come and sit at the feet of His Grace and know that He has pledged His personal honor and His own private Character for it that him that comes to Him, He will not cast out! If HE does not cast us out, who can? As He says, I will in no wise cast you out, rest assured that all His servants and all His enemies, even if they wanted to cast us out, would be quite unable to accomplish the task!   
When Jesus says, I will not cast out Him that comes to Me, He means that He will let him stay with Him. If you get into Christs family by simply trusting Him, you shall always be in His family. If you get into my Lords house by simply trusting Him, you shall always be in His house! He will not cast you out, but He will receive you, pardon you, cleanse you, bless you. You shall have the power, the right, the authority to become a son of Godand you shall have the nature of a son, you shall receive the Spirit of adoption whereby you shall be able to cry, Abba, Father. You shall have the blessings of a sonyou shall be provided for, educated and trained for the skies. You shall not be denied any blessing or favor which is given to Gods family. If you do but come to Christ, His Grace shall be free to you, His House shall be free for you, His city and His Kingdom shall cost you nothing, His heart shall be free for you and, by-and-by, His Heaven shall be free for you, for where He is, there shall you be alsoand as He sits at His Fathers right hand, so shall you sit down with Him upon His Throne!   
I have known the time when if I had heard such a sermon as this, I think I would have leaped for joy to think that there was such mercy to be had by me! I would not have needed any fine speaking, or any display of oratory. I would only have needed to be assured that Jesus would receive me and I would at once have come to Him! And this I know every truly hungry soul here will come and feed on this Truth of God tonight, and every thirsty soul will come and drink! But if there are any here who think they are good enoughif there are any who fancy that they have not sinned against God and so do not feel that they are in any great danger, or have any great needswell, it will be according to the old rule, the full will loathe the loaded table, but to the hungry man even bitter things will be sweet!   
I can only give you the Gospel invitation and leave it with the Lord to incline you to accept it. May you be led to come to Jesus by a spiritual act of faith this very hour!

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PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #3230 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

THE LAST MESSAGE FOR THE YEAR   
NO. 3230

A SERMON   
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, DECEMBER 29, 1910.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, DECEMBER 28, 1873.

*All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me; and him that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out.   
John 6:37.*

[Mr. Spurgeon preached many Sermons upon this verse. Among those already published are #1762, Volume 30HIGH DOCTRINE AND BROAD DOCTRINE; #2349, Volume 40 ALL COMERS TO CHRIST WELCOMED; #2954, Volume 51THE BIG GATES WIDE OPEN and #3000, Volume 52NUMBER 3000OR, COME AND WELCOMERead/download all these sermons, free of charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.]

WE have come to the last Sabbath evening and the last public Sabbath service of another year. With some of us it may be our last Sabbath on earth and our last public Sabbath service in this life. It becomes us, then, to fix our thoughts upon solemn and weighty themesthose which are of the utmost importance to usand those which most closely concern our eternal destiny. I pray that the Holy Spirit may cause the deepest possible seriousness to rest upon this whole assembly and that He may very specially guide me to speak as I ought upon the familiar but most weighty words that I trust He has moved me to select once again for your very earnest consideration tonight.

I have preached many times upon this text but, on this occasion, I am going to speak briefly upon three topics that it suggests to me. The first is that there is only one way of salvationAll that the Father gives Me shall come to Me. Him that comes to Me. This topic will teach us the exclusiveness of Divine Grace. Secondly, this way will be used by some All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me. This teaches us the Omnipotence of Divine Grace. Thirdly, all who come by this way shall be savedhim that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out. This teaches us the fullness and freeness of Divine Grace.

I. First, then, we learn from our text THE EXCLUSIVENESS OF DIVINE GRACETHERE IS ONLY ONE WAY OF SALVATION All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me. Him that comes to Me.

To come to Jesus is the one and only way of salvation . If there could have been any other way, this one would never have been opened. It is not conceivable that God would have given His only-begotten and wellbeloved Son to die upon the Cross of Calvary in order to save sinners if there had been any other way of saving them that would have been as consistent with the principles of Infallible Justice. If men could have entered into everlasting life without passing along the path stained and consecrated by the blood of Jesus, surely that blood would never have been shed for many for the remission of sins. The very fact that this new and living way has been opened proves that there is no other, for God would never have provided it unless it had been absolutely necessary. That this is the only way of salvation is again and again emphasized in Scripture with a sacred intolerance which none ought to mistake! Writing to the Corinthians, under the Inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Paul says, Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. And to Timothy, his own son in the faith, he writes, There is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus. And the Lord Jesus Christ, Himself, who had a more loving heart than ever beat in any merely human beings breast, most solemnly said, in almost His last words on earth, He that believes and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believes not shall be damned.

So there is no other way of salvation and sinners are most faithfully warned that however pleasant and attractive any other ways may appear to be, the end of those ways is death and everlasting destruction from the Presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power. When Jesus said, I am the Way, He clearly intended to exclude all other ways, so beware lest you perish in any one of them! Be not like the foolish and wicked people of Jeremiahs day to whom the Lord said, Stand you in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way and walk therein, and you shall find rest for your souls. But, alas, they said, We will not walk therein. Be you not like unto them!

But what is this exclusive way of salvation? In our text it is twice described as coming to Christ. But what is meant by that expression? It does not mean any mere locomotion, any moving of the body from one place to another. There were many who came to Christ in that sense while He was upon the earththey thronged around Him and pressed upon Himbut the mere proximity of their bodies to Christ did not bring salvation to them, for many of them turned away and walked no more with Him when His heart-searching teaching was too faithful for them. Well, then, what does coming to Christ readily mean?

Coming to Christ means, first, turning away from all confidence in ourselves or in others and trusting alone in Jesus. In order to come to a certain person, you must turn away from another person who is in a different direction, so if you want to be saved, you must come right away from trusting in yourselvesyou must cease to have any confidence in anything that you have ever done, or ever hope to doyou must not place any reliance upon the alms you have bestowed upon the poor, the prayers you have presented to God, the services you have attended, or anything of your own! You must utterly abhor all hope of salvation from yourself, even as Paul did when, after recounting the things in which he had formerly trusted, he wrote, But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yes, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is of the Law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.

If you are resolved to come to Christ, you must also give up all trust in others as a means of salvation. If you have up to now been placing any reliance upon your godly ancestry, your Christian father and mother, or if you have been depending upon your close connection with good people. If you have trusted to a man who calls himself a priest. If you have put any dependence upon what he can do towards your salvationI pray you to cast away all such confidence, and dependence, for if you do not, you cannot come to Christ! If you have been relying upon any rite, or ceremony, or sacrament relating to water or bread and wine, any priestly performance, or posture, or ritual, or anything apart from the Lord Jesus Christ, I implore you to abandon all those soul-destroying delusions, for no one of them nor all of them combined will help you into the one and only way of salvation!

For, observe, that the text speaksand it is the Lord Jesus Christ who speaks through the textof coming to a PersonAll that the Father gives ME shall come to ME; and him that comes to ME I will no wise cast out. Note how personal the text is both concerning the one coming and the One to whom he is to comeHim that comes to ME. That is the long and the short of the whole matterits Alpha and Omega, its beginning and its endthere must be a personal coming to the personal Christ! It will not suffice for you to come to Christs Doctrineyou must, of course, believe what He taughtbut believing His teaching will not save you unless you come to HIM. It will not be enough merely to come to Christs precepts and to try to practice theman utterly impossible task for you to perform in your own unaided strength! You must first come to Christ and then, trusting in Him for salvation, His gracious Spirit will take of the things of Christ and show them to you, and teach and enable you to walk in His ways and to obey His precepts.

Does someone ask, Who and what is He to whom I am to come? Listen. The Eternal Son of the Eternal FatherHe who has made the heavens and the earth and all things that are, whose almighty Word fashioned this round globe and sent it spinning on its wondrous course around the sunthe Creator and Lord of all the angelic host before whom cherubim and seraphim bow down in reverent adorationthis great King of kings and Lord of lords, in His amazing love and wondrous condescension, made Himself of no reputation and took upon Him the form of a Servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a Man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross. It is to Him that you are to come! You are to believe in Him as the Incarnate God, equally and just as truly Son of Man and Son of God! And then, (and this is the crux of your faith, your faith in the Crossthat Cross in which Paul gloriednot a cross of wood, or stone, or ivory before which people idolatrously prostrate themselvesbut the Doctrine of the Cross, which is today as great an offence as it was in Pauls day), you must believe that God laid upon His Incarnate and Immaculate Son, the sins of all His people whom He had given to Him from all eternity! And you must believe that He even took pleasure in bruising Him because of the wondrous results that were to follow and flow from His atoning Sacrifice on the Cross! Do you think I am speaking too strongly? Remember the words of the inspired Prophet IsaiahAll we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way, and the Lord has laid on Him (made to meet on Him) the iniquity of us all...It pleased the Lord to bruise Him. He has put Him to grief: when You shall make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand. If you, my Brother or Sister, rely upon this great expiatory Sacrifice and believe that when Christ died upon the Cross, He died as your Substitute and Representative, you are saved! You have entered the one and only way of salvation!

But be assured of this, if you reject the Incarnate God. If you will not trust in Him. If you will not come to Him that you may have life, there is no other way of salvation and there will never be any other! Never forget that this same Jesus, who was taken up into Heaven, shall so come again in like manner as He went up into Heavenand when He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe, there will be others to whom His Second Advent will bring nothing but dismay and terror, for then, the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and they that know not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the Presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power. It will be utterly in vain for you to cry, then, to the mountains and the rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sits on the Throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, for the great day of His wrath is come and who shall be able to stand?

II. Now, secondly, we learn from our text THE OMNIPOTENCE OF DIVINE GRACESOME WILL USE THIS ONE AND ONLY WAY OF SALVATION. All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me.

So first, there are some who were given to Christ. We believe that it is clearly revealed in the Scriptures that long before this earth was created, the Lord looked forward upon the race of human beings that He intended to live upon it, and that out of them He chose unto Himself a people whom He gave to His Son to be the reward of the suffering He would endure on their behalf. Peter wrote to the elect strangers, You are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people that you should show forth the praises of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light. And Paul wrote to Timothy, The foundation of God stands sure, having this seal, The Lord knows them that are His. We do not know them, but He knows everyone of them and He counts them as His own peculiar treasure! They shall be Mine, says the Lord of Hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels. These people have been given to Christ by His Father. Again and again, in that great intercessory prayer of His, He spoke of this Truth of God! In fact, the prayer begins with an emphatic declaration of itFather, the hour is come; glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You; as You have given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him.

In our text Christ says that these people shall come to Him. All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me. There is no question about whether they will come, or will not comeChrist says that they shall come to Him. But, asks someone, will God force them to come to Christ against their will? Oh, noHe has a gracious way of making them willing in the day of His power. By His Spirits Divine teaching, He will instruct them, illuminate them, persuade them, compel them so that everyone of those who were given to Christ will come to Him. But they are blind, says another. The Lord says, I will bring the blind by a way that they know not. But they are very obstinate. The Lord says, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness and speak comfortably unto her. But they are dead. Yes, that is true, but the Lord quickens those who are dead in trespasses and sins. Without violating our wills and leaving us to still act as free agents responsible for our own actions, He makes us willing to yield ourselves up to Christbody, soul and spirit to be forever His!

Why does Christ tell us this? I think He does it partly to comfort His ministers. Oh, it is heart-breaking work to keep on preaching Christ to sinners who will not come to Him, holding up Christ before eyes that see no beauty in Him, praising Him to ears that are not charmed with the music of His name! So our Master says to us, My servants, you shall not labor in vain, nor spend your strength for nothing. All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me. If all those who were first invited to the great Gospel feast make excuses for not coming, others will accept My invitation and the feast shall be fully furnished with guests. If scribes and Pharisees still reject Me, publicans and harlots will be only too glad to come to Me and I will cast out none who come. So still go on, My servants, publishing the glad tiding of salvation, for all that My Father gave Me must and shall come to Me.

I think Christ also speaks thus as a rebuff to those who seem to imagine that Christs work will be a failure if they do not come to Him! You know how many talk, nowadays, about the Gospel being old-fashioned, worn out and not adapted to this enlightened age! Oh, yes, Sir, I know what you think and how you talk! But are you foolish enough to suppose that Christs great Sacrifice on Calvary will prove to have been offered in vain just because you refuse to trust to it? Oh no, He shall see of the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied. Here is a poor silly fly drowning in a glass of water. He might as well imagine that his dying struggles would convulse all the empires of the earth as an atheist might think that he can demolish the whole system of Christianity by the nonsensical whimsies that he harbors in his stupid brain! I tell you, Man, that you cannot frustrate the eternal purposes of God, or rob His Son of a single grain of His Glory! What if you will not come to Christ? He never expected that you would come, so He will not be surprised or disappointed! But if you will not come to Him, others will. If you will not enlist in the army of the Cross and join the innumerable hosts that rally round His bloodstained banner, others will, and the great Son of David will never lack brave soldiers who will do and dare for Him more than even Davids mighty men did for their royal leader! Voltaire said that he lived in the twilight of Christianity, but if so, it was the twilight of the morning, not of the evening! Julian the apostate vowed that he would put down the Nazarene, but his dying cry was, O Galilean, You have conquered! Yes, and so He always willand they who oppose and reject Him will find that the stone which the builders refused will become the cornerstone in the great Temple of His Churchand also a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense to those who reject Him! Woe be unto those upon whom that Stone shall fall, for it will grind them to powder!

I think that Jesus also intended these words, All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me, to be a cause for jubilation in the hearts of His people. We often feel very sad concerning the times in which we live and there is more than enough to make us sigh and cry because of the abominations and iniquities in the world and, alas, because of the many evils in the professing church! But those who love the Lord and seek to serve Him are not left without many consolations and compensations. The purposes of God shall all be fulfilled! There shall not be one soul the less in Heaven notwithstanding all that Romanism, Ritualism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Mohammedanism and every other

ism may do! Christ shall not be robbed of the reward of His soul-travail by anything that infidelity can do! Satan may rage and roar, and all his legions may come up from the bottomless Pit and league themselves with wicked men to overthrow the Church of God, but founded upon the Rock, the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it. The kings and rulers of the earth may take counsel together against the Lord and against His Anointed, but He that sits in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision. And when the history of this poor little planet is finished, it shall be found that Christ was speaking nothing but the truth when He said, All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me.

III. Now I come to the last and perhaps the sweetest part of the whole discourse, which is to be concerning THE FULLNESS AND FREENESS OF DIVINE GRACEALL WHO COME BY THIS ONE WAY SHALL BE SAVED! Him that comes to Me, I will in no wise cast out.

This means that everyone who comes to Christ shall certainly be saved, for, if Christ will not cast him out, nobody else can do so! As soon as ever he comes to Christ, he is accepted (not repelled) by Christ! And being accepted by Christ, he is saved with an everlasting salvationand there is no power on earth or in Hell that can ever make him into an unsaved man after Christ has saved him!

But, says someone, suppose he comes to Christ and then finds that he is not one of those who were given to Christ by His Father? You must not suppose what never can be true, for there never was a sinner yet who came to Christ who was not first given to Christ! All who come to Christ are Divinely drawn to Him and no one is drawn to Him without having been from all eternity given to Himso there is nothing in our friends supposition that ought to be a stumbling block in the way of any seeking sinner here! I am quite certain that God has an elect people, for He tells me so in His Word. And I am equally certain that everyone who comes to Christ shall be saved, for that also is His own declaration in the Scriptures! When people ask me how I reconcile these two Truths of God, I usually say that there is no need to reconcile them, for they have never yet quarreled with one another! Both are true and both relate to the same persons, for those who come to Christ are those who were from eternity given to Christ by His Father!

Jesus Christ still says to us, Him that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out. But, Lord, objects someone, this mans life has been an outrageously bad one! Will You accept him if he comes to You? Oh, yes! Him that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out. But, Lord, he has been an habitual drunk and he has also been a great blasphemer. Well, suppose you were obliged to add that he has been an adulterer, a liar, a thief, a perjurer, or even a murderer? Jesus Christ would still say, Him that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out. Whatever his past character may have been, if he truly repents of his sin and trusts in My atoning blood to cleanse him from all his guilt, his sins and iniquities shall be remembered against him no more, forever. If I had the biggest, blackest sinner in the whole world here, I would say to him or to her, My dear Friend, if you will here and now trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, the one and only Savior of sinners, I can assure you, on the authority of God, Himself, that though your sins are as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though your sins are red like crimson, they shall be as wool. And that your sins, which are many, are all forgiven! And then, like the woman in the city who was a notorious public sinner, you will love Christ much because you have been forgiven much.

Ah, says some poor sinner here, but I do not feel that I have repented enough. I do not feel that my heart is tender enough. I do not feel that I have wept enough over my many offenses. Stop a moment, Friend. If you have your Bible open, or if not, listen while I read the text again All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me; and him that comes to me I will in no wise cast out. Is there anything in Christs words about how much you are to feel? Is there anything at all about your feelings? Not a word! Not even a syllable! If you but come to Christ, which means if you but trust Him, if you rely upon His finished work, if you truthfully say, as we often sing

*I do believe, I will believe,   
That Jesus died for me!   
That on the Cross He shed His blood   
From sin to set me free*

then that glorious Gospel in miniatureas Martin Luther called it, applies to you as well as to every other sinner who believes in JesusGod so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. There is nothing in that verse about feelingseverything depends upon faith! And then when you have believed in Jesus, right feelings will be given to you by Gods good Spirit. Gratitude, love, joy, hope, peace, courage, longsuffering, gentleness, meekness, temperance and every other fruit of the Spirit will spring from the blessed root-Grace of faith in Jesus! And so you shall have yet further confirmation of the fact that you are saved for the Lords own test is, By their fruits you shall know them.

Possibly there is someone here, on this last Sabbath night of another year, who is saying to himself, I hardly know why I came into this building tonight, for I have been everything that I ought not to have beenand nothing that I ought to have been. But, Friend, do you desire to begin a new life even before the new year dawns on you? Are you willing to leave your sins? Do you long to be a holy man? In a word, is it the one wish of your heart that you may be saved? Then I refer you, also, to my text and remind you that the Lord Jesus Christ said, him that comes to me I will in no wise cast out. There is nothing there to shut out the most irreligious man if he will but come to Christ! You say that you are an odd manwell, I have often said and others have said that I am an odd mana lot that cannot be put in any catalog! You are self-condemned and so was I before I came to Christ. You feel that you are, as George Whitefield used to say, one of the devils castawaysso bad that even Satan, himself, would not claim you! Why, you and I ought to shake hands, for that is just how I felt when that poor local preacher pointed to me and said, Look, young man, look! Jesus Christ says to you, Look unto Me and be you saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else. I did look, and was saved by the same Gospel I preach to you! And as this is the last Sabbath night in another year, and as it may be the last Gospel invitation you will ever have the opportunity of hearing, I repeat to you the very last invitations recorded in the Word of God, The Spirit and the bride say, Come, and let him that hears say, Come. And let him that is thirsty come. And whoever will, let him take the water of life freely. This agrees with John 3:16 which I have already quoted to you, and it also agrees with Christs words in our text, Him that comes to Me. John Bunyan said that meant any him in all the worldI will in no wise cast outthat is, for no reason, for no conceivable motive, for no possible cause will Christ cast out one who comes to Him by faith! Him that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out is a grand old AngloSaxon expression that sweeps round the man who comes to Christ and guards him like a sword of fire protecting him from every possibility of being cast out by Christ!

What do you say, My Hearers, to all this? I have pleaded with some of you hundreds of times and now, in this, my last Sabbath message for the year, I ask you once againWill you come to Christ? When will you come? Tomorrow? That means never, for tomorrow never comes. By-andby? That means that you do not intend to come to Christ at all! The text is in the present tense, him that comes to me, for, now is the accepted time. Behold, now is the day of salvation. Trust in Jesus now, Sinner! Trust your soul to Him as you trust your money to your banker and your body to your doctor! Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved. Oh, that the Holy Spirit may enable you to say, at this moment, This is a sinners salvation and, as I am a sinner, it exactly suits my case! I accept it, My Lord, praising and blessing You that I, a poor, foul, lost, condemned sinner coming to You, am savedsaved now and saved forever! Glory be unto Your holy name! Amen!

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **LUKE 11:1-26.**

1. And it came to pass, that as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, one of His disciples said unto Him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples. It seemed to this disciple as if he did not know how to pray after he had heard Christ pray. The prayer of Jesus was so infinitely above anything that he had ever reached that he said, Lord, teach us to pray. And as if he felt that he needed a precedent for asking such hallowed instruction, he said, Teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples. We must all feel that if we are to pray aright, we must be taught of God, by his Holy Spirit. We are full of infirmities and if there is any time when our infirmities are felt most, it is when we engage in prayer, but the Spirit also helps our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought. Let us, then, breathe this prayer to our great Teacher, Lord, teach us to pray.

2. And He said to them, When you pray, say, Our Father which are in Heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done, as in Heaven, so in earth. When we come to God in prayer, we are apt to think first of our own necessities, but if we came aright, in the spirit of sonship, truly saying, Our Father who are in Heaven, we should begin our prayer like this, Hallowed be Your name. May all men honor, reverence, and adore Your holy name. Your kingdom come. We are not satisfied that You should be anything less than King! Our hearts desire is, Reign, gracious God over us and over all men. Your will be done, as in Heaven, so in earth. Your will be done, rather than ours. Now comes a prayer for ourselves

3. Give us day by day our daily bread. Give us, O Lord, what we really neednot that which would be a luxury, but that which is a necessity. Give us, according as we shall need it day by day, what we shall then actually needour daily bread. We are not warranted in asking much more than this in temporal matters. They are all comprehended in this petition as far as they are necessary, but God has not given us carte blanche to ask for wealth, or honor, or any such dangerous things. There is no harm in asking for breadand He will give us that.

4. And forgive us our sins. We also need to pray this prayer. I do not think that our Savior ever anticipated a time when His disciples on earth would not need to pray, Forgive us our sins.

4. For we also forgive everyone that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation. Lord, do not try us and test us more than is absolutely necessary, for we are so apt to fall! Lead us not into temptation, but if we must be tempted   
4. Deliver us from evil. If some good end is to be answered by our being thus tested, then let it be so, but, O Lord, deliver us from evil, and especially from the Evil Onedo not allow us to fall into his hands in the hour of temptation.

5, 6. And He said to them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves; for a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him. This man was in a sad plighthis friend was faint and hungry and he was willing enough to entertain him, but he had nothing to set before him. So he acts very wiselyhe goes to a friend, and asks him to lend him three loaves.

7. And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give to you. If the man outside keeps on knocking. If he will not go away without the bread he wants for his friend, what will happen?

8. I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give to him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needs. See the power of importunate prayer? And you, Beloved, can have all that you really need for yourselves or others if you will only ask for it in the right way. If, summoning every faculty of your being, you resolve to plead, and plead, and plead yet again and again, and never take, No, for an answer, your hearts desire shall be granted!

9. And I say unto you, ask, and it shall be given you. But if asking does not seem to prevail with God   
9. Seek, and you shall find. And if, for a while, you do not find, come closer in   
9. Knock, and it shall be opened unto you. There are different methods of praying and each one has its special adaptation to the state in which you may beso use that method to which the Holy Spirit guides youso use all methods until you prevail.  
10, 11. For everyone that asks receives, and he that seeks finds; and to him that knocks it shall be opened. If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? There were many stones in those days that were in appearance wonderfully like the bread which they used in the East, but would any father mock his son by giving him one of those stones to break his teeth, instead of bread that he could eat? Never!   
11-13. Or if he asks for a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? Or if he shall ask for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If you, then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that asks Him? [See Sermon

#959, Volume 16RIGHT REPLIES TO RIGHT REQUESTSRead/download the entire sermon, free of

charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.] If you have the Holy Spirit, you virtually have all good gifts, for the Spirit is the earnest of Gods Love, the pledge of joys to come! And He brings with Him all things that are necessary and good for you!

14. And He was casting out a devil, and it was dumb. So that this poor man could not obey the Saviors teaching. He could not pray, for he was under the influence of a dumb devil. How many of that sort there are still in the world! They cannot speak with God, they have never learned to pray, for they are possessed by a dumb devil!

14. And it came to pass, when the devil was gone out, the dumb spoke; and the people wondered. When the devil is driven out of men by Christ, they soon begin to pray. The little sentence, Behold, he prays, was the indication of a new birth in Saul of Tarsus. The Lord grant that some here who have been possessed by a dumb spirit, may be graciously led to pray! Remember, dear Friend, that God will hear your prayer the first time you call upon Himand there is a text which says, Before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.

15. But some of them said, He casts out devils through Beelzebub, the chief of the devils. They could not have uttered a fouler lie than this! And if people thus slandered the Lord Jesus Christ, we need not be surprised if they speak ill of us!

16. And others, tempting Him, sought of Him a sign from Heaven. Yet they had a very striking one in the dumb devil being cast out of the man! What clearer sign than that could they have?

17, 18. But He, knowing their thoughts, said to them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and a house divided against a house fails. If Satan also is divided against himself, how shall his kingdom stand? Because you say that I cast out devils through Beelzebub. If Satan cast out Satan, his kingdom would soon come to an end! Note how calmly the Savior met these mockers and quibblers. There is no trace of anger in His wordsthey said the worst thing they could say about Him and His work and yet, in the coolest manner possible, He closes their mouths in the silence of shame. God grant us Grace to be calm and strong even when we are most furiously assailed! It is when we are in a hurry and fret that we grow weak.

19-23. And if I, by Beelzebub, cast out devils, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore shall they be your judges. But if I, with the finger of God, cast out devils, no doubt the Kingdom of God is come upon you. When a strong man armed keeps his palace, his goods are in peace: but when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he takes from him all his armor wherein he trusted, and divides his spoils. He that is not with Me is against Me: and he that gathers not with Me, scatters. Christ had made no compact with the powers of darkness! He was not casting the demons out with the devils aidit was absurd to think that He was! He was fighting them and casting them out by His own Divine, Omnipotent energy. Now comes a very striking parable

24. When the unclean spirit is gone out of a manSatan does, sometimes, go out of men entirely of his own accord without being turned out. He goes out for a walk, meaning to go back again. Many a man has left off being a drunk, or left off being lasciviousfor a timewhen the unclean spirit is gone out of a man

24. He walks through dry places, seeking rest; and finding none, he says, I will return unto my houseYou see that he still calls it his house. He has gone out for a walk, but he has taken the keys of his house with him. Some people sign the pledge and give up being drunks for a time, but if the devil is still their master, he has only gone away for a while, and he will come back again before long. If he goes out of his own accord, he will come back when he pleasesI will return unto my house

24, 26. From where I came out. And when he comes, he finds it swept and garnished. The man has become quite a decent sort of fellow! He has given up his bad ways and is a respectable member of society. The house is swept and garnished, but it is the devils house all the same!

26. Then goes he, and takes to him even other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in, and dwell there: and the last state of that man  
is worse than the first. [See Sermon #613, Volume 11THE STRONG ONE DRIVEN OUT BY A STRONGER ONERead/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at

http://www.spurgeongems.org.] There are, alas, many who have only a sham conversion, a conversion which lasts but a very little while. The devil was not cast out of them, but he went out of his own accord. But where Christ has comethe One who is far stronger than the devilto cast him out of his house, the devil will never be allowed to come back again, Christ will take care of that! Having won the victory and taken the house, he will keep it by force of arms. But beware, I pray you, of a conversion without Christ! Beware of a reformation in which the devil, himself, is a coworker with you, for it will come to something worse in the end! Let me read the verse againThen goes he, and takes to him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in, and dwell there; and the last state of that man is worse than the first. He becomes a worse man than ever because once he promised to be better, but only promised it in his own strength, which was utter weakness!

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PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST.   
END OF VOLUME 56 Sermon 599 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

THE CERTAINTY AND FREENESS OF DIVINE GRACE   
NO. 599

**DELIVERED ON SUNDAY MORNING, NOVEMBER 13, 1864, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me; and him that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out.   
John 6:37.**

LET it be forevermore remembered that the words of Jesus Christ are full of Truth and Grace. And that in each of these two sentences, whether we perceive the fact or not, there is the surest Truth and the freest Grace. There will be some who from the peculiarity of their minds, will prize most the first sentence. They will say, as they read these words, All that the Father gives Me shall come to Mewhy, here is high doctrine! Here is the security of the Covenant, the purpose of God effectually carried out! Here is the Truth of God which we love and the Grace in which we glory.

Other Brethren, overlooking the first sentence lest it should raise questions too hard to be answered, will rather grasp at the second sentence, Him that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out. Why, they say, here is universality of description! Here is a freeness of invitation! Here is a gracious overflow of liberalitythis is good free Gospel, indeed! And they will therefore fall to proclaiming the second sentence to the neglect of the first.

But, Brothers and Sisters, let us not sin by setting one Scripture against another, or attempting to divide the living child of Revelation. It is one and it is alike glorious in all its parts. You who love to hear the Gospel preached to sinners do not be afraid of the doctrines of Sovereign Grace! And you who love Sovereign Grace but cannot well hear doctrine too high for your taste, do not be afraid of the free invitations of the Gospel and the wide door which Jesus opens for needy sinners in many passages of Scripture!

Let us receive all Truth and let us be willing to learn every lesson which the Lord has written, remembering that if we cannot as yet reconcile Truths of God, there is the promiseWhat I do you know not now; but you shall know hereafter. If we could know everything, we would be gods! Being mortals, some things must be unknown to us. Let us know our ignorance and despair of becoming infallible and thus we shall be in the path to true wisdom! But, if we boast of our wisdom, we shall be on the high road to great folly.

Let us consider the text carefully. And as it divides into two branches, let us view them one by one. Here we have Grace and Truth triumphant in specialty. And, secondly, we have Grace and Truth triumphant in liberality. May God help us to handle these so that much instruction may flow from them.

I. In the first sentence, we have GRACE TRIUMPHANT IN SPECIALTY *All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me.*

I would bring out the meaning of this passage by a few observations. 1. You perceive here that the Lord Jesus leads us up to the original position of all thingsfor since a people were given to Him by the Father, it is clear that they must first have been in the Fathers hands. All men, then, are naturally, from the beginning, in the hands of the Father. And so it should be, for He has fashioned them all and made them for His pleasure. God, absolutely considered, created all things and His kingdom rules over all. Having a right to make laws, to issue rewards, or to threaten with punishments at His own pleasure, Jehovah sits upon His Throne, judging rightly. The elect were specially in the hands of the Father for He had chosen them.

The choice is ever described as being with the FatherI thank You, O Father, Lord of Heaven and earth, because You have hid these things from the wise and prudent and have revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in Your sight. They belong to the Father, then, as Creator, as Governor and as the source and fountain of election. How often do Believers forget the part which the Father has in their salvation. And yet He is the basis and prompter of it all. Remember, Beloved, that He who first of all chose you was no other than our Father who is in Heaven. And though our Lord Jesus Christ undertook your cause, yet it was because the Father, first of all, out of His great love, gave you to His Son. Forget not the Fathers Grace and cease not to sing of His love

*Twas with an everlasting love   
That God His own elect embraced   
Before He made the worlds above,   
Or earth on her huge columns placed.   
Long before the suns refulgent ray   
Primeval shades of darkness drove,   
They on His sacred bosom lay,*

**Loved with an everlasting love.**   
2. The Savior then proceeds to inform us of a great transaction. He says that the Father gave His people to the Son and put them into the hands of Christthe God-man Mediator. As Jesus is God, these people always were His own. But as Mediator, He received them from the hands of the Father. Here was the Fathers condescension in noticing us at all and in bestowing us upon the Sonhere was the Sons infinite mercy and compassion, in accepting such poor souls as we are at the Fathers hands and counting us to be His precious jewels, His peculiar portion. The persons referred to as being given by the Father are not all men, although, it is true that the Father has delivered all things into Jesus hands and He has power over all flesh.

We must always interpret one passage of Scripture by another. And the thirty-ninth verse of this chapter very clearly interprets the thirtyseventhAnd this is the Fathers will which has sent Me, that of all which He has given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. The given ones, it is clear, are by appointment delivered from being lost and appointed to a glorious resurrection which is not true of any but the chosen. In the tenth chapter we find the same explained thus in the twenty-seventh verseMy sheep hear My voice and I know them, and they follow Me: and I give unto them eternal life. And they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hands. My Father, which gave them to Me, is greater than all. And no man is able to pluck them out of my Fathers hands.

And if this should not explain the matter sufficiently, we have it again in our Lords prayer in the seventeenth chapter, sixth verseI have manifested Your name unto the men which You gave me out of the world: Yours they were and You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word. So you see that the persons given were His own sheep. They are brought to know the voice of the Good Shepherd and to follow Him. They are in His hands and there they are safely kept beyond all fear of harm. Jesus manifests the Fathers name unto them and they learn to keep the Fathers word.

This does not respect any gift of all men which the Father has made to the Sonthough in a certain sense all men have been given to Christ in order that they may be the unconscious instruments of His Glory, though not saved by His redemption. They are, even as His enemies, compelled to do His pleasure, though they shall never be lifted up to the adoption of children, nor to the dignity of being Brethren of the Lord.

We see, then, that there was a certain period when the eternal God gave into the hands of the Mediator a multitude which no man can number, whom He had chosen from among men to be His choice and peculiar treasure. The text speaks in the present tense. But then the thirty-eighth verse speaks in the past tense. And the passages we have been reading to you all have it in the pasttherefore understand that the gift of the elect to Christ was performed in the pastbefore the skies were stretched abroad or the mountains lifted their heads to the clouds God had given a people to Christ.

But the deed may well be said to be performed in the present, since with God there is no time and what He did yesterday, He does today, and will do forever. Moreover, in a certain sense Christ does receive from His Fathers hand His people in time as well as in eternitythe Father giving by effectual calling in time, the very people whom once He gave in secret Covenant in eternity. We are, by the words of our text, admitted into one of the secrets of the Divine council chamber and rejoice as we perceive that the chosen ones belonging to the Father were transferred by Him into the hands of the Mediator.

3. Further proceeding, Jesus assures us that this transaction in eternity involves a certain change in time. All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me. They may be living in sin and they may continue so to do twenty, thirty, forty, fifty, sixty, seventy yearsbut before their time shall come to die, they shall be brought to Christ! To come to Christ signifies to turn from sin and to trust Christ. Coming to Christ is a leaving of all false confidences, a renouncing of all love of sin and a looking to Jesus as the solitary pillar of our confidence and hope.

Now every soul whom God the Father gave to Jesus must do this and this is the token by which the secretly chosen are knownthey openly choose Christ because the Father has secretly chosen them. You can never know your election by any other means. That you are not one of His sheep will be proved by your continuance in unbelief. But if humbly and hopefully you come to Jesus and make Him all your salvation and your desire, let no doctrine of election alarm or keep you backyou are one of

His, for this is the seal which He sets upon His sheep. In due time they hear His voice, are led by Him into the green pastures of Grace, follow Him through life and are brought by Him at last to the hilltops of Glory!

**There is a period known to God,   
When all His sheep, redeemed by blood,   
Shall leave the hateful ways of sin,   
Turn to the fold and enter in.   
At peace with Hell, with God at war,   
In sins dark maze they wander far,   
Indulge their lusts and still go on   
As far from God as sheep can run.   
But see how Heavens indulgent care   
Attends their wanderings here and there   
Still hard at heel wherever they stray,   
With pricking thorns to hedge their way.   
Glory to God, they never shall rove   
Beyond the limits of His love.   
Fenced with Jehovahs shalls and wills,   
Firm as the everlasting hills   
The appointed time rolls on apace,   
Not to propose, but call by Grace,   
To change the heart, renew the will,   
And turn the feet to Zions hill.**   
4. Observe, yet further, that in the words of our text, Jesus hints at a power possessed by Him to constrain the wanderers to return. He says, All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me. Oh, the power and majesty which rest in the words shall come. He does not say they have power to come. He does not say they may come if they will, but they shall come. There is no, if, no but, no perhaps, no condition whatsoever! It is put down as an unconditional and absolute purpose of God and will of Christ that all whom the Father gave to Him shall come. Well, says one, but does Christ force any man to be saved? I answer No, in the sense in which the question is asked. No man was ever taken to Heaven by the ears or dragged there by the hair of his head! But, at the same time, the Lord Jesus does, by His messengers, His Word, and His Spirit, sweetly and graciously compel men to come in that they may eat of His marriage-supper.

And this He does, mark you, not by any violation of the free will or free agency of man! God never treats man as though he were a brute. He does not drag him with cart ropesHe treats men as men. And when He binds them with cords, they are the cords of love and the bands of a man. I may exercise power over anothers will and yet that other mans will may be perfectly free because the constraint is exercised in a manner accordant with the laws of the human mind. If I show a man that a certain line of action is much for his advantage, he feels bound to follow it, but he is perfectly free in so doing. If mans will were subdued or chained by some physical processif mans heart should, for instance, be taken from him and be turned round by a manual operationthat would be altogether inconsistent with human freedom, or indeed, with human nature. And yet I think some few people imagine that we mean this when we talk of constraining influence and Divine Grace! We mean nothing of the kind! We mean that Jehovah Jesus knows how, by irresistible arguments addressed to the understandingby mighty reasons appealing to the affections and by the mysterious influence of His Holy Spirit operating upon all the powers and passions of the soulto subdue the whole man, that whereas it was once rebellious it becomes obedient! Whereas it stood stoutly against the Most High, it throws down the weapons of its rebellion and cries, I yield! I yield! Subdued by Sovereign love and by the enlightenment which You have bestowed upon me, I yield myself to Your will! The weapons are not carnal, but mighty, through God, to the pulling down of strongholds. They are the invincible artillery of the love of Christ and the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God! Of this teaching no Arminian should complain when he remembers the strong expressions used in Wesleys hymns! Let me quote an instance   
*O my God, what must I do?   
You alone the way can show.   
You can save me in this hour,   
I have neither will nor power!   
God, if over all You are   
Greater than my sinful heart,   
All Your power on me be shown,   
Take away the heart of stone.  
Take away my darling sin,   
Make me willing to be clean.   
Make me willing to receive   
All Your goodness waits to give!   
Force me, Lord, with all to part,   
Tear these idols from my heart!   
Now Your love almighty show,   
Make even me a creature new.   
Jesus, mighty to renew,   
Work in me to will and do.   
Turn my natures rapid tide,   
Stem the torrent of my pride!   
Stop the whirlwind of my will,   
Speak and bid the sun stand still.   
Now Your love almighty show,   
Make even me a creature new.   
Arm of God, Your strength put on,   
Bow the heavens and come down!   
All my unbelief overthrow,   
Lay the aspiring mountain low!   
Conquer Your worst foe in me,   
Get Yourself the victory!   
Save the vilest of the race,   
Force me to be saved by Grace.*   
There is an influence put forth by the Holy Spirit which makes men willing in the day of Gods power. And every soul that is numbered in the Covenant of Grace shall. Let the devil do his worst and let the human will do its utmost and let temptations strain themselves to the last degree of intensitythey shall, I say, in obedience to Divine decree, be brought to the foot of the Cross, to cry, What must I do to be saved?   
5. And to conclude our remarks upon this first sentence, the Savior declares that there is no exception to this rule of Grace. He says, All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me. Not some of them, but all! Not all but one or two, but every one! Each one in particular and the whole collectively. It will be found when the archangels trumpet shall ring through earth and Heaven, that every soul whom God ordained to eternal life has attained that eternal life to Gods praise and honor! And when the census shall be read of all the children of the living God, not one of the bloodbought and blood-washed shall be absentthey shall all come to Christ in Heaven as they all come to Christ on earth.   
Now, albeit that some stumble at this doctrine, here is the greatest possible comfort to the preacher of the Word. Day after day we proclaim our Masters Truth and yet to a great extent we have to cryWho has believed our report? And to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? So many are stony-hearted. So many resist the invitations of the Gospel. So many turn a deaf ear to the warnings of almighty mercywhat then? Have we sown in vain? Have we labored for nothing? No, verily, in no way! The purpose of God is certainly fulfilled in every jot and tittle and the Masters will is definitely and in every point accomplished!   
Therefore we labor with no broken heart and we preach with no coward spirit in this matter. You, O proud and haughty sinners, may resist Him. But if you will not come, others shallyou are bid to come to the wedding. And if you will not come, the highways and the hedges shall find Him guests. His table shall not be empty. Think not that the blood of Christ shall be shed in vain! You may count it an unholy thing, but there are myriads who shall be washed in it and who shall rejoice in its power to cleanse. You may put from you the kingdom of Heaven and count yourselves unworthy of itif it is a savor of death unto death to youyet it shall be a savor of life unto life to others!   
The great plans of Sovereign mercy shall not be thwarted by the enmity of man! Jehovah shall yet in the end get the victory. All ages shall crown His head with fresh honors when they see how, despite all the enmity of the human heartits treachery and its hardnessthat His purpose did stand and He did all His pleasure and displayed the bounty of His Grace as He would, according to the good pleasure of His own will. You will see, then, that this first sentence, if we understand it at all, involves, first, the doctrine of electionthere are some whom the Father gave to Christ. It involves, next, the doctrine of effectual callingthose who are given must and shall comehowever stoutly they may set themselves against it, they shall be brought out of darkness into Gods marvelous light, And it also teaches us, and here I leave the first sentence, the indispensable necessity of faithfor even those who are given to Christ are not saved except they come to Jesus. Even they must come, for there is no other way to Heaven but by the Door, Christ Jesus.   
I must not expect, whoever I may be, that I shall be saved by my morality! I must not reckon to enter Heaven by my integrity or my generosity! All that the Father gives to our Redeemer must come to Him. Therefore none can come to Heaven except they come to Christ. And it becomes indispensably requisite for princes and for peasants, for sages and for savages, for the polite and for the uneducated, for the most virtuous and the most vile to come just as they are and accept the mercy of God which is freely presented to them in the Person of Christ Jesus. And, mark, by this shall those be known whom God has chosenthat they do willingly and joyfully accept Christ Jesus and come to Him with simple and unfeigned faith, resting upon Him as all their salvation and all their desire! Some of you do not like this doctrine. Well, I cannot help that. I find it in the Scriptures and I preach it. There is the textto me it means nothing if it does not mean what I have now stated. It is as plain and expressive as the Saxon language employed in it could possibly make it. Do not kick at the doctrine because you do not like it! If it is taught in Scripture, like it or not like it, receive it. Perhaps however, it does some people good to grow angry over a doctrine for they would never think of it at all if they did not! And while this doctrine, like an arrow in a wound, rankles and frets them, it nevertheless is the means of making them consider spiritual things and so they are brought to Jesus.   
I believe this is one of the virtues of this doctrinethat it excites peoples prejudices and they grow vexed. But since they cannot get rid of it, it follows themthey dream of it, they argue about itand at last there is a joint in the harness through which the good Word of the Gospel cuts its way and they come to receive Christ in the fullness and plenitude of His mercy.   
II. In the second sentence we have GRACE TRIUMPHANT IN ITS LIBERALITYHim that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out. 1. Please observe the liberality of the characterit is him that comesthere is no description given whatever, except, him that comes. It means the rich man, the poor man, the great man, the obscure man, the moral man, the debauchee, those who have sunken into the worst of crimes and those who have mounted to the best of virtues. Those who are next akin to devils and those who seem, by the correctness of their lives to be somewhat like angels are all includedhim, him! Him that comes! What him? says John Bunyan. Why, says he, answering his own question, any him in all the world that comes to Christ shall be in no wise cast out.   
Him that comes. To come, as I have explained before, is to leave something and to go to something. There is motion. We leave all other grounds of trust and we take Christ to be our solitary hope. We come to His blood to be washed, to His righteousness to be cleansed, to His wounds to be healed, to His life for life eternal and to His death for the death of our sins. We come to Jesus for everything! And the promise is that any man who comes, whoever he may be, shall find that he is not cast out. But suppose, says one, that the poor condemned wretch should come who has committed a foul and cruel murder? Well, if he comes, he shall not be cast out!   
If in addition to murder, or without murder, he should have been guilty of uncleanness impossible to describesuppose he to have wallowed in it year after year and to have brought himself to such a state that he is scarcely fit to be touched with a pair of tongs! Suppose he to be such an outcast that he is only fit to be swept into some back corner in Hell. Well, what then? If he comes to Christ, he shall not be cast out! I like to put it in such a light that he who deems himself to have gone furthest into sin may yet see that this text sets a door wide open whereby he may come for

mercy!   
It says, him that comes, and this shuts out no comer. John Newton   
was a blasphemer of so gross a kind that even the sailors in the vessel in  
a storm said that they should never get to port with such a sinner as John   
Newton on board! But he came to Christ and was not cast out! He lived to  
preach the Word of God! John Bunyan was so foul a blasphemer that even  
a woman of the street, who passed him by and heard him swear, said that  
he was enough to corrupt the whole parish. And he was astonished that a   
woman of so bad a character should so rebuke him!   
John Bunyan came to Jesus and he was not cast out! He lived to have   
the honor of suffering for his Master and to be the winner of multitudes of  
souls. Saul of Tarsus had stained himself with the blood of saints! He was   
a very wolf after Christs sheep! He was not satisfied with worrying them   
in his own land, so he obtained power to persecute them in Damascus.  
But when he fell upon his face and cried for mercy he was not cast out!  
Manasseh was blood-red with the murder of Gods Prophets. It is said that  
he cut the Prophet Isaiah in two with a saw. And yet, when out of the low   
dungeon he cried for mercy, he was not cast out!   
So that any kind of him, though he may have been a persecutor even   
unto bloodthough he may have been exceedingly mad against God till  
he could not speak without blasphemies against the name of Christ  
though he hated everything which is good and despised everything held  
precious by believing men and womenyet if he comes to Christ, he shall   
not be cast out! Every man, woman and child in this Tabernacle this   
morning is included in such a word as this, if he comes to Christ! That is   
the pointif you come to Christ, no matter what your past character may   
have been, nor yet what your present feelings may be, him that comes to  
Me I will in no wise cast out. I thank God for so generous a liberality as  
that!   
2. Then the next point of liberality is in the coming. Please notice it.   
Him that comes to Me. Here is no adjective to qualify ithere is no adverb to set out the manner. It is, him that comes to Me. That is the   
point, to Me. We must come to Jesus as crucified and bearing our sin.   
We must come to Christ as pleading before the Throne of God and see the   
acceptance of our prayers there. It is not coming to Baptism! It is not coming to the Lords Supper! It is not coming to the Church. It is not coming   
to worshipit is coming to Christ! Him that comes to Me.   
Take heed that you do not come elsewherefor if you rest short of anything but Christyou rest short of the promise. But, O Soul, if you build  
on nothing less than Jesus blood and righteousness. If you touch the   
hem of His garment. If you look out of self entirely to Himthen rest assured of thisthere is no other qualification to your coming but that you   
come to HIM!   
Some come to Christ at once. The very first time they hear the Gospel,   
they lay hold of it and are saved. They are not cast out. Some are months   
in comingthey go from strength to strength in this matter and their faith  
is a thing of long growth. Well, they shall not be cast out! Some come   
running! Some come walking! Some come creeping on all fours! Some have to get others to carry them, as that man did who was borne of four! But so long as they do but come, He does not cast them out! Some feel as if all their bones were broken and they can only writhe into His Presence, as it were, wriggle themselves to the Mercy Seat all full of aches, pains, woes, doubts, fears, whispers, distrusts, bad habits and sins. But if they do but come, they shall not be cast out!   
One man comes with a long prayer. Another comes with nothing but two words. One comes with many tears. Another could not shed a tear if it would save his soul, but he groans. Another can scarcely groan, but his heart feels as if it would burst. One has intense conviction, another has very little of it. One is shaken over Hells mouth, another is attracted by the beauties of the Savior. One has to be thundered at as from the top of Sinai, another is but beckoned and His willing heart runs to Calvary. But, however you come, Sinner, He will not cast you out if you come to Him that is the point!   
Do not waste time questioning what your experience is, or raising the point of how you came or when you camefor here it stands, him that comes to Menot him that comes in this way, or that way, but, him that comes to Me! Oh, the liberality of this precious verse! It shuts me in, it does not shut you out poor Sinnerhim that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out.   
3. Observe the liberality of the time. Him that comes. It does not say when. He may be seventyif he comes he is not cast out! He may be but sevenand, thank God there have been many boys and girls who have come even at that agebut He will not cast them out! Your candle may be little more than a snuff, but He will not quench it. Or it may be but newly litHe will accept either. The full-blown rose or the flower in the bud shall alike be received by His gracious hand!   
Some came to Jesus when He was on earthHe did not cast them out. A long file of sinners saved by Grace has been streaming up from the Cross to the Throne ever since then and not one of them has ever been rejected! We have fallen upon 1864, and the year is almost spent, yet, think not that we have come to the dregs of Christs mercy! Do not imagine that, because time grows old, Christs love grows decrepit! Ah, no! He will not cast us out in 1864 any more than He did the thief who looked to Him upon the Cross and found mercy that day! What a blessed thing it is that there is no limit as to time!   
I was remarking to myself the other day that the most of the conversions which occur in our place of worship are among new peoplepersons who come in once or twice and perhaps before they have heard a dozen sermons God blesses them. While those who have been hearing us for seven or eight years are not converted in anything like the same proportion. It is a very sad reflection, but still I couple with it this thought Well, if they have not come yet, still it is not too late. If they have been invited to come for seven, eight, nine, ten, twenty yearsand oh, there are some of you who have heard the Gospel ever since you were childrenyet it does not say that you shall be shut out because you come so late, but, him that comes!   
You may have turned a deaf ear until you are now growing gray. You may have despised Christ times without numberHe waited to be graciouswith outstretched arms He bade His minister woo you to come to Him, but you would not come! But still, if now, by Grace, you are led to come, He will not cast you out! At the last moment of life, if you come, He will not cast you out. And now this morningGod make it an auspicious hour to youcome and try Him this hour, it is just twenty minutes past noon, but you will find if you come that He will not cast you out, for the gates of the City of Mercy are never shut!   
4. Further, notice that there is no limit as to the duration of the promise. I mean, He does not merely say, I will not cast you out when you have come, but, I will NEVER cast you out. The original reads, I will not, not cast you out, or, I will never, never cast you out. The text means that Christ will not at first reject a Believer. And that as He will not do it at first, so He will not to the last. If I come to Christ today, He will accept me. And He accepts me in that act foreverHe will never cast me out!   
Suppose the Believer sins after coming? If any man sin we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. Suppose that Believers backslide? I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely: for My anger is turned away from him. But Believers may fall under temptation. God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able. But will, with the temptation, also make a way to escape, that you may be able to bear it. But the Believer may fall into sin as David did! Yes, but He will Purge them with hyssop and they shall be clean. He will wash them and they shall be whiter than snow,   
From all their iniquities will He cleanse them   
*Once in Christ, in Christ forever,   
Nothing from His love can sever,*   
and that doctrine this text teaches most expresslyhim that comes to Me I will never, never cast out. He will never suffer one who has once been grasped in His hands to be wrested from them! No member of Christs body can ever be cut off, or else Christ would be mutilated. No sheep of His flock shall ever be torn by the lionHe will rend the lion and, as David did, He will take the lamb out of the jaws of the lion and out of the paws of the bear. I give unto My sheep, says He, eternal life. And they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hands. What do you say to this, Sinner? Is not this a precious mercythat if you come to Christ you do not come to One who will treat you well a month or two and then send you packing about your business, but will receive you and make you His child and you shall abide forever, no longer receiving the spirit of bondage again to fear, but the spirit of adoption whereby you shall cry, Abba, Father? Oh, the Grace of this passage! Would I had an angels tongue to set it forth!   
5. Still we have not exhausted it. Something of the liberality of this passage is to be found in its certainty. Him that comes to me I will in no wise cast out. It is not a hope as to whether Christ will accept youit is a CERTAINTY! Oh, if there were only half a shadow of a hope that the Lord Jesus would have mercy upon such a poor worm as I am, would I not go into His Presence hoping against hope? If it were a case of sink or swim, yet, since I could lose nothing by trusting Him, I would gladly do it, as the hymn puts it   
*I can but perish if I go!   
I am resolved to try!   
For if I stay away,   
I know I must forever die.*   
But, dear Friends, we must not put it in that way, or at least, only for the sake of bringing out a thoughtfor there is no but about ityou cannot perish if you go! O, try at once and you will find that him that comes in no wise can be cast out! We sometimes sing

*Venture on Him, venture wholly,   
Let no other trust intrude,*   
but there is no venture in the caseit is an absolute certainty. Merchants will often speculate at a high figure. But there is no speculation here. We drink the medicine which the physician gives us in the hope that it may curebut this will curehere is water that will quench your thirst! Here is a balm that will heal your woundshim that comes He will receive He will in no wise cast out.   
What a hammer that word no wise is with which to smash your fears to pieces. Perhaps, says one, He will reject me because I do not repent enoughin no wise. Perhaps He will reject me because I have been so long comingin no wise. But He will reject me because I do not pray arightin no wise. You cannot mention any shape or form of a fear which this does not slay upon the spotI will in no wise cast out. I say again, I wish I had an angels tongue to put the liberality of this before you. The devil, I know, will be suggesting twenty reasons why you should not comelet this one reason why you should come be enough to answer all of histhat Jesus says, I will in no wise cast out him that comes. 6. I must conclude by observing that there is great liberality in the text, if you notice its personality. Reading over this verse carefully I observed that in the first sentence, where everything was special, Jesus used a large word and He said, All that the Father gives Me shall come. But in the second sentence, which is general, He uses a little word, a word which can mean only one and He says him. There is a personality herehim that comes. It does not say they that come, but him that comes. Why? Why, because sinners want personal comfort! They need something that will suit their case. Do you see, Sinner, He does not take men in the lump, but He picks you out as if you were the only sinner in the world! He says to you, him that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out!   
Had he put it in the plural, you might say, Ah, but He did not think of me. But now He has put it so that it just fits your case. This is no medicine in the bottle of which many may drink, but here is a glass set for you! It is not a cordial which may be passed round the table, but it is put at your place! Drink and be satisfiedhim that comes. Lord, does him mean me? Yes, it means you, if you will come. Come now! Put your trust in Jesus. What do you say? I hope the Spirit is speaking to you in these words of mine! And if He speaks to you as I speak to you, then shall it be well with you. Sinner, come!   
There is a dying Savior! He died in the place of sinners. In the place of what sinners? Why, of all sinners who trust Him. Will you trust Him? Is it a hard thing to trust God to save you? To trust God who became man and so proved His love to you? To trust Him? Why, says one, that is simple enough, but that is all the plan of salvation. When I am preaching from such a text as this I feel as if I have no scope for metaphors and figures and illustrationsI do not need anybecause this saving Truth of God must always he proclaimed as plainly as possible! And then if souls are saved by it, it is not the excellency of words, but the Truth itself which shall get the honor.   
Now, do you see it, Soul? If you do, I am contentif you trust Christ to save you, you shall not be cast out! You have come to Him! Your coming to Him proves that the Father gave you to Him! You are saved! You are one of His chosen! You shall never be cast out! Your Heaven is secure! You shall sit at the right hand of God and sing the new song, as surely as they do now, who, white-robed, are hymning the Redeemers praise! This is not an affair of months and weeks, is it? It does not need a momentto look, is the work of an instant. But the moment that faith is exercised, perfect pardon is given! There is no sin in Gods book against a soul that trusts Christ and there never can be   
*Theres pardon for transgressions past,   
It matters not how black their cast!   
And, O my Soul, with wonder view,   
For sins to come, heres pardon too.*   
What? Are there none who will accept this? Are there none here who say, I will trust my soul in Jesus hands? What? Will you build on your own righteousness? Ah, Fools! To pile up the sand which the next tide must sweep away! What? Do you despise the mercy of my God? Will you turn away from the bleeding wounds of His own dear Son? What? Is forgiveness not worth your having? Is Gods free mercy a thing to be scoffed at? O Heavens, hear and be astonished! O Earth, hear and be amazed! God sends the Gospel unto men, but they refuse it! That Gospel says unto them, Come now and let us reason together, says the Lord: though your sins are as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool.   
But though God calls, they refuse and will have none of His Words! May His mighty Spirit come and make a difference in some of you and bring you now to the foot of the Saviors Cross to look up! Do nothing else but look up! And looking there you shall never perish, but have eternal life! May the Master bless these words, feeble of themselves and only mighty because of the Truth they convey, for Jesus sake. Amen.

Adapted from The C.H. Spurgeon Collection, Version 1.0, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307 Sermon #1117 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

THE FATHERS WILL   
NO. 1117

DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**And this is the Fathers will which has sent Me, that of all which He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should   
raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of Him that sent Me, that everyone which sees the Son, and believes on Him, may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day.   
John 6:39, 40.**

SUCH is our impertinent curiosity that we would gladly peer between the folded leaves of the Divine purposes. The eager thirst of man to discover secrets, to solve mysteries, to draw aside the folded curtains and to ascertain that which is past finding out, tempts him full often to the wildest conjecture and the most adventurous speculation. How many would rush to any part of the earth were it possible to light upon a spot from which they could reconnoiter the times and the seasons to get a sight of the future? To know that which God conceals seems to be one of the depraved desires of the human heart. This presumptuous enquiry is both foolish and sinful. What have you to do, O man, with Gods councils? To obey Him is your work, not to attempt to know what He does not please to reveal.

But let us understand that the Gospel is an extract from the will of God and such an extract that it contains the very essence thereof. Certainly there is nothing in the will of God contrary to the Gospel. Among the unrevealed things there cannot be anything in conflict with the revealed things. None of the secrets can possibly contradict those Truths of God which He has seen fit to unfold. O then, you that want to know the will of God, here is something of it for you closely to observe and diligently to study! If you want to read that will, here it is given to you in two forms This is the Fathers will, (the will of Him which has sent Jesus, His onlybegotten Son, to be our Savior), that of all which He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.

And here is that same will, again, opened up before you, if you have but hearts to receive itThis is the will of Him that sent Me, that everyone which sees the Son, and believes on Him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day. The will of God is our salvation. It was from the will of God that the very thought of salvation first arose. Had we been left to our own wills, we should have been willing to wander further

and further from God. No man originated the idea of restoration for our raceGod Himself willed it and it is from the purpose of His Grace that all our hopes beginand the will which originated salvation shaped and formed it. It was Gods will that ordained salvation by faith, salvation through an atoning Sacrifice, salvation by the way of the new birth, salvation by the way of perseverance up to perfection.

God cast in His own mold the way and modus of salvation and it has been His will that has shaped it. Like a vessel revolving upon the wheel before Him, His fingers have made the form and fashion of it. According to His own will He begat us that we might be a kind of first fruits of His creatures. It is His will that has brought those of us who are saved into the knowledge of the Truth, by which will, also, we are sanctified and upon which will we rely as the motive force which shall bear us onward throughout the entire of our lives. It will bear us over the regions of death and bear us into the land of the perfect where we shall see the face of God without sin.

Now, it is about this will of God that we are going to speak, taking the two phrases as setting forth the Divine side of salvation and the human side of salvation. You know, beloved Friends, that the general custom is, with the various denominations of Christians, to take up one part of the Bible and preach that part. And then it is the duty of all divines on that side of the question not to preach anything but that. Or if they find a text that looks in rather a different direction, these gentlemen are expected to twist it round to suit their creedit being supposed that only one set of truths can possibly be worth defending. It never having entered into the heads of some people that there can be two apparently irreconcilable Truths which, nevertheless, are equally valuable.

Think not that I come here to defend the human side of salvation at the expense of the Divine! Nor am I desirous to magnify the Divine side of it at the expense of the human. Rather would I beseech you to look at the two texts which are together before us and to be prepared to receive both sets of Truths as Truths of God. I think it a very dangerous thing to say that the Truth lies between the two extremes. It does notthe Truth lies

in the two, in the comprehension of bothnot in taking a part from this and a part from that. Not in toning down one and modulating the other, as is too much the custom of today, but in believing and giving full expression to everything that God reveals whether we can reconcile the things or not.

We must open our hearts as children open their understandings to their fathers teaching, feeling that if the Gospel were such that we could make it into a complete system, we might be quite sure it was not Gods Gospel. For any system that comes from God must be too grand for the human brain to grasp at one effortand any path that He takes must extend too far beyond the line of our vision for us to make a nice little map of it and mark it out in squares. This world, you know, we can readily enough map. Go and get charts and you shall find that men of understanding have indicated almost every rock in the sea, almost every hamlet on the land. But they cannot map out the heavens in that way, for albeit that you can buy the celestial atlas, yet as you are well enough aware, there is not one in 10,000 of the stars that can possibly be put there.

When they are resolved by the telescope they become altogether innumerable and so far exceed all count that it is impossible for us to reckon them up in order and say that is the name of this, and this is the name of that. We must leave themthey are beyond us. There are deeps into which we cannot peer. Even the strongest glass cannot show us much more than a mere corner of the starry worlds. Thus, too, is it with the doctrines of the Gospelthey are too bright for our weak eyes, too sublime for our finite minds to scan except at a humble distance. Be it ours to take all we can of their solemn import, to believe them heartily, accept them gratefully and then fall down before the Lord and pour out our very souls in worshipping Him.

I. Well, now we come to our two texts. The first is the DIVINE SIDE OF THE WORK OF SALVATION. It needs to come firstsuch is its dignity. This is the Fathers will which has sent Me, that of all which He has given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. Mark attentively the announcement, how Sovereign its characterThis is the Fathers will. Majestic wordsThis is the Fathers will. No, if. No, but. No asking and requesting of men. No bending the knee to their choice or caprice. No asking them if they will please to have it so. But This is the Fathers will.

That is the will which is altogether absolute and independent, revolving on its own axis, the will that called creation out of nothing, the will which cannot be thwarted, for it is Omnipotent. This is the will which none may stand against, for it proceeds ever on its eternal course. It is a fixed will, for God is not fickle as we are. He does not will this today and that tomorrow. I am God, He says, and change not. He is the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of a turninga fixed, irresistible will, standing the same from everlasting to everlastingnot subject to change.

Would you have it change for the better? How could that be? Can God be better? Would you have it change for the worse? Would God be God if He could be worse than He is? How can it be that perfection can change? It must ever remain perfectiona change were to bring in imperfection into that which is complete. To Gods eternal mind there is no past, there

is no future   
*He fills His own eternal now,   
And sees her ages past.*

Looking as He does, from Heaven, He takes in at one glance all those periods of time which we are accustomed to call ages and cycles. They are all as the twinkling of an eye to Him, for a thousand years in His sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night. Let me, then, again read these words. They concern the salvation of His people. This is the Fathers will.

I say again, how grand they are! This is the Fathers will. O God, I trembled at Your will until I read those lines! I knew not what Your will might be and since I knew it must be accomplished I cowered down at Your feet in terror until I read that mercy is the Fathers will, that love is the Fathers will, that salvation is the Fathers willand then my heart flew into Your bosom with ecstasy and joy to think that Your Omnipotent, unchangeable will should be such goodwill! So full of benevolence, so full of love!

Following the current of this testimony, we are introduced to the obedient Servant of that will. This is the Fathers will, which has sent Me. Read the 38th verseFor I came down from Heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him that sent Me. Christ, then, is the obedient Servant of His Fathers will. But why does He say, not to do My own will? The meaning, I doubt not, as Dr. Owen well interprets it, is first or primarily in reply to the malicious charge of the Jews, that He was not intent to accomplish or bring about any private purposes of His own, distinct or different from those of His Father. But more than this, the will of God, which Christ came to fulfill, is sometimes taken for the commandment which He received from the Father.

So He says in the 40th Psalm, I delight to do Your will, O My God: yes, Your Law is within My heart. As though He should proclaim, all that You require at My hand as Mediator I am ready to perform. Was it not to this end that He did verily take on Him the form of a Servant? And for the same cause did not the Father expressly call Him His Servant, as you read in the 42nd chapter of IsaiahBehold My Servant, whom I uphold, My Elect, in whom My soul delights; I have put My Spirit upon Him: He shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles? Thus is He the Servant of the Father in the accomplishment of that work for which the Spirit was put upon Him.

Moreover, will of God may be taken for His purpose, His decree, His good pleasure to fulfill, which Christ came into the world. It is thus, little by little, that the full sense of the words breaks on our minds. Now, as I turn that over in my mind, not to do My own will, but the will of Him that sent Me, I am prone to reflect, It is for me to lay down my will at Gods feet. Well, it is but fit and right for all of us to do so. For every one of us to say, I came not to do my own will, seems natural and proper. But Christ, BelovedHis will is perfect! His will is as complete as the will of God, Himself! It is, in fact, coincident, must be coincident, with the will of God. But He speaks as God-ManMediatorand He puts it so that He may be to us the pattern of complete resignation and perfect obedience.

I, even I, who have no difference with God, who am God, who wills as God wills, yet I came not to do My own will, but the will of Him that sent Me. Why do you think it was necessary that He should say that? It was necessary, as I have already said, as an example to us, but further necessary that every one of us may know that Christ is no amateur Savior come into the world to save without a commission and without authority. He has come here willingly enough, but still, the reason of His coming is His Fathers will. When Christ forgives a sinner it is His Fathers will! When Christ receives a rebel to His bosom, it is His Fathers will!

He does not save us clandestinely or in any manner inconsiderate of or contrary to the Divine purposes, nor yet in some such way as though by the tenderness of a Friend He would rescue us from the sternness of a Judge. No, no, in no wisefor all that Jesus does is the Fathers will, as He would say of usI say not that I will pray to the Father for you, for the Father Himself loves you. The will which Christ is doing is the Fathers will! All that He is engaged to bring about is according to the will of the Father. Let us bless His name for that.

Well now, it would appear that God, in His Divine will, was pleased to give to Jesus, His obedient Servant, a number of men out of mankind who were to be His. Is not that the plain meaning of the passage, This is the will of Him that sent Me, that of all which He has given Me I should lose nothing? The Father gave to the Son, then, a number. I believe it is a number that no man can numbera number far beyond the bounds of our thought. But He did give a certain number whom He, Himself, had chosen from before the foundation of the worldand these became the property of the Lord Jesus Christ.

They were put under a different government, being placed under the mediatorial sway of the Son of God. They became disciplesnot by their own natural inclination, but by His gracious calling. They became Christs flock. He their Shepherd. They were to become Christs body. He was to be the Head. In due time they were to be Christs bride. He was to be the Husband. They were to be Christs Brethren and they were to be conformed to Him that He might be the first-born among many Brethren. Now this is a great transaction full of sublimitylet us not forget it or slight it. There was a day before all days when there was no day but the Ancient of

Days. And then the Ancient of Days, in His eternal wisdom transferred a number of men whom He had chosen into the hands of Jesus Christ. It is of no use quibbling at it! It is true! It was so and it is so, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken it. Gods eternal and electing purpose severed from the mass of mankind a people who were to belong to Jesus. Let us say Amen to the record.

The next thing we learn here is that all these persons Jesus Christ undertook to keep. It was the Fathers will that of all who were given to Christ He should losewhat?lose nothing. This is a very remarkable expression! It does not say He should lose nonethat is truebut lose no thing, nothing. The Lord Jesus Christ, therefore, has taken all those who were given of the Father to Him, into His custody. He is the Surety, He is responsible for them and He keeps them. In what way does He keep them? Seeing they were lost, He redeemed them. Seeing they were far from Him, He fetches them back BY His Grace, by the power of His Spirit. Seeing that they are still prone to wander He restores their souls. Seeing that they are imperfect He sanctifies them and He continues the work of sanctification. And He will make them, one day, to be without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing.

But the text says He will, lose nothing, by which He means that while He will certainly not lose one that His Father gave Him, He will not lose any part of one of them. For look at that child of God who died a few months ago. We laid him in the grave with many tears, and we believe his spirit is taken up to the right hand of God. But where is his body? Ah, we should not like to exhume itit would be a terrible spectacle if we should take it out of that coffin, or open the lid and look at all that mass of putridity! Surely this is part of one of Christs people that has been lost! Ah, but it is not His Fathers will that Christ should lose anything of what was given Himand therefore He adds, I will raise it up at the last day.

When the trumpet sounds, the dead shall come forth from their graves and there shall not be left in the grave a bone, nor a piece of a bone, of one of the Lords redeemedthey shall come again from the land of the enemyand leave nothing behind them. When Israel came out of Egypt the great Master did not bring some of the people out and leave some behind. Oh, no! Neither did He bring all the people and leave their property behind. Did not Moses say to Pharaoh, There shall not a hoof be left behind? Not a solitary lamb of all the flocksthere shall not one be left behind. And so out of the entire company that God the Father has given into the custody of Jesus, there shall not only not be one soul lost, but no part of any one of themneither of their body, of their soul, nor of their spirit. Death shall yield up its captives, they shall be completely free

*Then all the chosen race   
Shall meet around the Throne,   
To bless the conduct of His Grace   
And make His glories known.*

That is the Divine side of salvation, and that is the Truth of God which this first part of our text teaches. Do I hear somebody say, I think that doctrine is dangerous? My dear Sir, who is it dangerous to but fools? If God has taught it there can be no danger in it! At the same time there never was a Truth of God which foolish persons could not distort and turn into mischief. Ropes are good things, but many people have hung themselves with them. And there is many a grand doctrine which men wrest to their own destruction. We cannot be shaping the Truth of God down to consult the folly and sin of man. The question is, is it in the Bible? If it is there, let none of us ever say it is dangerous.

Well, but, you say, is it not all about secret things? Is it so? Then you need not be at all alarmed at our talking about it, for none of us can divulge anything which is secrettherefore you need not be under any concern that we shall do it. If it is secret, then so far as it is secret we cannot intermeddle with it. But we do say thiswhatever of it has been revealed is for us and for our childrenand we are not ashamed to speak of what God was not ashamed to declare. Moreover, we have proved it to be a good, comfortable, solid, soul-sustaining, sanctifying doctrine, for if there is anything in this world that can put force, life, energy into a man it is the belief that God has chosen him unto eternal lifehas put into him an unconquerable nature which is engaged to bring him safely to the right hand of the most High!

Why, the gratitude of a man that believes this becomes the master power of his life!   
*Loved of my God, for Him again   
With love intense I burn.   
Chosen of Him before time began   
I choose Him in return.*

Slaves are whipped to the battle, but the free man goes cheerfully to fight for the cause dear to his heart. The man that only lives a good life because he is afraid of being damned is a mere hireling in the House of God. But the man who knows that he is Gods child and never will be anything elsethat God loves him and must love himsays now, out of no desire of reward and no fears of punishment, being saved, forever saved, I love my Lord with all my heart and soul and strength, and I will render to Him the obedience of a child which is infinitely superior to the obedience of a slave. I question the possibility of virtue to a man who cannot sayI am saved. He that does good works in order to his being saved, or in order to keep himself from the peril of being lost, acts from a selfish motive and

believes in himself rather than his God.

But he, on the other hand, who feels that he is bought with a price and is delivered, is saved, is a child of God, can say, Now I have not myself to consider but my God. Now will I live for Him. Now will I spend and be spent, that I may glorify His name. The Lord grant to us to be brought into that condition in which we can understand and enjoy this doctrine and may we then, by our lives, prove our gratitude for the great benefits we have received of Him.

II. Now I am going to take the HUMAN SIDE, and I think I hear somebody sayThough I liked the first part, I know I shall not like the second. Dear Hearer, what right have you to quibble at anything that is true? Somebody on the other hand may say, I do not believe in this first part, perhaps I may in the second. My dear Friend, I wish you would give up that notion of picking and choosing parts of Gods Word that are agreeable to your taste, but rather take the whole, from the beginning of it to the end of it, so you shall find pleasure and profit all the way through.

Truly, Brothers and Sisters, it is shocking to think of the theoretical difficulties that people make for themselves by a kind of smart criticism that seems clever but lacks common sense! In this very chapter, at the 27th verse, you readLabor not for the meat which perishes, but for that meat which endures unto everlasting life, which the Son of Man shall give unto you. The fact is, you get here two paradoxes in one sentence. You are told not to labor for that meat which no man can procure without labor, and you are told to labor for that bread which no man can procure by labor, because it is a free gift.

Nevertheless, the thing needs no explanation. It is clear as daylight to every discerning heart. Here, then, is the human side of salvationThis is the will of Him that sent Me, that everyone which sees the Son, and believes on Him, may have everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day. Observe, there is no lowering of the tone. The same august words strike us on the threshold of each announcement. This is the will of Him that sent Me. The freest proclamations of the Gospel that can ever be given are as much Divine as are the plainest declarations of distinguishing Grace. Listen, then, with equal attention to this second part, for this has the same imprimatur, the same Divine stamp upon itThis is the will of Him that sent Me.

Notice again that there is the same obedient Servant engaged on this occasion as before. Whether you look at the Divine side or the human side of salvation, the most conspicuous object is still Christ Jesus. If God looks down on men it is through His Anointed, or if men look up to God, it is through Gods Christ whom He has sent. The points of difference we will therefore dwell upon. In this second verse the persons described as partakers of the benefit of salvation are thus describedEveryone which sees the Son, and believes on Him. What are we to understand by these wordsEveryone which sees the Son? We cannot see the Son now with our natural organs of sight, for Jesus has gone up to Heaven. With these optics we cannot scan His features or perceive His Presence.

But when we read of Him in the Evangelists, and when we hear of Him from the mouths of His servants, we do, in effect, see Him evidently set forth before us. The eyes of our understanding discern Him. The sense of faith recognizes Him. Now if by that sight, that knowledge, that information, we are led to believe on Him, then we have everlasting life. Whoever he may beEveryone, it saysEveryone which sees the Son, and believes on Him, comes in for the same privilege. This includes the man with great faith, but it equally includes the babe with little faith. This includes the man of reputable character, but it equally includes the man whose character has been, up till now, disreputable. Everyone that believes on Him.

Does it mean that if I believe on Him I have eternal life? Yes, whoever you are. You may listen to it in the dark, I do not want to look at you to discriminate between one individual and another. The assertion is wide enough for all of you. Are you a black man, or a white man? Are you a yellow man, or a brown man? It matters not. Are you rich, or are you poor, one in the higher ranks, or one obscure and despised? It matters not. Whoever you may be, every child of man that is born of woman that sees the Son, and believes on Him, shall have eternal life. Are there no exceptions? None whatever! Can it not be supposed that some characters may be excluded? None are excluded, therefore, but those who exclude themselves. The learned and polite, the ignorant and rudeeveryone which sees the Son, and believes on Him, may have everlasting life. That is to say, to go over the same matter yet again, every man, woman, childevery one of the human race that trusts his soul with the Son of God has everlasting life.

Well, but, says one, suppose I should not have been given by God the Father to the Son? You have no right to suppose that. If you believe in Jesus Christ you have everlasting life. I could explain, I think, a little to you, at least I have a way of explaining it to myself, how these two meet. I do not care to explain it. I do not think it is necessary at all, for it is so. There never was a soul that believed in Jesus, yet, but God the Father had given that soul to Christ. There never was a soul that trusted the Savior but it turned out that, after all, that soul had been ordained to do so from before the foundation of the world! We will not attempt to answer objections. There is the Truth of God, the plain, naked Truth of God! This is the will of Him that sent the Savior into the world, that everyone that

sees the Son, and believes on Him, should at once have eternal life. O what a splendid Gospel that is!

Now, when I go out to preach I have not to say, I am going to preach to Gods electnot at allEveryone which sees the Son, and believes on Him, may have everlasting life! Nor have I to say to myself, Now I shall pick out certain characters that I think must be a delineation of Gods chosen. I have no right to make any picking or choosing. There is the GospelGo you into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believes and is baptized shall be saved. And this, again, is the GospelThat everyone which sees the Son, and believes on Him, may have everlasting life. There let it stand, then. We will not clip its wings but we will rejoice in its simple Truth!

Now it appears that these persons who believe in Jesus, whoever they may be, are already in a present state of safety, for as soon as they believe on Him they have everlasting life. They are made alive unto God. They receive a spiritual life which they never had before. The Holy Spirit comes into them and quickens them. Whereas they were up to then dead in trespasses and sins, the Holy Spirit makes them alive unto God by Jesus Christ. And this is true of everyone that sees the Son and believes on Him. This life which is thus given is a life that cannot die, for it is everlasting. Everlasting life is freely and sovereignly bestowed, so that every Believer has in him a vital principle which cannot be destroyed any more than God Himself can. For as Gods life is everlasting life, so the life of every Believer is called everlasting life.

O see the blessedness of this, that everyone which sees the Son, and believes on Him, may have everlasting life. We do not seem to want to preach upon that. I like to roll it over under my tongue. I should like everybody here that is perplexing himself about the doctrines of the Gospel and saying, Perhaps I am shut out from the mercy of God, to go home repeating these words. Therefore I will repeat them againthat everyone which sees the Son, and believes on Him, may have everlasting life. And since notwithstanding this gift of everlasting life the bodies of Believers die, Jesus Christ has added here that it is the will of the Father that He should raise him up at the last day. It seems, then, Beloved, that no Believer shall be lost and nothing of a Believer, for if his body must be put into the groundcorruption, earth and worms shall but refine his flesh till at the sound of the last trumpet he shall put it on afresh!

I will raise him up at the last day. Then it seems that if I am a Believer in Jesus I may conclude that God the Father gave me to Christ to save me and that Christ will save me and keep me until He, Himself, shall descend from Heaven with a shout and call His own redeemed out of the graves. Thus the two truths are reconciledmay they be reconciled in our experience as well as in our faith!

Now then, to close, let me say to any troubled person here present beloved Friend, never fear that there is anything in the secret purposes of God which can contradict the open promises of God! Never dream, if you are a Believer, that there can be any dark decree that shuts you out from the benefits of Grace. Decrees or no decrees, this is the will of Him that sent Me, that everyone which sees the Son, and believes on Him, may have everlasting life. Lay hold, therefore, on Christ with all your heart, poor Sinner! Ask not to know whether your name is in the Book of Life. Come just as you are, by Gods own invitation, and lay hold on Jesus Christ!

The woman in the crowd could not tell whether it was written in the book of the decrees that she should be healed, but she came behind the Savior and touched the hem of His garment and was made whole. The dying thief did not stop to enquire, Was I chosen of God before time began? But he said, Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom. Now you, in like manner, act upon your present crisis and fit your prayer to the present opportunity. The doctrine of decrees never operates upon a mans ordinary life. What hungry man would stop, or hesitate and say, I cannot tell whether it is the purpose of God that I should eat? But when the provision is spread out before him he eats.

Would the weary man vex his soul with misgivings and say, I need to know whether it is the purpose of God I should sleep? No, but he acts like a sensible creature and goes to his bed at the time of rest, grateful for the interval of deep repose that can renew his strength and freshen his vital powers. Now you go and do likewise. Do not rebel at the purposes, or deny them, but act upon the precepts and rejoice in them! They are the guide for you. Rely upon the promises! That is the way for you to realize them. And inasmuch as the clear promise rings out from the Eternal Throne, Him that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out, go and see if He will cast you out.

Come, you vile Sinner, you foul Sinner, you devilish Sinnercome you who are stained with every sincome and see if Christ will reject you! And remember that the text that should encourage you stands hard by that which may embarrass youclose to itwhere Jesus says, All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me; and him that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from Heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him that sent Me. I do pray that those words may encourage many souls to come!

And once more, fear not that if you believe, your believing will end in failure. If you believe in Jesus Christ, the text says, It is the Fathers will that you should have eternal life and be raised up at the last day. The

question sometimes comes to ones mindAfter I have believed in Jesus and placed all my hope in Him, may I not, after all, perish? Is there not something expected of me in which I may fail? If I rest upon Him as a rock, yet still, are there not some other props and buttresses needed, and if I shall not supply them shall I be safe at last? Well, I frankly confess if there is anything needed as the ground of a sinners hope beyond the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ, I, who preach to you, must certainly perish, for I can sing the hymn we sang this morning with all my heart

*Other refuge have I none,   
Hangs my helpless soul on You.   
Leave, oh leave me not alone,   
Still support and comfort me.*

We desire to abound in good works. We desire to destroy every vice and forsake all falsehood and all evil. But we cannot depend on these things! We cannot mix them up with the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ! Our one hope lies here, that Jesus died, and God has said it, He that believes on Him has eternal life, and shall be raised up at the last day. Now, suppose, after all, you should believe on Him and find, at last, that you are not saved! Beloved, the supposition cannot be entertained for a moment, for it is written, It is the Fathers will. Is that will to be thwarted? It is written that He has sent Christhas Christ come in vain? God must be false to all His promises, belie His oath, degrade His Son before He can suffer a soul that sees the Son and believes on Him to perish!

You are all safe enough if you are resting there. Do not let a doubt disturb you. Go your way full of peace and consolation, and the Lord be with you! But, oh, if you have never believed in Jesus, may your spirits never know any rest till you do! May you never be content till you flee to Him and rest on Him! The Lord grant it, for His dear names sake. Amen.

PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMONJohn 6:22.   
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HUMAN INABILITY   
NO. 182

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON SABBATH MORNING, MARCH 7, 1858, BY THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE MUSIC HALL, ROYAL SURREY GARDENS.

**No man can come to Me, except the Father which has sent Me draw him. John 6:44.**

COMING to Christ is a very common phrase in Holy Scripture. It is used to express those acts of the soul wherein leaving at once our selfrighteousness and our sins, we fly unto the Lord Jesus Christ and receive His righteousness to be our covering and His blood to be our atonement. Coming to Christ, then, embraces in it repentance, self-negation and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. It sums within itself all those things which are the necessary attendants of these great states of heart, such as the belief of the truth, earnestness of prayer to God, the submission of the soul to the precepts of Gods Gospel and all those things which accompany the dawn of salvation in the soul.

Coming to Christ is just the one essential thing for a sinners salvation. He that comes not to Christ, do what he may, or think what he may, is yet in the gall of bitterness and in the bonds of iniquity. Coming to Christ is the very first effect of regeneration. No sooner is the soul quickened than it at once discovers its lost estate, is horrified thereat, looks out for a refuge and believing Christ to be a suitable one, flies to Him and reposes in Him.

Where there is not this coming to Christ, it is certain that there is as yet no quickeningwhere there is no quickening, the soul is dead in trespasses and sinsand being dead it cannot enter into the kingdom of Heaven. We have before us now an announcement very startling, some say very obnoxious. Coming to Christ, though described by some people as being the very easiest thing in all the world, is in our text declared to be a thing utterly and entirely impossible to any man, unless the Father shall draw him to Christ.

It shall be our business, then, to enlarge upon this declaration. We doubt not that it will always be offensive to carnal nature, but nevertheless, the offending of human nature is sometimes the first step towards bringing it to bow itself before God. And if this is the effect of a painful process, we can forget the pain and rejoice in the glorious consequences.

I shall endeavor this morning, first of all, to notice mans inability, wherein it consists. Secondly, the Fathers drawingswhat these are and how they are exerted upon the soul. And then I shall conclude by noticing a sweet consolation which may be derived from this seemingly barren and terrible text.

I. First, then, MANS INABILITY. The text says, No man can come to Me, except the Father which has sent Me draw him. Wherein does this inability lie?

First, it does not lie in any physical defect. If in coming to Christ, moving the body or walking with the feet should be of any assistance, certainly man has all physical power to come to Christ in that sense. I remember to have heard a very foolish Antinomian declare that he did not believe any man had the power to walk to the house of God unless the Father drew him. Now the man was plainly foolish, because he must have seen that as long as a man was alive and had legs, it was as easy for him to walk to the house of God as to the house of Satan.

If coming to Christ includes the utterance of a prayer, man has no physical defect in that respect. If he is not dumb, he can say a prayer as easily as he can utter blasphemy. It is as easy for a man to sing one of the songs of Zion as to sing a profane and libidinous song. There is no lack of physical power in coming to Christ that can be wanted with regard to the bodily strength man most assuredly has. And any part of salvation which consists in that is totally and entirely in the power of man without any assistance from the Spirit of God.

Nor, again, does this inability lie in any mental lack. I can believe this Bible to be true just as easily as I can believe any other book to be true. So far as believing on Christ is an act of the mind, I am just as able to believe on Christ as I am able to believe on anybody else. Let his statement be but true, it is idle to tell me I cannot believe it. I can believe the statement that Christ makes as well as I can believe the statement of any other person. There is no deficiency of faculty in the mindit is as capable of appreciating as a mere mental act the guilt of sin, as it is of appreciating the guilt of assassination. It is just as possible for me to exercise the mental idea of seeking God, as it is to exercise the thought of ambition.

I have all the mental strength and power that can possibly be needed, so far as mental power is needed in salvation at all. No, there is not any man so ignorant that he can plead a lack of intellect as an excuse for rejecting the Gospel. The defect, then, does not lie either in the body, or, what we are bound to call, speaking theologically, the mind. It is not any lack or deficiency there, although it is the vitiation of the mind, the corruption or the ruin of it, which, after all, is the very essence of mans inability.

Permit me to show you wherein this inability of man really does lie. It lies deep in his nature. Through the Fall and through our own sin, the nature of man has become so debased, depraved and corrupt, that it is impossible for him to come to Christ without the assistance of God the Holy Spirit. Now, in trying to exhibit how the nature of man thus renders him unable to come to Christ, you must allow me just to take this figure. You see a sheephow willingly it feeds upon the herbage! You never knew a sheep to seek after carrion, it could not live on lions food.

Now bring me a wolf and you ask me whether a wolf cannot eat grass, whether it cannot be just as docile and as domesticated as the sheep. I answer, no, because its nature is contrary to it. You say, Well, it has ears and legs. Can it not hear the shepherds voice and follow him wherever he leads it? I answer, certainly. There is no physical cause why it cannot do so, but its nature forbids itand therefore I say it cannot do so. Can it not be tamed? Cannot its ferocity be removed?

Probably it may so far be subdued that it may become apparently tame, but there will always be a marked distinction between it and the sheep, because there is a distinction in nature. Now, the reason why man cannot come to Christ is not because he cannot come, so far as his body or his mere power of mind is concerned. Man cannot come to Christ because his nature is so corrupt that he has neither the will nor the power to come to Christ unless drawn by the Spirit.

But let me give you a better illustration. You see a mother with her babe in her arms. You put a knife into her hand and tell her to stab that babe in the heart. She replies and very truthfully, I cannot. Now, so far as her bodily power is concerned, she can, if she pleases. There is the knife and there is the child. The child cannot resist and she has quite sufficient strength in her hand immediately to stab it. But she is quite correct when she says she cannot do it. As a mere act of the mind, it is quite possible she might think of such a thing as killing the child and yet she says she cannot think of such a thing. And she does not say falsely, for her nature as a mother forbids her doing a thing from which her soul revolts.

Simply because she is that childs parent she feels she cannot kill it. It is even so with a sinner. Coming to Christ is so obnoxious to human nature that although, so far as physical and mental forces are concerned, (and these have but a very narrow sphere in salvation), men could come if they wouldit is strictly correct to say that they cannot and will not unless the Father who has sent Christ does draw them. Let us enter a little more deeply into the subject and try to show you wherein this inability of man consists, in its more minute particulars.

1. First it lies in the obstinacy of the human will. Oh, says the Arminian, men may be saved if they will. We reply, My dear Sir, we all believe that. But it is just the if they will that is the difficulty. We assert that no man will come to Christ unless he is drawn. No, we do not assert

it, but Christ Himself declares it You will not come unto Me that you might have life. And as long as that you will not come stands on record in Holy Scripture, Christ shall not be brought to believe in any doctrine of the freedom of the human will.

It is strange how people, when talking about free will, talk of things which they do not at all understand. Now says one, I believe men can be saved if they will. My dear Sir, that is not the question at all. The question is, are men ever found naturally willing to submit to the humbling terms of the Gospel of Christ? We declare, upon Scriptural authority, that the human will is so desperately set on mischief, so depraved and so inclined to everything that is evilso disinclined to everything that is goodthat without the powerful, supernatural, irresistible influence of the Holy Spirit, no human will will ever be constrained towards Christ.

You reply that men sometimes are willing, without the help of the Holy Spirit. I answerdid you ever meet with any person who was? Scores and hundreds, no, thousands of Christians have I conversed with, of different opinions, young and oldbut it has never been my lot to meet with one who could affirm that he came to Christ of himself without being drawn. The universal confession of all true Believers is thisI know that unless Jesus Christ had sought me when a stranger wandering from the fold of God, I would to this very hour have been wandering far from Himat a distance from Himand loving that distance well. With common consent, all Believers affirm the truth that men will not come to Christ till the Father who has sent Christ does draw them.

2. Again, not only is the will obstinate, but the understanding is darkened. Of that we have abundant Scriptural proof. I am not now making mere assertions, but stating doctrines authoritatively taught in the Holy Scriptures and known in the conscience of every Christian manthat the understanding of man is so dark that he cannot by any means understand the things of God until his understanding has been opened. Man is by nature blind within. The Cross of Christ, so laden with glories and glittering with attractions, never attracts him, because he is blind and cannot see its beauties. Talk to him of the wonders of the creation. Show to him the many-colored arch that spans the sky. Let him behold the glories of a landscapehe is well able to see all these things.

But talk to him of the wonders of the Covenant of Grace, speak to him of the security of the Believer in Christ, tell him of the beauties of the Person of the Redeemer, he is quite deaf to all your description. You are as one that plays a goodly tune, it is true. But he regards not, he is deaf, he has no comprehension. Or, to return to the verse which we so specially marked in our reading, The natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned, and inasmuch as he is a natural man, it is not in his power to discern the things of God. Well, says one, I think I have arrived at a very tolerable judgment in matters of theology. I think I understand almost every point.

True, that you may do in the letter of it. But in the spirit of it, in the true reception thereof into the soul and in the actual understanding of it, it is impossible for you to have attainedunless you have been drawn by the Spirit. For as long as that Scripture stands truethat carnal men cannot receive spiritual thingsit must be true that you have not received them, unless you have been renewed and made a spiritual man in Christ Jesus. The will, then and the understanding, are two great doors, both blocked up against our coming to Christ. And until these are opened by the sweet influences of the Divine Spirit, they must be forever closed to anything like coming to Christ.

3. Again, the affections, which constitute a very great part of man, are depraved. Man, as he is, before he receives the grace of God, loves anything and everything above spiritual things. If you want proof of this, look around you. There needs no monument to the depravity of the human affections. Cast your eyes everywherethere is not a street, nor a house, no, nor a heart, which does not bear upon it sad evidence of this dreadful truth. Why is it that men are not found on the Sabbath-Day universally flocking to the house of God? Why are we not more constantly found reading our Bibles? How is it that prayer is a duty almost universally neglected? Why is it that Christ Jesus is so little loved? Why are even His professed followers so cold in their affections to Him?

From where arise these things? Assuredly, dear Brethren, we can trace them to no other source than thisthe corruption and vitiation of the affections. We love that which we ought to hate and we hate that which we ought to love. It is but human nature, fallen human naturethat man should love this present life better than the life to come. It is but the effect of the Fall that man should love sin better than righteousness and the ways of this world better than the ways of God. And again, we repeat it until these affections are renewed and turned into a fresh channel by the gracious drawings of the Father, it is not possible for any man to love the Lord Jesus Christ.

4. Yet once more conscience, too, has been overpowered by the Fall. I believe there is no more egregious mistake made by divines than when they tell people that conscience is the vicegerent of God within the soul and that it is one of those powers which retains its ancient dignity and stands erect amidst the fall of its compeers. My Brethren, when man fell in the garden, manhood fell entirely. There was not one single pillar in

the temple of manhood that stood erect. It is true, conscience was not destroyed. The pillar was not shattered. It fell, and it fell in one piece, and here it lies alonethe mightiest remnant of Gods once perfect work in man.

But that conscience is fallen, I am sure. Look at men. Who among them is the possessor of a good conscience toward God, but the regenerated man? Do you imagine that if mens consciences always spoke loudly and clearly to them, they would live in the daily commission of acts which are as opposed to the right as darkness to light? No, Belovedconscience can tell me that I am a sinner, but conscience cannot make me feel that I am one. Conscience may tell me that such-and-such a thing is wrong, but how wrong it is, conscience itself does not know.

Did any mans conscience, unenlightened by the Spirit, ever tell him that his sins deserved damnation? Or if conscience did do that, did it ever lead any man to feel an abhorrence of sin as sin? In fact, did conscience ever bring a man to such a self-renunciation that he did totally abhor himself and all his works and come to Christ? No, conscience, although it is not dead, is ruined. Its power is impaired, it has not that clearness of eye and that strength of hand and that thunder of voice which it had before the Fall. It has ceased, to a great degree, to exert its supremacy in the town of Mansoul. Then, Beloved, it becomes necessary for this very reason, because conscience is depraved, that the Holy Spirit should step in to show us our need of a Savior and draw us to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Still, says one, as far as you have so far gone, it appears to me that you consider that the reason why men do not come to Christ is that they will not, rather than they cannot. True, most true. I believe the greatest reason of mans inability is the obstinacy of his will. That once overcome, I think the great stone is rolled away from the sepulcher and the hardest part of the battle is already won. But allow me to go a little further. My text does not say, No man will come, but it says, No man can come. Now, many interpreters believe that the can here is but a strong expression conveying no more meaning than the word will. I feel assured that this is not correct.

There is in man not only unwillingness to be saved, but there is a spiritual powerlessness to come to Christ. And this I will prove to every Christian at any rate. Beloved, I speak to you who have already been quickened by Divine Grace. Does not your experience teach you that there are times when you have a will to serve God and yet have not the power? Have you not sometimes been obliged to say that you have wished to believe but you have had to pray, Lord, help my unbelief? Because, although willing enough to receive Gods Testimony, your own carnal nature was too strong for you and you felt you needed supernatural help.

Are you able to go into your room at any hour you choose and to fall upon your knees and say, Now, it is my will that I should be very earnest in prayer and that I should draw near unto God? I ask, do you find your power equal to your will? You could say, even at the bar of God Himself, that you are sure you are not mistaken in your willingness. You are willing to be wrapped up in devotion. It is your will that your soul should not wander from a pure contemplation of the Lord Jesus Christ, but you find that you cannot do that, even when you are willing, without the help of the Spirit.

Now, if the quickened child of God finds a spiritual inability, how much more the sinner who is dead in trespasses and sin? If even the advanced Christian, after thirty or forty years, finds himself sometimes willing and yet powerlessif such is his experiencedoes it not seem more than likely that the poor sinner who has not yet believed should find a need of strength as well as a want of will?

But, again, there is another argument. If the sinner has strength to come to Christ, I should like to know how we are to understand those continual descriptions of the sinners state which we meet with in Gods Holy Word? Now, a sinner is said to be dead in trespasses and sins. Will you affirm that death implies nothing more than the absence of a will? Surely a corpse is quite as unable as unwilling. Or again, do not all men see that there is a distinction between will and power? Might not that corpse be sufficiently quickened to get a will and yet be so powerless that it could not lift as much as its hand or foot? Have we ever seen cases in which persons have been just sufficiently re-animated to give evidence of lifeand have yet been so near death that they could not have performed the slightest action?

Is there not a clear difference between the giving of the will and the giving of power? It is quite certain, however, that where the will is given, the power will follow. Make a man willing and he shall be made powerful, for when God gives the will, He does not tantalize man by giving him to wish for that which he is unable to do. Nevertheless He makes such a division between the will and the power, that it shall be seen that both things are quite distinct gifts of the Lord God.

Then I must ask one more question. If that were all that were needed to make a man willing, do you not at once degrade the Holy Spirit? Are we not in the habit of giving all the glory of salvation wrought in us to God the Spirit? But now, if all that God the Spirit does for me is to make me willing to do these things for myself, am I not in a great measure a sharer with the Holy Spirit in the glory? And may I not boldly stand up and say,

It is true the Spirit gave me the will to do it, but still I did it myself and therein will I glory. For if I did these things myself without assistance from on high, I will not cast my crown at His feet. It is my own crown, I earned it and I will keep it.

Inasmuch as the Holy Spirit is evermore in Scripture set forth as the Person who works in us to will and to do of His own good pleasure, we hold it to be a legitimate inference that He must do something more for us than the mere making of us willing. Therefore there must be another thing besides want of will in a sinnerthere must be absolute and actual want of power.

Now, before I leave this statement, let me address myself to you for a moment. I am often charged with preaching doctrines that may do a great deal of hurt. Well, I shall not deny the charge, for I am not careful to answer in this matter. I have my witnesses here present to prove that the things which I have preached have done a great deal of hurt, but they have not done hurt either to morality or to Gods Church. The hurt has been on the side of Satan. There are not ones or twos but many hundreds who this morning rejoice that they have been brought near to God. From having been profane Sabbath-breakers, drunkards, or worldly persons, they have been brought to know and love the Lord Jesus Christ. And if this is any hurt, may God of His infinite mercy send us a thousand times as much.

But further, what Truth is there in the world which will not hurt a man who chooses to make hurt of it? You who preach general redemption are very fond of proclaiming the great truth of Gods mercy to the last moment. But how dare you preach that? Many people make hurt of it by putting off the day of grace and thinking that the last hour may do as well as the first. Why, if we ever preached anything which man could misuse, and abuse, we must hold our tongues forever. Still says one, Well then, if I cannot save myself, and cannot come to Christ, I must sit still and do nothing.

If men do say so, on their own heads shall be their doom. We have very plainly told you that there are many things you can do. To be found continually in the house of God is in your power. To study the Word of God with diligence is in your power. To renounce your outward sin, to forsake the vices in which you indulge, to make your life honest, sober, and righteous is in your power. For this you need no help from the Holy Spirit. All this you can do yourself. But to come to Christ truly is not in your power until you are renewed by the Holy Spirit. But mark you, your want of power is no excuse, seeing that you have no desire to come and are living in willful rebellion against God. Your want of power lies mainly in the obstinacy of your nature.

Suppose a liar says that it is not in his power to speak the truth, that he has been a liar so long that he cannot leave it off. Is that an excuse for him? Suppose a man who has long indulged in lust should tell you that he finds his lusts have so girt about him like a great iron net that he cannot get rid of them. Would you take that as an excuse? Truly it is none at all. If a drunkard has become so foully a drunkard that he finds it impossible to pass a public bar without stepping in, do you therefore excuse him? No, because his inability to reform lies in his

naturewhich he has no desire to restrain or conquer.

The thing that is done and the thing that causes the thing that is donebeing both from the root of sinare two evils which cannot excuse each other. It is because you have learned to do evil that you cannot now learn to do well, and instead, therefore, of letting you sit down to excuse yourselveslet me put a thunderbolt beneath the seat of your sloththat you may be startled by it and aroused.

Remember, that to sit still is to be damned to all eternity. Oh, that God the Holy Spirit might make use of this truth in a very different manner! Before I have done I trust I shall be enabled to show you how it is that this truth, which apparently condemns men and shuts them out, is, after all, the great truth which has been blessed to the conversion of men.

II. Our second point is THE FATHERS DRAWINGS. No man can come to Me except the Father which has sent Me draw him. How, then, does the Father draw men? Arminian divines generally say that God draws men by the preaching of the Gospel. Very true. The preaching of the Gospel is the instrument of drawing men, but there must be something more than this. Let me ask to whom did Christ address these words? Why, to the people of Capernaum, where he had often preached, where he had uttered mournfully and plaintively the woes of the Law and the invitations of the Gospel. In that city He had done many mighty works and worked many miracles!

In fact, such teaching and such miraculous attestation had He given to them, that He declared that Tyre and Sidon would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes if they had been blessed with such privileges. Now if the preaching of Christ Himself did not avail to the enabling these men to come to Christ, it cannot be possible that all that was intended by the drawing of the Father was simply preaching. No, Brethren, you must note again, He does not say no man can come except the minister draw him, but except the Father draw him.

Now there is such a thing as being drawn by the Gospel and drawn by the minister without being drawn by God. Clearly it is a Divine drawing that is meant, a drawing by the Most High Godthe First Person of the most glorious Trinity sending out the Third Person, the Holy Spirit, to induce men to come to Christ. Another person turns round and says with a sneer, Then do you think that Christ drags men to Himself, seeing that they are unwilling! I remember meeting once with a man who said to me, Sir, you preach that Christ takes people by the hair of their heads and drags them to Himself. I asked him whether he could refer to the date of the sermon wherein I preached that extraordinary doctrine, for if he could, I should be very much obliged. However, he could not.

But said I, while Christ does not drag people to Himself by the hair of their heads, I believe that He draws them by the heart quite as powerfully as your caricature would suggest. Mark that in the Fathers drawing there is no compulsion whatever. Christ never compelled any man to come to Him against his will. If a man is unwilling to be saved, Christ does not save him against his will. How, then, does the Holy Spirit draw him? Why, by making him willing. It is true He does not use moral persuasion. He knows a nearer method of reaching the heart. He goes to the secret fountain of the heart and he knows how, by some mysterious operation, to turn the will in an opposite direction, so that, as Ralph Erskine paradoxically puts it, the man is saved with full consent against his will, that is, against his old will he is saved.

But he is saved with full consent for he is made willing in the day of Gods power. Do not imagine that any man will go to Heaven kicking and struggling all the way against the hand that draws him. Do not conceive that any man will be plunged in the bath of a Saviors blood while he is striving to run away from the Savior. Oh, no! It is quite true that first of all man is unwilling to be saved. When the Holy Spirit has put His influence into the heart, the text is fulfilleddraw me and I will run after You. We follow on while He draws us, glad to obey the voice which once we had despised. But the gist of the matter lies in the turning of the will.

How that is done no flesh knows. It is one of those mysteries that is clearly perceived as a fact, but the cause of which no tongue can tell and no heart can guess. The apparent way, however, in which the Holy Spirit operates, we can tell you. The first thing the Holy Spirit does when He comes into a mans heart is thisHe finds him with a very good opinion of himself. And there is nothing which prevents a man coming to Christ like a good opinion of himself. Why, says man, I dont want to come to Christ. I have as good a righteousness as anybody can desire. I feel I can walk into Heaven on my own rights.

The Holy Spirit lays bare his heartlets him see the loathsome cancer that is there eating away his lifeuncovers to him all the blackness and defilement of that sink of Hell, the human heart. Then the man stands aghast, I never thought I was like this. Oh, those sins I thought were little, have swelled out to an immense stature. What I thought was a molehill has grown into a mountain. It was but the hyssop on the wall before, but now it has become a cedar of Lebanon. Oh, says the man within himself, I will try and reform. I will do good deeds enough to wash these black deeds out.

Then comes the Holy Spirit and shows him that he cannot do this, takes away all his fancied power and strength, so that the man falls down on his knees in agony and cries, Oh, once I thought I could save myself by my good works, but now I find that

*Could my tears forever flow,   
Could my zeal no respite know,   
All for sin could not atone,   
You must save and You alone.*

Then the heart thinks and the man is ready to despair. And says he, I never can be saved. Nothing can save me. Then, comes the Holy Spirit and shows the sinner the Cross of Christ, gives him eyes anointed with heavenly eye-salve and says, Look to yonder Cross. That Man died to save sinners. You feel that you are a sinner. He died to save you. And He enables the heart to believe and to come to Christ. And when it comes to Christ, by this sweet drawing of the Spirit, it finds a peace with God which passes all understanding, which keeps his heart and mind through Jesus Christ our Lord. Now, you will plainly perceive that all this may be done without any compulsion. Man is as much drawn willingly, as if he were not drawn at all. And he comes to Christ with full consent, with as full a consent as if no secret influence had ever been exercised in his heart. But that influence must be exercised, or else there never has been and there never will be any man who either can or will come to the Lord Jesus Christ.

III. And, now, we gather up our ends and conclude by trying to make a practical application of the doctrine. And we trust a comfortable one. Well, says one if what this man preaches is true, what is to become of my religion? For do you know I have been a long while trying and I do not like to hear you say a man cannot save himself. I believe he can and I mean to persevere. But if I am to believe what you say, I must give it all up and begin again. My dear Friends, it will be a very happy thing if you do. Do not think that I shall be at all alarmed if you do so.

Remember, what you are doing is building your house upon the sand and it is but an act of charity if I can shake it a little for you. Let me assure you, in Gods name, if your religion has no better foundation than

your own strength, it will not stand at the bar of God. Nothing will last to eternity but that which came from eternity. Unless the everlasting God has done a good work in your heart, all you may have done must be unraveled at the last day of account. It is all in vain for you to be a Churchgoer or Chapel-goer, a good keeper of the Sabbath, an observer of your prayers. It is all in vain for you to be honest to your neighbors and reputable in your conversation. If you hope to be saved by these things, it is all in vain for you to trust in them.

Go onbe as honest as you like. Keep the Sabbath perpetually, be as holy as you can. I would not dissuade you from these things. God forbid. Grow in them, but oh, do not trust in them. For if you rely upon these things you will find they will fail you when most you need them. And if there is anything else that you have found yourself able to do unassisted by Divine Grace, the sooner you can get rid of the hope that has been engendered by it, the better for youfor it is a foul delusion to rely upon anything that flesh can do.

A spiritual Heaven must be inhabited by spiritual men and preparation for it must be worked by the Spirit of God. Well, cries another, I have been sitting under a ministry where I have been told that I could, at my own option, repent and believe and the consequence is that I have been putting it off from day to day. I thought I could come one day as well as another. That I had only to say, Lord, have mercy upon me, and believe, and then I should be saved. Now you have taken all this hope away for me, Sir. I feel amazement and horror taking hold upon me. Again, I say, My dear Friend, I am very glad of it. This was the effect which I hoped to produce, by Gods grace. I pray that you may feel this a great deal more. When you have no hope of saving yourself, I shall have hope that God has begun to save you.

As soon as you say, Oh, I cannot come to Christ. Lord, draw me, help me, I shall rejoice over you. He who has got a will, though he has not power, has grace begun in his heart and God will not leave him until the work is finished. But, careless Sinner, learn that your salvation now hangs in Gods hand. Oh, remember you are entirely in the hand of God. You have sinned against Him and if He wills to damn you, damned you are. You can not resist His will nor thwart His purpose. You have deserved His wrath and if He chooses to pour the full shower of that wrath upon your head, you can do nothing to reverse it.

If, on the other hand, He chooses to save you, He is able to save you to the very uttermost. But you lie as much in His hand as the summers moth beneath your own finger. He is the God whom you are grieving every day. Does it not make you tremble to think that your eternal destiny now hangs upon the will of Him whom you have angered and incensed? Does not this make your knees knock together and your blood curdle? If it does so I rejoice, inasmuch as this may be the first effect of the Spirits drawing in your soul. Oh, tremble to think that the God whom you have angered is the God upon whom your salvation or your condemnation entirely depends. Tremble and kiss the Son lest He be angry and you perish from the way while His wrath is kindled but a little.

Now, the comfortable reflection is thissome of you this morning are conscious that you are coming to Christ. Have you not begun to weep the penitential tear? Did not your closet witness your prayerful preparation for the hearing of the Word of God? And during the service this morning, has not your heart said within you, Lord, save me, or I perish, for save myself I cannot? And could you not now stand up in your seat and sing

*Oh, Sovereign Grace my heart subdue;   
I would be led in triumph, too,   
A willing captive of my Lord,   
To sing the triumph of His Word?*

And have I not myself heard you say in your heartJesus, Jesus, my whole trust is in You. I know that no righteousness of my own can save me, but only You. O Christsink or swim, I cast myself on You? Oh, my Brothers and Sisters, you are drawn by the Father, for you could not have come unless He had drawn you. Sweet thought! And if He has drawn you, do you know what is the delightful inference? Let me repeat just one text, and may that comfort youThe Lord has appeared of old unto me, saying, I have loved you with an everlasting lovetherefore with loving kindness have I drawn you.

Yes, my poor weeping Brothers and Sisters, inasmuch as you are now coming to Christ, God has drawn you. And inasmuch as He has drawn you, it is a proof that He has loved you from before the foundation of the world. Let your heart leap within you, you are one of His! Your name was written on the Saviors hands when they were nailed to the accursed tree. Your name glitters on the breastplate of the great High Priest today. And it was there before the daystar knew its place, or planets ran their round. Rejoice in the Lord, you that have come to Christ, and shout for joy all you that have been drawn of the Father. For this is your proofyour solemn testimonythat you from among men have been chosen in eternal election and that you shall be kept by the power of God, through faith, unto the salvation which is ready to be revealed!

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THE DRAWINGS OF DIVINE LOVE   
NO. 2386

**A SERMON INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS DAY, NOVEMBER 11, 1894.   
DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, AUGUST 26, 1888.

**No man can come to Me, except the Father who sent Me draws him and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the Prophets, And they shall all be taught by God. Therefore, everyone who**

**has heard, and has learned of the Father, comes unto Me. John 6:44, 45.**

THERE is something here which troubles many seeking souls. They hear the Gospel preached in this manner, Look and live, or, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved. This comforts them and they say to themselves, This is a way in which we can run. We delight to be told of salvation by faith in Christ. By-and-by, they hear a discourse upon our Saviors Words, You must be born again, or they listen to descriptions of the inward experience of a child of God. They are taught that there must be a brokenness of heart before there can be a true binding up. There must be a stripping before there can be a clothing. There must be death before there can be resurrection and then they say to themselves, This, we fear, is true. But how different it is from the message we heard the other day! Are there two things equally truesalvation by simple faith in Christand yet the necessity of a new heart and a right spirit?

They are equally true, and they ought to be preached with equal clearness, and equal earnestness! But I would say to every seeker, You will find it very injurious to get worrying yourself with such difficulties as these. As a rule, you had better leave those questions for another day. Suppose that you were puzzled concerning specific gravity, the weight of a body in water? if you were a drowning man, I would recommend you to waive the consideration of such a subject till you were safely on shore! It is hardly the time, I think, to enter into difficult disquisitions while you are in grave peril. And, in like manner, you may leave many theological questions until, by faith in Christ, you are saved. Then, going into His school, you may ask Him to teach you these other more advanced lessons.

Now, for your help, I desire to say that these two doctrines of Salvation by Faith and the Inward Drawing of the Spirit of God are equally true and, unless they are proclaimed in due proportion, mischief may come from the preaching of either the one, or the other. I think that when the preacher only says, Believe, believe, believe, believe, believe, believe, mischief may come of that imperfect declaration, for it is a one-sided form of the Truth of God, and other important Truths of God may be forgotten, and men may get into a superficial habit of imagining that they believe when they hardly know what it is that they believeand their faith is not the living faith of Gods elect which works by love, purifies the soul and sanctifies the life!

On the other hand, I am quite sure that you may preach the need of inward experience and preach it very thoroughly and continually. But if this other matter of faith is left out, you may preach some of your hearers into despair, many of them into indifference and others of them into a kind of self-righteousness of feelings! I have met with persons who were certainly trusting in their feelings and who went so far as to condemn others because they had not endured the same amount of misery and passed through the same conviction of sin, or indulged in the same agony of despair. Truths of God are preached, we shall not stop to reconcile themthere is no need to do so, especially if they reconcile themselves to you while we preach! If the two doctrines are preached, they will act as a balance, the one to the other, and while men hear our Savior say, He that believes on Me has everlasting life, they will not misunderstand what He says if they also hear as the deep bass note of that musical scale the equally Divine utterance, You must be born again.

The text gives us good help upon this subject. I do not believe that there are any practical difficulties in the matter at all. I say, practical difficulties, for there are philosophical difficulties. Is there any subject about which there are not philosophical difficulties? Can you not, if you think of anythingbe it the most commonplace fact in natural history, very soon surround it with a cloud of obscurity which nobody can remove? A fool can set a stool where a wise man will tumble over it and you can soon raise a difficulty if you want to. Here is one. There is a bullock in the meadow and there is also a sheep in the same pasture. They will both eat grass and on the bullock that grass will turn to hair, and on the sheep it will turn to wool. How come? Can you tell me? No, and I do not want to know. It may be a very interesting point for discussion, but, practically there is no difficulty about it. Those who tan the leather, or those who dye the wool are not hindered in the least degree in their handicraft by the philosophical difficulty I have mentioned! So, there are philosophical difficulties about this matter of simple faith and salvation by it, and of the Spirits work and the necessity for it, but, practically, there is no difficulty at all, for the man who believes in Christ Jesus is born again! And every man who is born again believes in the Lord Jesus Christ! The two things come together, live together and are perfected together!

However, for the help of some sincere seekers after Christ who may be in perplexity, I will speak about this matter that troubles them. Let me read the text againNo man can come to Me, except the Father who sent Me draws him: and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the Prophets, And they shall all be taught by God. Therefore, everyone who has heard, and has learned of the Father, comes unto Me.

I. Our first observation upon this text is that THE ALL-IMPORTANT MATTER OF FAITH IS A VERY SIMPLE BUSINESS. Twice is it mentioned here, and the only definition of it that is given is coming to ChristNo man can come to Me. And, again, in the 45th verse, Comes unto Me.

Faith in Christ is simply and truly described as coming to Him. It is not an acrobatic featit is simply a coming to Christ. It is not an exercise of profound mental facultiesit is coming to Christ. A child comes to his mother. A blind man comes to his home. Even an animal comes to his master. Coming is a very simple action, indeed. It seems to have only two things about it. One is, to come away from something, and the other is, to come to something.

In coming to Christ Jesus as our Savior, we first come away from all other trusts. We leave all other confidences right behind us and come away from them altogether. My own works? I must come away from all trust in them, to Christ! My own feelings? I must come away from all reliance upon them, to Christ! Ceremonies, forms, rites, yes, even such as God has given, I must come away from all confidence in them and I must come to Jesus, quitting and leaving them all! You cannot come to Jesus and yet hold on to your old trusts. You cannot come to Jesus and yet cling to your old sins. You must come away from

righteous self as well as from sinful self. To go to a place, I must go from a place. If you would come to Christ, you must bid, good-bye, to your old sins and say, farewell, to your old confidences. Are you ready to sue for a divorce between your soul and sin, between your soul and self-confidence? That is the first essential thing in coming to Christleaving all other trusts.

Then the other part of coming is drawing near to Christ to obtain everything we need. When we truly come to Christ, we draw near to Him. We do not any longer neglect Him, we do not look away from Himon the contrary, we begin to think much of Him, our hopes center in Him and, having thought of Him, and so having come mentally to Him, we trust in Him. We come to Him for what He is. Is He a Savior? We come to Him that He may save us! Does He wash away sin? We come to Him that He may wash away our sin! Does He heal spiritual diseases? We come to Him that He may heal us of our diseases! You know what is meant by coming to such and such a physician. You must, in that same sense, come to Jesus Christ, the Divine Physician, for sin-sick souls.

This expression, coming to Christ, is so simple that I do not know how to make it any plainer. I am afraid that if I were to try to explain it, I might be like Thomas Scott when he wrote his notes to Bunyans Pilgrims Progress. Going round his parish, he found a woman who had The Pilgrims Progress with his notes. My good woman, he asked, do you understand The Pilgrims Progress? Yes, Scott, I understand The Pilgrims Progress very well and I hope that, one day, I may be able to understand your explanation of it. I will not attempt to explain any further what coming to Christ is, lest I should not succeed any better than Mr. Scott did! It ought to be clear to everybody that coming from something, and coming to something, or someone, constitute the act of coming. Quit, then, both sin and self by determined resolve, and come to Jesusrest in Him, take Him to be everything to youand then believe that you have everlasting life, according to His declaration, He that believes on Me has everlasting life.

Yet our Savior does, in close connection with this text, give us another illustration of what faith is. Faith is coming to Christ. It is also eating or receiving Christ. A man has a piece of bread in his hand. He does not know where the wheat grew, nor in what mill it was ground, nor in what oven the bread was baked, but he knows that it is bread and that he is hungry. Nature, especially living nature, abhors a vacuum, so the man determines to fill the vacuum within with that piece of bread! What does he do, but eat it? You do not have to teach children how to eat. I said to a little boy this afternoon, Why dont you put your bread and butter in your ear? Of course, he knew better than to act like that, so all he did was to laugh at me! And you never yet met with a child who took to putting the bread and butter in his earhe puts it in his mouth and eats it. So, there really is, if you would but use it, sense enough within you to understand what faith in Christ is. If you were not so ready to confound and confuse yourself, my dear Friend, you might know what faith is!

You tell me that it puzzles you. I think that it is you that puzzles yourself, not faith that puzzles you. When you get bread, you put it into your mouth, you eat it and let it go down into yourself. You may not know much about the processes that are going on within you and you need not want to know. If you do not understand anything about them, the bread will feed you just as well. Now, in that way take the Lord Jesus Christ into you, spiritually, and feed upon Him. Say from your heart, Lord, I live upon You. I believe You to be God. I believe that You did take our nature. I trust You as the Incarnate God. I believe that You did suffer in the place of guilty men. I believe that You have put away the sin of all those who trust You, and put it away forever so that they can never be condemned. I trust You to be my Savior, altogether and solely my Savior. If you really do that, you are saved.

How do I know it? says one. Because Christ says itis not that enough? He that believes on Me has everlasting life. But I have not felt any strange sensations! I have had no wonderful dreams. What? Are you asking for such signs as those? Is not Christs Word, He that believes on Me has everlasting life, enough for you? Lord, I believe on You. Therefore, I have everlasting life. Your Word is enough for me!

That is my first point, faith is a very simple matter.   
II. But, secondly, TO THIS FAITH MEN ARE GREATLY DISINCLINED. He who knew most about men says of them, No man can come to Me, except the Father who sent Me draws him.   
Men are grievously disinclined to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. Their unwillingness is so great that it amounts to an inability of this sort, that, as there are none so deaf as those that will not hear, and none so blind as those that will not see, so there are none so unable as those who are unwilling! And the Savior thus puts it, No man can come to Me, except the Father who sent me draws him.   
But why are men so unwilling to believe in the Lord Jesus? In Christs lifetime on earth, their unwillingness arose partly because He was of such lowly origin. They said, We know Joseph, and Mary, and the brethren of Jesus. How can we believe in Him as the Messiah? He was so poor, so obscure, He came of a family that was not notable in Israel as far as they knew. Besides, He came out of Nazareth and they asked, Can any good thing come out of Nazareth? He was a Galilean and they could not look up to one who came from that despised region.   
In addition to that, all His teaching was opposed to their proud notions. If He had come as an earthly king, to overthrow the Roman power, they might have believed in Him, but, as He was, they regarded Him as a root out of a dry ground. They could see nothing illustrious about the Man of Sorrows, so they would not believe in Him. And numbers of people, to this day, do not receive Christ because faith in Him is not fashionable. True godliness is not held in high repute in the upper circles of society. O simpletons, to lose your souls for the sake of a little worldly grandeur! God save us all from such insanity as that!   
The more common reason why men are not saved by faith in Christ is because they do not see any need of a Savior. I know you very well, my dear Mr. Good-Enough, and my dear Friend, Mr. Too-Good! You do not believe that you need savingyou think that you have as much as you ought to have of everything that is good, and even some to give away! Oh, yes, you hope to enter Heaven with all sails up. What will you do when you get there? The redeemed ones are all singing that they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. But you will have to go up in a corner, by yourself, and hold your tongue, because you had not anything that needed to be washed and you were, yourself, perfectly clean! You would not be happy in Heaven, for the very Glory of that blissful place is the Lamb of God and His precious blood is the theme of continual thanksgiving! I pray God to bring you out of your miserable delusion, for it is no better than that. You are not the good man that you think you areyou are stained with sin from head to foot and unless you are washed in the Divinely-provided bath, even in the atoning blood of Jesus, you will perish in your sin!   
But many do not come to Christ and trust Him because they will not receive the doctrine of Substitution. Christs dying in the sinners place, the Just for the unjust, to bring them to God, they will not havethey kick at it! I assure you that you will never have rest and peace till you accept that blessed soul-saving doctrine, for other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, even Jesus Christ the Righteous, and there is no Jesus Christ to trust in except the glorious Substitute who bore our sins in His own body on the tree! Oh, that men would not be so foolish as to reject Gods plan of salvation by the vicarious Atonement once offered on Calvary!   
Many also refuse the Savior because they are occupied with other things. They cannot come to Christ because their farm, their merchandise, their newly-married wife, or something or other, keeps them back. Oh, how long some of you have been waitingsome of you who have attended the Tabernacle, too, all the time! If anybody had said, 20 years ago, that you would be sitting in your pew an unconverted man, tonight, you were not willing to have believed it! You will probably be sitting in that pew, an unconverted man, in 20 more years time, I fearyou will either be saved, or you will have gone the way of all flesh! Oh, that the day would come when there shall be no more hesitation, no more postponement, but when you would, from your heart, say, I must have Christ. I will trust Him! Say even now what we have often sung *I do believe, I will believe,   
That Jesus died for me!   
That on the Cross He shed His blood,   
From sin to set me free.*   
There are many more who do not exercise simple faith in Christ because they do not like the consequences of it. Why, says one, if I become a Believer in Christ, I shall have to give up my old ways. You will. If I become a follower of the Lamb, I cannot go where I now go. Quite right! I am glad you see that. I hope that you are not such a hypocrite as to imagine that you can trust Christ to put away your past sin and then go on living in sin as you have done. That will never do! Christ has opened a hospital for the sick, but it is that He may heal them! He receives sinners, but not that they may remain sinnersit is that He may make saints of them and deliver them from sin! You will never come to Christ as long as you are in love with sin. And you are so much in love with sin that you never will come at all except Omnipotent Grace shall draw you! And so says our Lord Jesus Christ, No man can come to Me, except the Father who sent Me draws him.

There are many others who cannot trust in Christ and cannot come to Him because they wish for certain feelings or emotions. You want to experience amazing changes that you may know that God is at work in your soul, do you? Well, I do not wonder at that desire, but please notice what is said in the 46th verse, Not that any man has seen the Father. The work of God in the heart is not seen by the soul until, first of all, the soul sees Jesus Christ! You must not think that you can deal with an absolute God. Apart from Christ, you cannot approach God, and God operating upon your heart, without faith in Christ, will not be the ground of any comfort to you. Whatever God may be doing in you, or may not be doing in you, is not the thing that you are to look to as the foundation of your hope! Your trust is to be in Christs work on the Cross, and in nothing else! You shall see plenty of evidences, miracles and signs, by-andby, but, to begin with, the Gospel for you is, Believe, believe, believe. I could believe if \_\_\_\_. Oh, yes! I see, the ground of your confidence is that, if, not Gods Word. Oh, Sir, but I could trust Gods Word if I \_\_\_\_. Ah, that is the same thing, over again!   
You see, it is not Gods Word that you trustit is that rotten, if, to which you cling! Now, away with it, away with it, I pray you! Either call God a liar, or else believe Him. It must be one of the two! But do not pretend that you would believe Him under certain conditions that you would like to impose. If a man said to me that he would believe me under certain conditions, I would understand at once that he did not really believe me at all. That, in fact, he could not believe me, but he would believe somebody else, and perhaps trust me under cover of that other person. That would not be faith in me at all and, I pray you, deal not with the Lord in such a fashion!   
So, you see, dear Friends, my text plainly teaches us that men are greatly disinclined to come to Jesus.   
III. Therefore, THE OPERATIONS OF GOD ON THE SOUL ALL RUN IN THE WAY OF LEADING MEN TO COME TO JESUS. That is clear if you read the text, No man can come to Me, except the Father who sent Me draws him.   
You see, first, the Father inclines us to come to Christ. It is written in the Prophets, And they shall all be taught by God. What are they taught? Therefore, everyone who has heard, and has learned of the Father, comes unto Me. It is clear that the drift of the Divine operations in the heart of man is towards Christ. The Lord draws us, but all His drawings are towards Christ. If you think that you have experienced the work of the Holy Spirit in your heart, and yet it does not draw you towards Christ, you have made a mistake. The Spirit always draws away from self and away from sin, to Jesus Christ, alone! If you are drawn that way, it is the Lord who draws you, for all His drawings are in that direction.   
Then, next, the drift of all Gods teachings is this way. Whatever the Spirit of God teaches a man, the end and objective of that teaching is to get him away from self and draw him to Christ. All the teachings of affliction are intended to make us sick of self and fond of Christ. All the true teachings of the Christian ministry aim at putting down self and exalting Christ!   
All the drawings and all the teachings, then, that come from God, are towards Christ. By this test you may try everything that professes to be a Divine operation. If any man says, I am the subject of the work of the Spirit of God, and he does not exalt Christ, tell him that he is not the subject of the Spirits work at all. If he comes to you with some fine idea about himself, making out that he is some great one, say to yourself, It is no part of the work of the Spirit to set up any man as a great one. His work is to take of the things of Christ and show them to us. The Holy Spirit addicts Himself to the glorifying of Christ, so He withers our false hopes and gives us true hopes! He does this in order that Christ may be lifted up and that we may be drawn to Him.   
I believe that this is the test of all kinds of preaching. Does a man come with a Divine message to my soul? I will try him by this test. Does he lift up Christ? Does he draw me to trust in Christ? Does he draw me to love Christ? Does he draw me to be like Christ? Well and good! I will hear some more of what that man says, but if, Sunday after Sunday, I have to say, They have taken away my Lord and I know not where they have laid Him, I say, Good-bye, Sir, other people may listen to you, but you are not the man that I want to hear. I must have Christ, Christ, Christ, Christ, Christ first, last, Alpha, Omega, beginning, middle, end and all through, or else I cannot believe that the teaching is of God, for the Father draws to Christ and teaches concerning Christ.   
Further, He makes us to hear and to learn that we may come to Christ. Come, then, my dear Hearers! I think that I have now brought you a little into the Light of God. You say that you must be the subject of a Divine operation. Are you looking to Christ? Then you have had that Divine operation performed upon you, for it makes you look to Christ, alone! Is believing an easy thing? asks one. It is the easiest thing in the world! It is as easy as coming, or as eating. Well, but why is it so difficult for me? Probably it is difficult because it is so easy. I believe that faith is a hard thing to many because it is not a hard thing. It is just like Naamans washing in the Jordanif the Prophet had bid him do some great thing, some difficult thing, he would have done it. But when he said nothing but, Wash, and be clean, Naaman felt that he was too great to go to the River Jordan and too clean to go and wash. He is a nobleman and a gentlemanis he to go and wash like any pig?  
Yes, he is, and only so can he be cleansed, for his leprosy makes him as foul as any swine could be and he must, therefore, wash if he would be clean! You, though you are the queen of morality, must trust in Christ just as a harlot must trust in Christ! And you, young man, though you are, in all things, noble and excellent, you must come and believe in Christ just as a thief must do, or else you can never come where that dying thief, is, who passed with Christ into Paradise! There is but one doorwill you bow your head and enter? There is only one way of salvationwill you run along it? If not, if you will put your goodness before Christ, it shall become as bad as a crime or infamy, itself! God grant that the operations of the Holy Spirit may lead you up to simple faith in Jesus!   
IV. So, then, I finish with this fourth point. IF WE HAVE COME TO JESUS, WE NEED NOT QUESTION OUR SAFETY. Christ says, He that believes on Me has everlasting life. He who has come to Jesus is saved! You need not question your safety, for you could not have come to Christ without having been drawn to Him. No man can come to Me, except the Father who sent Me draws him. You could not have come if you had not been drawn! Well, then, if you have come, you have been drawn, and if the Father has drawn you, you have come the right way! It all lies in a nutshell. If I have come to Jesus and have put my trust in Himmy nature is, in itself, so averse to this way of salvation that, if I have really and from my heart accepted itthere must have been upon my heart an operation from God to bring me into this condition! That operation could not have been badly performed, for God never works amiss or ineffectually. I am, therefore, in the very fact of being brought to Christ, assured that God has been at work with me!   
Oh! I have sometimes heard poor souls say, I came to Christ, but I am afraid that I have come the wrong way. You cannot come the wrong way. Oh, but I heard of one who came to Christ so quickly! Yes, and I have heard of one who came to Him very slowly. But as he came, it did not so much matter how he came! When the whole world was drowned, a pair of greyhounds found shelter in the ark. I do not suppose they started very early. But there was a pair of snails that went in with themI wonder how soon they started? They certainly must have started a long while before the ark door was opened or the ark prepared. Come along, then, you poor crawling snails, come along! If some of you have the greyhounds speed, come along, bound and leap to Christthe quicker the better! But if you are a man of slow action, remember that the snails in the ark were not drowned. Though they were slow in coming in, there they were, as safely preserved as the rest of the living creatures that were with Noah. Well says one, I feel as if I could only creep to Christ with broken legs and an aching back. Then creep to Christ, only come to Him! Come anywayleaping or limping. If you shall come, He has said, Him that comes to Me , I will in no wise cast out, and that includes any coming in all the world if it is but a coming to Him. If you trust Him, you are saved! That Truth of God ought, I think, to give some consolation to any who are troubled about their faith and about the inner life of the soul.   
Yet again, remember that all teaching that is absolutely necessary to salvation concerns Christ. Therefore, everyone who has heard, and has learned of the Father, comes unto Me. If there were any right teachings that would lead you beyond ChristI do not know any, but if there were suchyou can do without them. The only teachings that you need are those that lead you to Christ. Let this comfort anyone who says, I understand no theology. I am only a beginner in the study of the Word. I could not even explain the plan of salvation to another person, but I am trusting in Christ. Well, rest satisfied with that glorious fact!   
To close, the best sentence in the whole text, to my mind, is that with which the 44TH verse finishes, I will raise him up at the last day. Is not that glorious? The Savior does not merely say that he that believes is drawn to Him by the Father and that he is now saved, but He says, I will raise him up at the last day. It is as good as saying, I will take that mans case into My own hands. He does not mention all the intervening circumstance, but He finishes up with the last victory, I will raise him up at the last day. This man is a sinner, Lord. I will forgive him. He has a black heart. I will change it. He will be very fickle. I will keep him. He will be much tempted. I will pray for him. He will have many afflictions. I will sustain him. But Lord, he will die. I will be with him. But he will be buried, Lord, and laid among the worms, dust to dust. I will raise him up at the last day.

It is as good as saying, I will go through with the business for the whole of the man, for if He takes care of the poor body, and raises it up, depend upon it that He will take care of the soul that shall be forever with Him! If this rag of a robe that I wear is yet so dear to Him that He will not leave it in the grave, then the man within the robe will be all right! Christ will take care of him, depend upon that! He who will preserve the casket will not lose the jewel. I will raise him up at the last day.   
The Lord bring every one of you to trust in this mighty Savior, for His great names sake! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON:  
**John 6:41-71.**   
We shall read, tonight, part of that blessed sixth chapter of Johns Gospel, beginning at the 41ST verse.

Verses 41, 42. The Jews then murmured at Him because He said, I am the bread which came down from Heaven. And they said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How is it then that He says, I came down from Heaven? Familiarity breeds contempt. Because the Jews knew Jesus and His kindred after the flesh, therefore they would not believe that He came down from Heaven. Let us beware of foolish prejudices and let us not judge after the flesh. Why should Jesus not have come down from Heaven even though these men knew His reputed father and mother?

43. Jesus, therefore, answered and said unto them, Murmur not among yourselves. It was a murmuring that was scarcely audible, but Jesus heard it and He checked it. The Lord cannot take any delight in murmuring. Murmur not among yourselves.

44. No man can come to Me, except the Father who sent Me draws him: and I will raise him up at the last day. You did not expect the Savior to say just that, did you? He always speaks the Truth of God, even though He has to lay the axe at the root of the tree of self-confidence. He does not seem to be encouraging His hearers, but rather to be repelling them. He was trying to show them the state in which they really were. They had not been drawn to Himself. They were alienated from Him and they would continue to be at a distance from Him unless God should interpose and draw them to Him.

45. It is written in the Prophets, And they shall be all taught by God. Therefore, everyone who has heard, and has learned of the Father, comes unto Me. This was as much as to say, The Father has never taught you. You have learned nothing from Him, or you would come to Me. And in your rejection of Me, you prove that you are strangers to the Grace of God.

46. Not that any man has seen the Father, save He which is of God, He has seen the Father. Christ is of God in a very peculiar sense. He is not Gods creature, but Gods Son. He is of the very essence of God and, therefore, He knows what God is as we never can know.

47. Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believes on Me has everlasting life. This is a grand saying! Can you not catch the Truth of God it reveals? Whatever deficiencies there may be in you, if you believe on Christ, you have everlasting lifenot a life which you can lose, or which will die out, but everlasting life! And we are not among those who clip the wings of that great word, everlasting. We take this verse to mean just what it saysthat is, if you believe on Christ, you have within you a life which will last forever and ever!

48-50. I am the bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which comes down from Heaven, that a man may eat thereof and not die. Christ is the Bread for the soul, the Bread of immortality, the Bread which will fit a man for Heaven and sustain him till he arrives there. Oh, that we may all eat of this Bread of Life, and so live forever!

51-54. I am the living bread which came down from Heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever: and the bread that I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this Man give us His flesh to eat? Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except you eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats My flesh, and drinks My blood has eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. How necessary it is to have a spiritual understanding of the Scriptures! These metaphors have a sort of cannibal meaning about them to a man who goes no further than the letter. But the spiritual man knows that the soul feeds upon the doctrine of Christs Incarnation and drinks in the truth of Christs Atonement. This is feeding, this is drinkingthis is being nourished upon Christs flesh and Christs blood!

55. For My flesh is meat, indeed, and My blood is drink, indeed. Meat and wine are, after all, only shadowsthey feed the shadow-life of the flesh. Christ and His precious blood are the great realitiesthey nourish the true life of the spirit. Blessed are they who know what it is in spirit to feed upon these spiritual things!

56-58. He that eats My flesh, and drinks My blood, dwells in Me, and I in him. As the living Father has sent Me, and I live by the Father: so he that eats Me, even he shall live by Me. This is that bread which came down from Heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: He that eats of this bread shall live forever. The Savior goes over the same ground several times. There is a variety in His utterances, but in essence, the meaning is the same. He wants to get it into our minds that we are to live upon Himthat He, not self, He, not works, He, not our feelingsis the real food of the soul, by which that soul acquires and retains immortal life.

59, 60. These things said He in the synagogue, as He taught in Capernaum. Many therefore of His disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it? Preachers must not be astonished if they stagger their hearers when they proclaim the Truth of God! They must not retract what they have said, nor tone it down because soand-so is offended by it! Truth is hard, especially to hard hearts. Every great Truth is hard to a beginner in the school of Christbut it is, none the less, to be taught, for that which is difficult, today, may become delightful, tomorrow, or whenever we are better educated in the things of God!

61, 62. When Jesus knew in Himself that His disciples murmured at it, He said unto them, Does this offend you? What and if you shall see the Son of Man ascend up where He was before? He that is offended at any Gospel Truth may expect to be still more offended, for there are higher and deeper doctrines than Jesus had then uttered. If you stagger under the elementary lessons, what will you do when you get into the grammar school of Divinity, and begin to learn the loftier lessons of the Truths of God? Oh, for a faith that never staggers when Christ speaks, and that believes whatever He reveals!

63. It is the Spirit that quickens; the flesh profits nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life. Do not look at them as dead words! Regard them as full of life and understand them in their living spiritual sense.

64. But there are some of you that believe not. Some of Christs own disciples, some who had kept Him companybelieved not! This was a very sad statement for Jesus to be obliged to make, but it must be made today about many professed ChristiansThere are some of you that believe not.

64. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray Him. He is not deceived by hypocrites. If we have crept into the Church unworthily, He knows all about us. He knows us better than we know ourselves! Oh, that we might be very careful, watchful, jealous! May we abhor hypocrisy of every sort! It is impossible to continue in it without being detected, but if it were possible, we ought not to practice it, but with such an eye as that which is in the Head of the Church, even Christ, we cannot deceivetherefore, let us not attempt it.

65, 66. And He said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto Me, except it were given unto him of My Father. From that time many of His disciples went back, and walked no more with Him. It often happens, in the ministry of a faithful preacher, that he has to say unpleasant things. And there are some who withdraw because of his preaching of the Truth of God. Should he break his heart when they do so? Certainly not! They did the same with his Master. They acted the same with the Apostle Paul. It will be so to the end of the chapter and, indeed, it is part of our work to separate between the precious and the vile. Truth is like the fan which drives away the chaff and leaves the wheat the more pure. Yet it is sad to read that many of the disciples of Christ went back and walked no more with Him because they could not endure the faithful Words He spoke to them.

67, 68. Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will you, also, go away? Then Simon PeterWho was always to the front, ever ready to speak, Simon Peter

68-70. Answered Him, Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that you are that Christ, the Son of the living God. Jesus answered them, have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil? Our Lord often surprises us by the way in which He speaks. He does not say what we would have expected to hear from Him, but He says something that is very startling and even discouraging! It is the way of our Master, because He sees further than we do and He often replies, not to the question as it lies in the words addressed to Himbut to a belief in the heart at the back of the words. He did so here. Peter may have thought that the twelve were all steadfast and sincere, so Christ says to him, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?

71. He spoke of Judas Iscariot the son of Simon: for he it was that should betray Him, being one of the twelve.   
HYMNS FROM OUR OWN HYMN BOOK552, 448, 502. Adapted from The C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307 Sermon #2606 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

**CHOICE TEACHING FOR THE CHOSEN   
NO. 2606**

**A SERMON   
INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS-DAY, JANUARY 22, 1899. DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, OCTOBER 21, 1883.

**It is written in the Prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man, therefore, that has heard and has learned of the Father, comes unto Me. John 6:45.**

I SUPPOSE that you never noticed any great literary excellence in Bradshaws Railway Guide. No, you say, one writing would be very much out of place in such a book as thatit is meant to be a plain direction to travelers. When we consult it, we do not wish to be entertained, we want to be guided as to the best and quickest route to our desired destination. Well, that is the sort of sermon I am going to try to preach one which, I trust, shall be a guide to Heaven to some who hear it, or who may afterwards read itI long, above all things, that through my words many may find rest and peace in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Notice, dear Friends, what our Savior was aiming at in this discourse. The Jews had been murmuring at Him. Certain followers of the scribes and Pharisees, who always opposed Him, had been whispering among themselves and finding fault with Him. Our Lord did not condescend to come down to their level and parley with them. They pretended that their difficulty was that He was well known among them, that He was the son of Joseph, the carpenter, and that they knew His mother and His brothers and sisters. Our Lord does not appear directly to answer them, but He takes quite a different tack. He says, Murmur not among yourselves about this matter. Do not imagine for a moment that I am disappointed because you do not believe in Me, and do not suppose that your unbelief will at all frustrate My Fathers purpose or surprise Him. You may reject Me if you are determined to do so, but your folly and sin will make no difference to anybody except yourselves. On your own head shall be the guilt of your own blood. I knew that you would not believe in Me. I quite expected that you would not receive Me, for, No man can come to Me, except the Father which has sent Me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. And, Beloved, in a similar manner, when we are pleading with you that you should believe in Christ, we must weep over you as Jesus wept over Jerusalem! And we may say, as Paul wrote to the Thessalonians, We were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherishes her children, but when you come to this terrible decisionthat you reject Christ and will not have Him reign over you, then we fall back upon the eternal purposes of Godand we tell you that you have not received either the electing love of God or the effectual working of the Holy Spirit. And you are left to perish in your sins!

To the ungodly and the unspiritual this may sound like rather harsh language, but should not men be treated with some measure of harshness if they spurn the Christ who is set before them and, in their unbelief, wickedly reject Him? True love is all the more loving because it is outspoken and sometimes seems even severe. There is a spurious sort of love current, nowadays, which consists in saying, Ah, yes, you are all right and I am all right! You say, No, and I say, Yes, but, no doubt, we are both equally correct. You are black and I am whiteor I am black and you are whitebut, in these days, black is white, and white is no color at all! Let us make things smooth and pleasant all round. You praise me and I will praise you! It does not really matter what you believe, or what you thinkwe shall all get right at last. That kind of talk, or the preaching which comes practically to the same point, is infernal cruelty to immortal souls! I dare not use a milder term to describe it. It may be cried up as charity, but there is no charity in it! It is a shameful selfishness which, for the sake of ease and popular favor, cries, Peace, peace, when there is no peace, and seduces men to their own destructionplaying merry tunes to them when, all the while, they are dancing down to death and to Hell!

Our Lord Jesus Christ was not a preacher of that order. When men refused Him, He flashed the red light of the Truth of God in their faces and made them know that if they rejected Him, they rejected their only hope of mercyand if they turned against His Grace, it was because they did not know its power and were not under its influence. He taught these people, who murmured at Him, that they never would believe in Him unless the Father taught them. He plainly declared that the Father would teach all His own and that if those who were listening to Him did not come to Him, it would prove that the Father had not taught them, that they were not Gods chosen and, therefore, they would perish in their carnal and guilty ignorance of Him!

Now coming to the text, I shall ask you to notice, first, the promise of the Fathers teaching of His own people. It is written in the Prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Then, secondly, we shall examine the teaching itself. They shall be all taught of God. And, thirdly, we shall consider the grand result of the teaching. Every man, therefore, that has heard, and has learned of the Father, comes unto Me.

I. To begin, then, there is in the text, THE PROMISE OF THE FATHERS TEACHING OF HIS OWN PEOPLE.   
Christ says, concerning this promise, It is written in the Prophets. I greatly admire that sentence because if there was ever anyone in this world who might have spoken on His own authority, without quoting Scripture, it was our Lord Jesus Christ! In Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily and, therefore, all His sayings are the utterances of Omnipotence and He often, when upon the earth, made use of that great double Amen, Verily, verily, I say unto you. Yet this Divine Teacher, who spoke as never man spoke, continually quoted from the Old Testament and supported His own teachings by quotations from the Law and the Prophets, and the Psalmists and other Inspired writers. In this case, addressing Himself to the Jews, He says, It is written in the Prophets. The tendency, nowadays, even among preachers, is to depreciate and dishonor Holy Scripture. I am often saddened as I find how many are quibbling at one part or another of the Sacred Word. To my heart, there is nothing more authoritative or more conclusive than this little sentence, It is written. If Gods message to men is written, that is enough for meand my great concern shall be to find out what that message is! Every man must have Infallibility somewhere. Some find it in the Pope, but I frankly confess that I have never seen the slightest sign of it there! Some find it in what they call, the church. I am sure I do not know in which church to look for it, for all of them seem to me to be very, very fallible. I find Infallibility only in the Inspired Word of God! Here is a harbor where I can drop down my anchor feeling certain that it will hold. Here is a place where I can find sure footing and, by the Grace of God, from this confidence I shall never be moved. It is written in the Prophets, is quite enough for me! I trust, Beloved, that it is also sufficient for all of you.   
That we may learn the lesson that our Lord intended to teach, let us look at the Words which He quoted. He said, It is written in the Prophets. And, truly, the passage or its equivalent may be found in more places than I shall be able to refer to, now, but will you kindly look, first, at the 54th Chapter of Isaiah, at the 13th verse? Ah, I see the eyes of you Bible-lovers flash and I think I hear you say, Fifty-fourth of Isaiah? Why, of course, that follows just after the 53rd of Isaiah! Precisely so and, that 53rd of Isaiah, as you well know, is all about Christs Substitutionary Sacrifice. There we have the full-length portrait of the bleeding Substitute But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed. Many of you know by heart that blessed chapter, so full of the doctrine of God laying upon Christ the sin of His people, and of Christ bearing all their iniquities that they might be forever free. Well, immediately after that great central Truth of the Christian faith, comes this 54th ChapterSing, O barren, you that did not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, you that did not travail with child, There is no better place for any to sing than at the foot of the Cross, gazing by faith upon the crucified Savior! O Earth, with all your barrenness! O heart of steel, with all your hardness! Break forth into singing, for there is heavenly joy and there is the promise of Heaven, itself, in the death of Him who lived, and loved, and died for us!  
Further on in the 54th Chapter comes this 13th verse, from which our Savior quoted, And all your children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of your children. This is a promise to the Lords own people. The teaching of Scripture is that Christ died for His chosen. Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it. Gods promise, All your children shall be taught of the Lord, is made to His own Church and to all who are the children of that Church, namely, all who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life! All Gods chosen, all whose names are written in the Lambs Book of Life, all whom Christ has redeemed by His blood, shall be, each according to his measure, in due time taught of the Lord.   
That is the meaning of the promise as we get it in Isaiahs prophecy. First, it follows the Doctrine of Substitution and, next, it is made to Gods chosen people.   
Now will you turn over a few pages in your Bible, and read what is written in the 31st Chapter of the prophecy of Jeremiah, beginning at the 31st verse? Behold, the days come, says the Lord, that I will make a new Covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the Covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which My Covenant they broke, although I was an husband unto them, says the Lord: but this shall be the Covenant that I will make with the house of Israel. After those days, says the Lord, I will put My Law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be My people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know Me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, says the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

So, you see, this promise is joined with other blessings of the New Covenant. Notice that when our Savior quoted the prophecy, He commenced with the word, and. Now, as a general rule, when you make a quotation, you do not begin with, and. That is a copulative conjunction which joins one sentence to another, yet our Lord begins with an, and, as if to hint that there was a great deal going before it of which He could not speak fully, just then. There is an Everlasting Covenant, ordered in all things and sure, which God has made with Christ Jesus, His Son, on our behalf. And all who were represented by Christ became, by virtue of their union with Him, partakers in all the blessings of that Covenant. Our side of it has been fulfilled by Christ, our Representative. He has done the Fathers will perfectly and He has been able to say, concerning the part entrusted to Him, It is finished. The side of the Covenant which has yet to be fulfilled is God the Fathers portionand that runs thus, I will, and they shallI will be their God, and they shall be My people. I will put My fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from Me. I will instruct them so that they shall not need to have anyone to say to them, Know the Lord, for they shall all know Me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them. What a wonderful promise this is! It is perfectly unconditional and freely made by the Father concerning all His chosen!   
As it stands in these two prophecies, as our Savior quotes it, it is a promise made to each individual of the chosen seed. They shall be all taught of God. Then there shall not be one true child of God who shall not be taken into the Lords school and be taught and trained by the Divine Father! Perhaps someone asks the very important question, Do I belong to that blessed number? Let me reply by making another enquiry, Have you been truly taught of the Lord? If so, you belong to the chosen company. If you have not been taught of the Lord, I cannot tell whether you are His or not. None of us can climb to Heaven and unroll the eternal parchments, to tell whose name is written there. And until there is some open and overt evidence of your being the Lords, I cannot declare that you are. But by this test shall you knowif you have been taught of the Lord, you are one of His children, you are in the Covenant of Grace, and you shall have your full share of every good thing which the Lord has there laid up for His own.   
That, then, is the promise of the Fathers teaching.  
II. Now, in the second place, let us briefly examine THE TEACHING ITSELF. They shall be all taught of God.   
I want you to notice, first, that this teaching is practically the same thing as Gods drawing. Let me read the previous verse. No man can come to Me, except the Father which has sent Me draw him. And they shall be all taught of God. The way in which God draws men to Christ is not merely by persuasion, but by instruction. The Father does not draw us to Christ by a force which is contrary to our nature and willwe are not sticks and stonesand He does not treat us as if we were. We are rational, responsible, free agents and He deals with us as such, never snapping even the finest strings in the instrument of human nature, so far as it is human nature. So, when He draws men, He draws them by teaching them!   
I will show you how the Lord does this. He first teaches the poor soul what a great sinner he isand that makes him look for a great Savior. He teaches that poor sinner the impossibility of his being saved by his own worksand that makes him look for the works of somebody else. He teaches that poor sinner that He has authorized Christ to stand in his place and, by His life and death, to meet all the Laws demands on that sinners behalfand the poor sinner says, Why, that is exactly what I need! So, while the Lord teaches him, He is really drawing him and, in like manner, there ought to be a great deal of teaching in all our attempts to draw men to ChristI mean, in our efforts to be the instruments of drawing them. If I stand here and simply shout, Believe, Believe, Believe, I cannot expect that any good and lasting result will come of my shouting. I must tell people what they are to believe! I may try to persuade men to do this and to do thatand there may be great force in the persuasion, but, unless they understand the reason for my pleading, little will come of it. Gods way of working should be our way of working and He draws men by teaching them! Observe that very carefully.   
Now notice what kind of teaching is here promised. It is Divine teaching. All your children shall be taught of the Lord. They shall be all taught of God. There is no teaching but that which will ever save the soul. My dear Hearer, you may listen to the best preacher who ever lived, but unless God shall apply the Truth of God to your heart, you will not receive it. You may study the best books on theology as long as you like, but unless God the Holy Spirit shall give you the keys of this treasure house, you will never get at its precious things and secure them as your own. Means are to be usedas I will show you in a minute or twobut you must not trust in the meansyou must not even rely on the best study that you can give to the Word of God, itself, as the sure means of your knowing the Truth. Over and above all that, you need the instruction and illumination of the Holy Spirit! He shall teach you all things. But unless you have His teaching, you cannot and you will not know the Truth of God. I would like, if I could, to unlearn everything concerning the things of God that I have taught myself. I desire with all my heart that all I know may be what I have learned of the Spirit of God and, dear Soul, if ever you are to come to Christ, you will have to unlearn a great deal that you have been teaching yourself, for nothing will be of any real worth to you in the matter of your eternal salvation but what the Holy Spirit, Himself, shall write on your heart and teach you. So, the promise of the text concerns Divine teaching.   
Yet notice, also, that it is teaching through the usual means. Every man, therefore, that has heard, and has learned of the Father, comes unto Me. Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God. Though my hearing will not save me, yet, ordinarily, it is the channel by which Gods Spirit works to the saving of the soul. Though my reading of the Scripture will not, of itself, save me, yet it is the usual way by which God enlightens the understanding through the Holy Spirit. Never neglect the means of Grace, I pray you, but, at the same time, never get into the condition that some are in who feel quite happy so long as they have been to a place of worship on Sunday, who return home and go to bed, just as if they had done all their duty for the day and had no need of anything further. They are like men who go to market, but do not buy anything. Or like persons who go into a field, but do not work in it. They are quite satisfied with having been to the market or the field. It must not be so with you, dear Hearers. If you want to find Christif you want to go to Heaven when you dienever be satisfied with mere hearing of the Word, but pray God the Holy Spirit that through the hearing you may be taught of the Lord.   
The most blessed thing about this Divine teaching is that it is effectual teaching. If you are taught by the ablest divine, you may yet learn nothing. But if you are taught of God, you will really know what you learn. If He teaches you what your sin really is, you will know itperhaps even to despair. If He teaches you the meaning of His Law, you will know it as you lie at the foot of Sinai trembling. And if He teaches you the fullness of Christ, you will know that, and you will rejoice that He is just such a Christ as you need! Men are sure to learn whatever God teaches them by His Holy Spirit. There shall not be one who shall pass through His school and yet remain a fool. Though they were all fools when they entered it, yet, before they leave it, they shall be so instructed as to the way of holiness that they shall not err therein. My heart continues praying even while I am preaching, Lord, teach me, and then it adds, and, Lord, teach these people, too. Come and be their Instructor, for what can they know except that which You teach them ?   
III. So I shall conclude with this last pointTHE GRAND RESULT OF THIS TEACHING. We have read the promise of the teaching. We have thought over what kind of teaching it is. Now let us enquireWhat is the result of it? Every man, therefore, that has heard and has learned of the Father, comes unto Me.   
Some men say that they have been taught of God and then they go on to prove that what they know is of their own inventing. Our Lords test concerning His disciples is, By their fruits you shall know them. And this is the fruitevery man who has heard the Word, and who has been taught of the Father, comes to Christ! Therefore, if any man preaches that which does not lead you to Christ, do not listen to it, for evidently he has not been taught of God. And, if you find in any book, teaching which makes you think less of Christ than you did before, burn the book! It will do you no good, and it may do you a great deal of mischief. All sound teaching leads to Christ, for if, when the Father, Himself, is the Teacher, the consummation of our scholarship is that we come to Christ. Surely, when we poor creatures are the teachers, we must be even more bound to begin and end with Christ Crucified. You were asking me, just now, whether you had been taught of the Father. You wanted to know whether you were one of His children. Well, here is the testhave you come to Christ? If so, you have been taught of God!  
Coming to Christ is a very simple thing. It is the easiest thing in all the world, yet no man ever performed it until God the Father instructed him and taught him that sacred art. To wash in Jordan was a very simple thing, yet at first proud Naaman would not do ithe turned away in a rage! To believe in Jesus is a very simple thinglittle children have believed in Him, persons who have scarcely been intellectually above an idiot have, nevertheless, been able to believe in Jesus! And yet, with all its simplicity, men never exercise it until they have been taught of the Father. I suppose it is because faith is so easy that they despise it. Naamans servants said to him, If the Prophet had bid you do some great thing, would you not have done it? How much rather, then, when he says to you, Wash, and be clean? And it is only when the Divine Spirit humbles the heart and makes the man feel that he must stoop to anything so long as he may but be saved, that, at last, he goes down to wash in Jordan according to the saying of the man of God, or to believe in Jesus Christ according to the command of the Gospel.

You are taught of the Lord, my dear Hearer, if you believe in Jesus Christ, that is, if you come and trust Him. And, if you do not trust Christ, you may be a Doctor of Divinity, but you have never been taught of the Lord. He is not to you very God of very God, your sole and only Savior. It you do not trust Christ, you are a stranger to the Divine Light of God that assuredly must be the case. You cannot be right in the rest unless you are trusting in Him. But, if you are truly believing in Him, then you are taught of the Lord. It is very wonderful how God brings His people to this point of trusting Jesus. I heard a little story which might have fitted

very well into my morning sermon [Sermon #1745, Volume 29AbijahOr Some Good Thing Towards the Lordread/download the entire sermon free of charge at

http://www.spurgeongems.org ] but it was told to me after I had finished my discourse, so I will repeat it to you now. In a London court there was a little girl who had been to Sunday school and who had found Christ as her Savior. She heard that there was a poor woman lying very ill and all alone, up two flight of stairs, so the child went up to the room and pushed the door open. She did not show herself, but said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved. A nurse came in the afternoon, to attend to the poor creature, and she fetched in a city missionary to see the woman, for she talked so strangely, the nurse thought. When the good man came in, the woman said, I am so happy, I am believing in the Lord Jesus Christ and I am saved! An angel came to the door and I heard him speak, and he said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved, and I did believe on Him, and I am saved!

It was not an angel at all, it was that little girl! But it did not matter in the least who said it, for it was just as true whether an angel or a child spoke the words. I long that God should lead you, my dear Friend, to feel, It does not matter how the Gospel comes to me, for if it is true, I believe it and I accept the Christ whom it makes known to me. Some of you probably think that if an angel were to come flying through the Tabernacle and were to alight just against your seat and say to you, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved, you would believe at once. But it would not make any difference in your believing, would it? It is the same message as I, who am, indeed, in the Scriptural sense, one of the angels or the Churches, put before you. You do not mind who brings the letter that is full of good news! I never trouble to send out to enquire the color of the postmans hair if he brings me a letterI take it and read its contentsand you need not stop to ask whether the message comes to you by an angel, or a babe, or a minister, or whoever it is! Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved! And, if you do believe on Him, then I know that the Father taught you, I am persuaded that you are one of Gods elect and I can turn and say to you, Yes, though I have not read the secret roll of the redeemed, if you believe in Christ, your name is there, for there never was a soul yet that came to Christ except the Father drew him. And the Father never drew one by mistake and He never will! This is the blessed consummation of all Gods teachingthat the taught ones come to Christ!

But notice, before I close, that the Lord says, Every man, therefore, that has heard and has learned of the Father, comes unto Me. He does not merely come once, but he keeps on coming. Do not make any mistake about faith in Christ, as if it were one single act and then were done with. The faith that saves the soul is an all-the-day faith and an everyday faith. If you believe in Christ, your faith must be of the kind that believes today, tomorrow and forever. If you say, I believe that I believed in Christ 20 years ago and, therefore, I am saved, I do not believe anything of the kind! Unless you still believe, you never truly believed in Christ Jesus, for the faith that God works in the soul is a continual faith! It has its ups and downs and, sometimes, like the moon, it is eclipsed, but it comes out of the darkness, again, and shines as brightly as ever! And, further, if you did ever really believe in Christ, you believe in Him now. To whom coming, says the Apostlenot, having once come to Christ, we now run from Him. But, to whom coming, always coming, always trusting, always believing!

And why is this? Because we are always being taught of the Father! I trusted Christ when I knew comparatively little of Gods Word. And I confess that I still know but very little of its boundless height, depth, length and breadth, but I believe that as I grow to know more and more, I shall trust more. If that is not the result of your knowledge, it is not the knowledge that the Holy Spirit gives you! It is the knowledge that puffs up. If it were the Holy Spirits teaching, you would rely more and more upon Christ and rest more entirely on Him. I pray for you, my dearlybeloved fellow Church members, that you and I may be taught of God till we grow less and less, and come to be nothing at all in our own esteem till we vanish away into Christ and Christ becomes more than our necessary food, our life, our joy, our All-in-All!

Everyone who is taught of the Father, in proportion as he is so taught, comes nearer and nearer to Christ until he comes perfectly to Christ in the Glory yet to be revealed. O blessed Master, we are still coming to You. We are, everyday, coming nearer to You. Your Spirit is making us more like You and making us long more for You! Your Father is creating in us more and more of a hungering and thirsting after You. Though we are very lame and do sadly limp, yet still we are coming to You. We can only feebly fly, yet still we are flying towards You and we expect that when You shall appear, and sit upon the Great White Throne, You will recognize that we are coming to You and You, Yourself will say to us, Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. We are coming, Lord, to You! Come to us! Yes, come quickly, even so, come, Lord Jesus! Amen and Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON:   
**JOHN 6:25-51.**

These people had crossed the Sea of Galilee and gone to Capernaum, seeking for Jesus. It seemed a very hopeful sign that they should be willing to make such efforts to find Christ, but see how the Lord Jesus, Himself, regarded it.

Verses 25, 26. And when they had found Him on the other side of the sea, they said unto Him, Rabbi, when did You come here? Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, You seek Me, not because you saw the miracles, but because you did eat of the loaves, and were filled. What very plain talk this is! Our Lord does not try to gain popularity by the concealment of truth, but He tells these people to their faces, You are only following Me because of what you get out of Me. Oh, some worldly-wise man would have said, that is a very imprudent speechit will drive the people away. Just so and Christ seemed to say, on more than one occasion, If people will be driven away by the Truth of God, let them be driven away. John the Baptist had declared that Christ had His fan in His hand and that He would thoroughly purge His floor. And if that floor is to be purged, there must be a driving away of the chaff! Our Lords example should teach us to speak in His name nothing less and nothing more than the Truth of God in all love and kindness. After thus pointing out the true motive which made the people seek Him, our Savior uttered a very singular paradox.

27. Labor not for the meat which perishes, but for that meat which endures unto everlasting life, which the Son of Man shall give unto you: for Him has God the Father sealed. Is it not strange that Christ says, Labor not for the very thing which you cannot get without laboring for it? And then He says, Labor for that which you cannot get by laboring for it? He virtually tells us that it is so, by adding the words, which the Son of Man shall give unto you, plainly proving that it does not come as the result of human labor, but as the free gift of the Son of God. He that is wise will discover the meaning of the paradox, but he that is blind will stumble over the letter of it and not discern the spiritual interpretation.

28. Then said they unto Him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? We want to do the best works, the noblest works, the most acceptable works in all the world! Tell us what we should do in order to perform a God-like work.

29. Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God. The highest and best work which you can accomplish is   
29. That you believe on Him whom He has sent. Faith is the noblest of the Graces! It is the very essence of true worship! It contains within itself the germs of all excellenceand the man who believes in Christ has done that which is more pleasing to God than anything else in all the world!   
30, 31. They said, therefore, unto Him, What sign do You show, then, that we may see, and believe You? What do You do? Our fathers ate manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from Heaven to eat. Do you see the drift of their talk? They are still looking for the loaves and fishes and, therefore, whatever Christ may say, they turn the discourse round that way. If they can get from Christ something to eat, they will believe in Himwhat groveling, earth-bound creatures they were!   
32, 33. Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from Heaven; but My Father gives you the free Bread from Heaven. For the Bread of God is He which comes down from Heaven, and gives life unto the world. The best and noblest breadthe bread which has Deity in itthe bread which can feed your souls, and sustain you with everlasting life, the Bread of God is He which comes down from Heaven and gives life unto the world.   
34. Then said they unto Him, Lord, give us this bread. They said this not knowing what they said, and not understanding what He meant. Bread for the body was all that they wanted. Their cry was, Give us bread, and we are content. They had no spiritual appetite for Christ, the Bread of God.

35, 36. And Jesus said unto them, I am the Bread of Life. He that comes to Me shall never hunger; and He that believes on Me shall never thirst. But I said to you, that you have seen Me, and believe not. These were the very people whom He had fed on the other side of the seayet they were craving for more. That kind of bread cannot stay their hunger for long. They had not received Him as their Savior, otherwise they would have been well content with Him and would have asked for nothing more.   
37-39. All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me; and Him that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from Heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him that sent Me. And this is the Fathers will which has sent Me, that of all which He has given Me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. Christ will not lose one whom the Father gave Him, no nor any part of one. He will not lose the body of any of His people any more than He will lose the soul of any.   
40. And this is the will of Him that Me, that everyone which sees the Son, and believes on Him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise Him up at the last day. Christ will never have finished His work upon Believers till He has raised their bodies from the grave and glorified them like His own resurrection body. He will never cease from the work which He has commenced on any of His people till He has laid the top stone in the glorious perfections of Heaven! And this Truth of God is the joy of our hearts even now.  
41. The Jews then murmured at Him, because He said, I am the Bread which came down from Heaven. They muttered, murmured, whispered, growled among themselves at this saying of Christ.   
42. And they said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How is it, then, that He says, I came down from Heaven? This is just the way with menthey judge by outward appearances and if the Gospel comes to them as a thing beloved of poor men, if it is preached without much eloquence, if the service is without the attractions of sweet music or of gaudy attirestraightway they say there can be nothing in it! O blind bats, when God veils Himself in human flesh, can it be otherwise?   
43. Jesus therefore answered and said unto them, Murmur not among yourselves. I never thought you would believe in Me. I never imagined that I should win your confidence.   
44. No man can come to Me, except the Father which has sent Me draw him. You are not drawn unto Me, therefore it is clear that you are not the subjects of Divine Grace. You think you are judging Me, but in so doing you are really judging and condemning yourselves. Whenever men sit in judgment on the Gospel, they soon let us know what kind of spirit possesses them. It is not Christ who is on trialit is they, themselves and when they rail at Him, they do but prove that the Grace of the Father has never drawn them to Him. No man can come to Me, except the Father which has sent Me draw him.   
44-46. And I will raise Him up at the last day. It is written in the Prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man, therefore, that has heard and has learned of the Father, comes unto Me. Not that any man has seen the Father, save he which is of God, He has seen the Father. Do not suppose that even when you are taught of God, you will know the Father as I know Him, or see Him as I have seen Him. That Divine glance at Deity is not for us.   
47. Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believes on Me has everlasting life. This was how our Lord spoke straight to the faces of those who had derided Him and said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? With the strongest Words which He was in the habit of using, He says, Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believes on Me has everlasting life.   
48-51. I am that Bread of life. Your fathers ate manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which comes down from Heaven, that a man may eat, thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from Heaven: if any man eats of this bread, he shall live forever: and the bread that I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.

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FEEDING ON THE BREAD OF LIFE   
NO. 2706

A SERMON   
INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS-DAY, DECEMBER 23, 1900.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, NOVEMBER 6, 1881.

**Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believes on Me has everlasting life. I am that bread of life.   
John 6:47, 48.**

OBSERVE carefully the order in which our Lord puts the two blessings He mentionsfirst, life through believing on Him, and then food to sustain that life. First, he that believes on Me has everlasting life, and next to that, I am that bread of life. Life comes first and food follows afterwards. It is impossible for a dead man to feed, or to be fedonly the living can eat and drink. I once went into the monastery of the Capuchins at Rome and there I saw certain of the departed brotherhood dressed in their regular habits, although they had been dead, some of them a hundred years, some fifty, and one gentleman, I think, had scarcely been dead more than a year or so. But there they sat, with their breviaries in their hands, just as if they had been alive! Yet I did not see any preparations for feeding them. It would have been as ridiculous to attempt to feed them as it was to keep them there at all!

Now, when we preach the Gospel, unless you have spiritual life, you cannot feed upon it. And if you were to come to the Communion Table, unless you were truly alive unto God, you might eat the bread and drink the wine, but with real spiritual food, the body of Christ, and the blood of Christ, you could have nothing to do. We do not give food to people in order to make them live. That would be a useless experiment, but, because they are alive, they take food in order to sustain and nourish the life which is already in them. Always remember, dear Friends, that the best spiritual food in the world is useless to those who are spiritually dead. And one very essential part of the Gospel is that Truth of God which our Savior so plainly taught, You must be born again. All attempts at feeding the soul are of no use until the new birth has been experienced! Even that precious, priceless bread of life cannot be assimilated unless the soul has been quickened by the Spirit of God. Judge, then, my Hearers, whether you are alive unto God, or not. Before you can rightly know the Truth, before you are qualified to learn its mysteries, pray that you may be made to live by faith in Jesus Christfor before food comes life.

But, next, after life there must be food, for, just as surely as there will be no use for the food without the life, so will there be no continuance of the life without the food. Men have played great pranks with themselves and have even experimented upon the possibility of living for 40 days without foodan experiment which I, for one, have no kind of wish to imitate! Neither would I recommend any of my hearers to attempt it, for the probability is that if one man should manage to survive his 40 days fast, there will be 40 other men, who try to do the same, who will be in another world long before the end of that time! God meant us to eat if we wish to live. When He made men and women, He made the fruits of the earth on which they should feed. And afterwards He gave them the flesh of beasts that they might feed thereon, but they must be fed if they are to continue to exist.

So is it with the soulbut the soul must be fed on spiritual meat. Souls cannot eat what bodies can eat. But, still, they must eat. All the qualities in a spiritual man, which are gracious, need food. Faith needs the Truth of God to believe. Love needs a revelation of love to keep it burning. Hope needs to be reminded of the things to be expected in the future, so that it may continue to hope. And every Grace within a spiritual man is clamorous for spiritual food that it may feed upon. If there are any of you who profess to be spiritual men and women, and yet you say that you can live without reading the Bible, without attending the House of Prayer, without any outward means of Grace, all I can say is that I do not want to try your system of living, for I should be starved by it, even if you are not! And I would not recommend any Christian to try to see how long his spirit can live without spiritual food. No, our Lords order is, first, lifethen food. And this implies that where there is life, there must be food. Those two things are very simple, yet many persons live as if they did not know them.

Next, if you look at the text, you will see that there is everlastingness in the life. Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believes on Me has everlasting life. Yet there is need of food all the same. The everlastingness of the life does not change the fact of its need of spiritual food, for here the two things are put side by sideHe that believes on Me has everlasting life. I am that bread of life. The life of the Believer is everlasting, yet it needs food to sustain it. Does any of you say, God has saved me, the Holy Spirit has quickened me, and I shall never perish. Therefore I need not feed upon the Word, I need not be watchful, I need not be careful? My dear Friend, you err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the analogy of faith. It is quite certain that those whom Christ has quickened by His Spirit shall never die, but it is just as certain that they would die if they did not feed upon Christ and sustain their life by that means! The two things are not contrary, the one to the other. I charge you, Beloved, to be as vigilant in the keeping of yourselves as if you were really your own keepers! Be as earnest that you slip not with your feet as if there were no promise that God would keep the feet of His saints. Be as diligent in prayer and holy living as if everything depended upon yourself. Yet forget not to fall back upon the grand Truth of God that, after all, your safety does not depend upon yourself, but it rests in the hands of Him who has undertaken to keep you from falling and to preserve you even to the end. Your new life is everlasting, yet you must feed it!

Now think for a minute or two of the converse of that Truth. Because your new life must feedwhich is clear from the text, where Christ says, I am that bread of lifedo not, therefore, infer that your life is not everlasting. All the precepts of the Word of God which admonish us to persevere are consistent with the fact that the saints shall persevere. All the exhortations to feed on spiritual food are quite consistent with the blessed fact that you shall so feed and that, so feeding, your souls shall live forever. Has not a man two eyes? Surely it is that he may see the whole of a truth and not merely one side of it. I believe that some people fall into great mischief because they shut one eye and will never open it and if anybody tries to point out the other side of the Truth of God, they cry, Oh, he is not sound! But, my dear Friend, for my part, I am always quite satisfied when I have the Scriptures at the back of my teaching. I do not care even the snap of a finger for what you may call unsound, or what anybody else may call unsound, so long as it is in accordance with the Word of God! And you may depend upon this fact, that paradoxes are not strange things in Scripture, but are rather the rule than the exception.

Very often, those things which appear to contradict each other are only two sides of the same Truth of God, and he who would get at the Truth, itself, must look at them both, and follow them both. If you are Christs sheep, you shall never perish, neither shall any pluck you out of His handsyet it is to you that such a warning as this is addressed Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. And it is to you that the injunction is given, Labor not for the meat which perishes, but for that meat which endures unto everlasting life. And while laboring for it, bless God that you already have it, seeing that you have Christ in your possession, and He says, I am that bread of life.

Notice, Brothers and Sisters, how Jesus Christ, our Divine Lord and Master, is everything to His people. Our life, that is ChristHe that believes on Me has everlasting life. Our food for that lifethat also is ChristI am that bread of life. I have come even to love my own necessities, for they seem to be like pedestals whereon the image of Christ may stand! If I did not need Christ, how could He be my life? If I did not need food to sustain that life, how could He be the bread of life to me? The greater my necessities, the deeper is my sense of His fullness! The more I become dependent upon Him for everything, the more I see of His allsufficiency. You know that if there were no great hollows and deep places on the face of the earth, there would be no room for the seas and oceans. And if there were no deep places in our souls need, where could be the fullness, the manifested fullness, of the Lord Jesus Christ? Rejoice, then, my Brothers and Sisters, that Christ made you alive from the dead! And then raise another song of thanksgiving because He keeps you alive. Bless His name for grafting you into the vine. And then bless Him for every drop of sap as it comes flowing out of Himthe Stem into youthe branch. Christ is ALL! Christ is ALL! Christ is ALL and to His name be praise forever and ever!

Perhaps someone asks, How do we feed on Jesus Christ? And there are some who say that we feed upon Christ in what is called, the sacrament. I do not like that word, sacrament, as applied to the ordinance of the Lords Supper. Regardless, there is no mention in Scripture of such a thing as a sacrament. It is an old heathenish word, applying to the oath which a soldier swore to be faithful to his commander. I like neither swearing nor sacraments, and I do not like either one of them anymore than the other, for both of them are contrary to the Word of God! Out of that word, sacrament, a great mass of mischief has grown upit is a bed of rottenness out of which all sorts of evil fungi have sprung. Let us keep clear of that, once and for all!

Some men tell us, however, that in what they call, the sacrament of holy communion, the communicants feed upon Christ. Listen. My text was spoken by Christ before the Lords Supper had been instituteda long while before He broke the bread and poured out the wine as a memorial of His death, He had uttered these remarkable wordsVerily, verily, I say unto you, Except you eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, you have no life in you. But there was spiritual life in the Apostles, even then, was there not? Yet they had never eaten of what is called the sacrament, for it was not instituted at that time! As there was true life in them, they must have eaten of Christand there being no Lords Supper then instituted, it is clear that there is a way of eating of Christs flesh and drinking of His blood, altogether apart from the communion!

Now, having said so much by way of correcting a common error, I want you just as clearly to understand that the Lords Supper, as afterwards instituted, was manifestly intended by Christ to be a picture, setting forth by outward and visible signs, the way of feeding upon Him. It is not actually feeding upon Christ, for that took place before there was any Lords Supper, but it is an admirable picture of that feeding upon Christ and to all time it remains one of the choicest methodsone method only, mark youone of the choicest methods by which spiritually-quickened souls are helped to feed upon Christ. We often feed upon Christ while hearing sermons. We feed upon Christ as we read good books. We feed upon Christ in the public prayers of the sanctuary, and in the secret communion in our own chamber. If we are as we should be, we are always feeding upon Christ! And part of the meaning of that petition, Give us this day our daily bread, is, Give us this day to feed upon Christ. Though we come to no Communion Table, much less approach an altar of sacrifice, we are spiritually and really fed upon Christ in other ways. Still, I say again that this communion service is a very choice way of feeding upon Christ. And I want to try to show you, by this picture, how it is that souls feed spiritually upon our Lord Jesus Christ.

Baptism is a picture of how souls receive spiritual life. The Lords Supper is a picture of how that new life is sustained. Both ordinances are only pictures, symbols, emblemsnothing more! Our immersion, by its symbolic representation of death, burial and rising again out of the water, sets forth how we live by dying to all but Christ, and rise again to live in Christ in newness of life. That is the beginning of the new life. And then comes the Lords Supper as a picture of how the soul feeds upon the body and blood of Christ. Baptism is the door of the house and the Lords Supper is a meal in the inner chamber for those who have been raised from the dead and quickened into life in Christ Jesus. Do not imagineI do not suppose that I have a single hearer who thinks sobut do not imagine that there is any magic in Baptism, by which water makes men, women, or children, into children of God, heirs of Christ, and inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven! And do not suppose that there is any magic about the bread and winewafers and wine and water I think some usebut do not think for a moment that there is any magic in them! They are merely pictures setting forth important Truths of God, for souls cannot eat bread and souls cannot drink the fruit of the vine. What are these emblems and symbols here for? Only as helps to thought, reminders of certain great facts, memorials of wondrous deeds which are brought to our recollection, so that our memoriesand through them our soulsmay feed upon these great Truths of God!

Now, after this unusually lengthy preface, which seemed to be necessary to the full understanding of our subject, I want to point out to you the picture, which the Lords Supper sets before us, of our feeding upon the bread of life.

I. And, first, WE FEED NOT WITHOUT A BLESSING. In coming to the Communion Table, the first thing we do is to give thanksto ask a blessingthe blessing of God upon the sacred feast. Now, Soul, if you are really alive unto God by Jesus Christ, you cannot feed upon Christ without the Divine blessing. As you could not, at the first, come to Christ without the Fathers blessing, so you cannot even now feed upon Christ without the Holy Spirits Divine assistance. If I were to sit down and say, I am going to feed upon Christ, and opened at the very sweetest chapter in the whole Bible, I might read it through and yet not be feeding upon Christ at all. If I were to say, I will get to my knees, and in my chamber I will enter into fellowship with Christ, and spiritually eat His flesh, and drink His blood, I might stay on my knees till they ached, but, apart from the blessing of God, I should get no good out of the action. So, first, when we come to this Communion Table, we ask God to bless what we are about to do, for, unless He shall draw us, we shall not be able to run after Him. Unless He shall open our mouth, we shall not be fed with the bread of Heaven. I charge you, therefore, O beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ, whose hearts are longing for communion with the WellBeloved, ask your Heavenly Father, by the effectual working of His blessed Spirit, to visit you with power, and life, and blessing! When you open the Bible, let it be with this prayer upon your lipQuicken me, O Lord, according unto Your Word! When you draw near to God in private devotion, let it be in complete dependence upon the Spirit of God. When you listen to sermons, when you come to the Communion Table, let it always be with a glance to Heaven for the blessing of the Lord to rest upon it all, for all is nothing unless God shall bless it to you.

II. Secondly, WE FEED ON JESUS WHO DIED FOR US. The Blessing is asked. Now what follows at the Communion? Why, next, bread is taken, and broken. That bread is the emblem of the body of Christ. But what is that wine cup? It is the emblem of the blood of Christ. So, you see, we have flesh there without blood, and blood there, as it were, drained out of the flesh. What do the two emblems together make up? Why,

death. If we were to dip the bread in the wine, it would be no proper observance of the Lords Supperbut these two emblems are separate, the one from the otherbecause they are intended to symbolize to us the death of Christ. Now, Brothers and Sisters, the food of your faith is to be found in the death of the Lord Jesus for you and, oh, what blessed food it is! Some of us know what it is to be bowed down in despondency almost to despair and I, for one, bear my testimony that under such circumstances, nothing revives me like a sight of my Master on the accursed tree! Unless He died for me, I, for one, am eternally lost. I can see no merits of my own which I dare present to God, for I am a mass of sin, and I should be a mass of misery, were it not for those dear wounds of His, and that bloody sweat, that Cross and passion!

Think much of this great central Truth of the Atonement, for it is the food of your soul. The bread and the wine cannot spiritually feed youall they can do is to help you to remember the sufferings and death of Jesus and, by remembering them, to show forth His death till He comes. It is in this way that your faith is nourished, your hope is nourished, your love is nourished, your whole soul is nourished in every gracious and holy way! Read the life of Christ as recorded by the four Evangelists, but feed most on the death of Christ. Study the example of Christ, yet that is not your foodlet your food be His body broken for your sake, His blood poured out in grievous agony, even unto death, as Atonement for your sin. The Lords Supper is a very beautiful and impressive method of instruction to us because, as there we have to feed upon emblems which set forth a cruel death, so our souls must feed, by contemplation, upon the real death of Christ, and all good things within us must be sustained by faith in that death!

III. Now we will go a step furtherWE FEED UPON CHRIST BY RECEIVING HIM SPIRITUALLY INTO US. We have looked at what is on the table. The next thing, in order to celebrate the Lords Supper, is that we must eat, and we must drink. It would be no observance of the Supper if I were to break the bread and leave it on the table, or if the wine in the cup should stand there simply to be looked at. No, the bread must be eaten, the wine must be drunk. Learn, therefore, that if your soul is to be fed, you must take Christ into youyou must not merely think of Him as belonging to somebody else, but as your own Savior, whose death was in your place, who loved you and gave Himself for you. Make bold, by faith, to cry, as Thomas did, not only, Lord and God, but, My Lord, and my God. Say, In this blood, which He shed, I wash away my sin. This body of His, which He gave to death, He gave up for me. And in His sufferings my heart confides because these sufferings were endured for me.

It is palpable to everyone that there is no feeding of the body by just rubbing a loaf of bread outside of it. You have to break up the loaf and get it into yourself. And there is no feeding the spirit by merely believing the doctrines of the Word and knowing the facts of the Gospelyou must accept Him who is the very essence of the doctrines. You must receive Him to whom all the facts relate. You must, indeed, by faith take Jesus Christ into yourself! O Beloved, this is the way to feed on Christ! Your new life will be vigorous enough and strong enough when this is the case with you.

IV. Further, WE FEED UPON CHRIST BY DELIBERATE THOUGHT. I remind you that in the eating and the drinking at the Lords Supper, there is much deliberation to be manifested. It is not a helter-skelter rush, and a hurried feeding. There are two signs, two symbols, both of which very wonderfully represent Christs suffering. I have often sketched for you the process by which we get our breadit is very significant and instructive. The wheat is taken, and cast into the ground and buried. It is subject to frost and snow, and all manner of ills. It springs up. It grows. It ripens. Then comes the sickle and it is cut down. Being cut down, it is carried away upon the loaded wagon and thrown upon the threshing floor. Then it is beaten with the flail till each grain of wheat is separated from the straw. Then the wheat is taken and put into the mill, and in the mill it is ground to fine flour. Nor have its pangs and tortures ended. It is made into dough and kneaded. And then it must go into the oven to be baked. Through all sorts of painful processes it must go till it finishes up with being broken to pieces and with being ground between the teeth of the eater. In this way it becomes a most significant symbol of the sufferings of Christ. His life is, all through, a story of griefSurely He has borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows, and you and I are to think over that history of Christ with due deliberation and care as we ponder the symbolism of the broken bread.

Then comes the cup. Here, the grape has been crushed in the winepress till its ruddiest juice has been poured forth, its very hearts blood being shed beneath the extreme pressure. This is another picture of Christs sufferingof His suffering even unto death. So the one picture has two panels and many subdivisions, as if the Lord would say to us, If you want to feed your soul upon Christ, you must think a great deal about Him. You must not merely say, by faith, Yes, Christ is my Savior. That is well, so far as it goes. That Truth will give you life, but you must see who He was, and what He was, and what He did, and why He did it, and what He is doing now, and what He has yet to do. And so, by taking it in detail, you will feed your soul very wonderfully. Look at many halfstarved Christians. Why you can see each rib, you may tell each bone in their spiritual anatomy. They have scarcely enough life to be able to sing

in a whisper *Tis a point I long to know,*

***Oft it causes anxious thought,   
Do I love the Lord, or no?   
Am I His, or am I not?***

Now, if they thought more of Christif they broke up the Truth about Him more than they doif they looked more into His passionif they studied His wondrous Personif they relied upon His promisesif they rested in His work more in detail by contemplation, they would grow to be spiritual giantsthey would be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might.

Is there not much instructive teaching, then, in this Supper, as far as we have gone? But, I want you, dear Friends, to notice that every point about the Lords Supper is full of gracious spiritual meaning.

V. Next, WE FEED UPON CHRIST BY RECEIVING THE COVENANT. When the Lord Jesus Christ passed the cup to His disciples, He said to them, This cup is the new testament (that is, Covenant,) in My blood, which is shed for you. Listen to the word, Covenant, Covenant. Brothers and Sisters, are you very hungry? Do your souls want the richest food that God Himself can give you? I will tell you of a cupboard where there is locked up bread such as they never ate in the wilderness! It is better even than the manna. Take your Bible and go through its many chambers, and up and down the corridors of its wondrous teaching, and you will see, over one coffer that stands there, this word, in golden letters, Covenant. That is the place where God specially meets with His people. He has given meat unto them that fear Him: He will ever be mindful of His Covenant. The man who can fully understand the word, Covenant, is a theologian! That is the key of all theologythe Covenant of Works by which we fell, and the Covenant of Grace by which we standChrist fulfilling the Covenant for us as our Surety and Representative, fulfilling it by the shedding of His blood, which is typified by the cup, and so leaving for us a Covenant wholly fulfilled on our side, which is Christs side, and only to be fulfilled now by God! And what God has to fulfill is this promise of the CovenantA new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put My Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you shall keep My judgments, and do them...And you shall be My people, and I will be your God.

Ah, Brothers and Sisters! This is what we call a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined. Some of our fellow Christians have very poor spiritual digestionthey cannot feed upon this sort of food. When they try to partake of it, they fancy that it is too rich for them, so they say, It cannot be good food for souls. Yes, but there are some of us who, by reason of age and use, have had our senses exercised, and we have now grown old enough to digest the strong meat of the Gospel, and we are glad to get our teeth into it whenever we can! I like to go down to the Covenant storehouse and to lay hold of these blessed things! And I urge you, Brothers and Sisters, to do the same. If you really want to feed your soul, take care that you try to understand the Covenant, for the Lord Jesus gives you a hint that the richest wine is found there by saying, as He was passing the cup, This cup is the New Covenant in My blood.

VI. Yet again, WE FEED UPON CHRIST AS WE SIT AROUND HIS TABLE. To my mind there is something very beautiful and suggestive in the right posture for the observance of the Lords Supper. What is that? Coming up here and kneeling as if there was something to worship? That is a relic of old Romanism that ought to be done away with by all Protestants! What is the proper way to observe this ordinance? Why, just sitting around the table on which the emblems are spread. Look at that remarkable picture of Leonardo de Vincia picture which I have seen hanging up in a Romish church, as you may see it in many Romish churches. It represents Christ and all His disciples sitting at a table, and that is the right posture for us. How did they at first eat it? They reclinedthey lay along, in the easiest possible posture that they could take, sustaining themselves upon the left arm, and so feeding, one with his head on his neighbors bosom. Now, translating the Oriental into the Western fashion, the nearest approach to that is to sit as much at your ease as you canand the spiritual meaning of that posture is thisYou are saved men and women. The life of God is in you, therefore, rest. We who have believed do enter into rest. And whenever you want to feed on Christ, do not feed on Him in a hurry. Do not fidget. Do not worry. Do not stand with your loins girt, and with your staff in your hand, as the Israelites were to eat the Passover in Egypt. You are out of Egyptyou are past the wilderness, for we who have believed in Christ have entered Canaanand are at rest.

VII. Once more, WE FEED UPON CHRIST AS WE SIT TOGETHER TO OBSERVE THIS ORDINANCE. A very blessed way of feeding upon Christ is pictured by our sitting together around this Communion Table. One person could not celebrate the Lords Supper, for a primary part of it is fellowship with others. We being many are one bread, and one body. If you want to feed rightly on Christ, do not keep to yourself, and do not try to keep Christ to yourself. No, Brother, Christ Jesus is not Head over only you! He is the Head of the whole body, which is His Church. I believe that, sometimes, when you cannot pray alone, you would be helped if you would associate others with you in your supplications. There is a way of feeding upon Christ by getting others to come in and feed too. Mind that and let your communion with Jesus, while it should be alone full often, not be always alone, but lay hold upon your Savior, and take Him to your mothers house, and to the chamber of her that bore you, and there will He show you His great love. He may come to Peter or Magdalene alone, but He most of all delights, on the first day of the week, to stand in the midst of His assembled ones, and to say not merely to any one of them, but to them all, Peace be unto you. Live in holy love with all who love Christ so shall you be helped to feed upon Him, remembering that we are made to sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus our Lord.

VIII. The last point is thisWE FEED NOT UPON CHRIST WITHOUT PRAISE. When we come to the close of the Lords Supper, we always do what our Lord Jesus did. After supper, they sang a hymn. So the right way to close the celebration of the Supper is to sing a Psalm of praise. And, dear Friends, whenever you want to commune with Christ, take care that you praise as well as pray. Mingle thanksgiving with your supplications, for Jesus loves to hear the praises of His people. I am afraid we lose a great deal of communion with Christ because we do not give Him more praise. I heard a Brother say, the other dayand, oh, how greatly did I enjoy his conversation when he said it!There are some times, when I am alone with God, when I cannot pray. I do not feel as if, just then, I needed anything of Him. Then, he said, I always sing, or in some way or other praise God. And I find communion with God in praise to be as profitable to my soul as communion with Him in prayer. And, oftentimes, before my praise is done, my prayer begins to spring up like a living well. Try that plan, Brothers and Sisters, for it may help you still more blessedly to feed upon Jesus Christ.

I wish that all my congregation knew the sweetness of feeding upon Christ. Every man feeds on something or other. You see one man getting his Sunday newspaperhow he will feed on that! Another goes to frivolous amusements, and he feeds on them. Another man feeds upon his business, and upon the thought of his many cares! But all that is poor foodit is only ashes and husks. If you did but possess true spiritual life, you would know the deep necessity there is of feeding upon Christ. But you do not possess that life, you say. No, then do you know what will become of the dead? What will become of the dead? And after death comes corruption. The old Jews, in the times of the kings, took the corrupting bodies of the dead out into the valley of Hinnomand there they kindled great fires, that the corrupting corpses might be burnt. And something like that, only far worse, will be the lot of everyone who is not quickened of the Spirit of God and made to live with Christ! You will go to the place where their worm dies not. That is the place of corruption and the fire is not quenched. that is Tophets flame. God save you from it! But there is no salvation from it except for those who have life through believing in JesusHe that believes on the Son has everlasting life: and He that believes not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abides on Him. God save you, dear Friends, from that awful doom, for His dear Sons sake! Amen.

HYMNS FROM OUR OWN HYMN BOOK282, 295, 942. EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **JOHN 6:41-65.**

Verse 41. The Jews then murmured at Him. That is, at the Christ. 41, 42. Because He said, I am the bread which came down from Heaven. And they said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How is it then that He says, I came down from Heaven? They did know His mother, but they made a mistake, which may have seemed a very slight one to them, when they said that they knew His father. Yet that is how nearly all great errors springfrom some slight and apparently trivial addition to the Truth of God. They did know Mary, but they did not know that Jehovah was the Father of the Christ.   
43, 44. Jesus therefore answered and said unto them, Murmur not among yourselves. No man can come to Me, except the Father which has sent Me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. Note the unflinching boldness of Christ! He did not say to these people, Well, you have some cause for murmuring and I will explain the matter to you. On the contrary, He faced them with the Doctrine of Sovereign Grace, and told them that He did not expect them to understand Him, for they could not do so except the Father, who had sent Him, should draw their hearts towards Him!   
45. It is written in the Prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that has heard, and has learned of the Father, comes unto Me. So, in fact, He said to them, You have not been taught of God. The Father has never drawn you, otherwise you would have received Me. So does the brave Champion thrust the naked sword of the Truth of God into their very souls!   
46, 47. Not that any man has seen the Father, save He which is of God, He has seen the Father. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believes on Me has everlasting life. Let me read those precious words again, catch at them, you timid and trembling onesVerily, verily, I say unto you, He that believes on Me hasnow, in present possession everlasting life.   
48, 49. I am that bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. He does not say, Our fathers. He comes out, as it were, as much from the Jews as from the Gentile ungodly world, and He says, Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead.   
50, 51. This is the bread which comes down from Heaven, that a man may eat, and not die. I am the living bread. Bread that contains life within itself and is, therefore, most potent to sustain a life like itselfI am the living bread.   
51, 52. Which came down from Heaven: if any man eat of this bread, He shall live forever: and the bread that I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. The Jews therefore strived among themselves, saying, How can this Man give us His flesh to eat? I wonder if they perceived that this declaration of Christ involved His death, for He did not speak of giving them His living body, but His flesh. There are some who find their main comfort in the Incarnation of Christ and, certainly, that is a very comforting Truth of God. But, without the death of Christ, it affords no nourishment for the soul. Atonement, Atonementthere is the kernel of the whole matter! Christ must die and then He can give us His flesh to eat!   
53, 54. Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except you eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, you have no life in you. Whoso eats My flesh, and drinks My blood, has eternal life; and I will raise Him up at the last day. His soul shall live. His spirit shall never die. And though his body shall die, the force of the eternal life within the man shall quicken even his mortal body into an immortality like that of his spirit.   
55-60. For My flesh is meat indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. He that eats My flesh, and drinks My blood, dwells in Me, and I in Him. As the living Father has sent Me, and I live by the Father, so he that eats Me, even he shall live by Me. This is that bread which came down from Heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eats of this bread shall live forever. These things said He in the synagogue, as He taught in Capernaum. Many, therefore, of His disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is an hard saying; who can bear it? And a hard saying it really is until we are instructed by the Spirit of God to understand it! The Roman Catholic has made it into a gross and carnal saying, teaching men that they really, actually and corporeally, eat the flesh and drink the blood of Christ, which is horrible blasphemy, and nothing less! But they who are taught of God see the inward meaning of the Truth peeping up from behind the letter, and know what it is to receive into their hearts, though not into their bodiesinto their thoughts, though not into their mouthsthe very body and blood of Christ.   
61-63. When Jesus knew in Himself that His disciples murmured at it, He said unto them, Does this offend you? What and if you shall see the Son of Man ascend up where He was before? It is the Spirit that quickens. The Spirit in us gives spiritual meaning to the Word, and life to us also It is the Spirit that quickens;   
63. The flesh profits nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life. They are not carnal. They are not gross. They have in them an inner sense which is full of life and spirit.   
64, 65. But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray Him. And He said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto Me, except it were given unto Him of My Father. No manno, not even an Apostlenot the one who ate bread with Christ and was His familiar friendnot even he could come without being drawn by God. And Judas did not come to Christ. In the sense in which our Lord used the word, Judas never really came to Him, but perished in his sin. The Father must draw us with Divine cords, or else to the Son we shall never come.

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PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #1940 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

THE BEST BREAD   
NO. 1940

A SERMON INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS-DAY, JANUARY 16, 1887.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON THURSDAY EVENING, OCTOBER 28, 1886.

**I am that bread of life.   
John 6:48.**

You will observe that our Lord here speaks concerning Himself. He speaks not merely of His Words, nor of His offices, nor of His work, but of Himself. I am that bread of life. And herein He teaches us all to fix our eyes mainly upon His blessed Person and to think of Him first and foremost. He is the center and soul of all. There is a tendency about us all to get away from Jesus and to look rather to the streams than to the Fountainhead. Why are we more taken up with bits of glass that sparkle in the light than with the Sun, Himself? That Tree of Life in the midst of the Paradise of Godwe forget to eat of that and we wander to the borders of the garden to pluck the fruit of the forbidden Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. I wish that our ministrythat mine, especiallymight be tied and tethered to the Cross! I would have no other subject to set before you but Jesus, only. Moses and Elijah are well enough in their places, but when they disappear and Jesus is the better seen, we are gainers by their loss! If I might dig for copper, silver and gold, I should think it no deprivation to be obliged to find only gold. It is no loss to lose all but Jesus! You may wander from Dan to Beersheba and you may not sin, for it is all holy ground between the two placesbut he is wisest who does not ramble even there, but keeps to Calvaryand is content to speak only of Jesus crucified.

God forbid, said one who was a great and a wise manGod forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. Paul would have considered it a terrible calamity if he had become fascinated, or even influenced by the speculations of the cultured men of His period! He felt that the atoning Sacrifice deserved all His admiration and He had none to spare for anything else.

You know how he fell among certain wise people who were fond of philosophical disquisitions and to them he said, I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified. He did not endeavor to please his audience by agreeing with them, but the further they went in one direction, the further he went in the otherthe more surely to counteract their error. Because they were so broad, he would narrow himself to the one theme of the Cross. In these times, when the world has run mad upon its idols of human thought, it may be wise to be more strict than ever and to stand steadfast in Pauls determinationI determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

It was Himself, my Brothers and Sisters, that our Lord set before His hearers as the Bread of Life! He did not mention anything of doctrine, or of precept, or of ordinance, but Himself. He says I am that bread of life. Of Him, therefore, let us think.

It is of the utmost importance to those of you who have spiritual life that you should feed upon the Lord Jesus. It is well to know everything that is revealed, for every Word of God is good and has its usesand all Scripture is profitablebut the daily household bread, the substantial meat on which we must be nourished if we would grow strong for God and holiness, is Christ Himself! I am that bread of life. We do not get bread anywhere else save in Jesus our Lord. We may find certain minor things apart from Himflavoring, ornaments and furniture of the table we may get from some other handsbut the bread, the real solid meat, the essence of the festivalis Christ Himself! So let us begin with Him in our discourse and continue with Him till we close our meditation.

But now, when I have to preach upon a subject like this, I find it necessary to begin a little way from the text. I am that bread of life. Bread, Brothers and Sistersbread is for living men and women, but bread is of no use in the tomb. Breadshall we bring it to a sepulcher? Shall we roll away the stone? Shall we draw out the bodies swathed in linen? Shall we set them upright in ghastly posture and shall we put bread upon the table before them? To what purpose would it be? It would be a ghastly mockery! If you leave the bread there and visit again that loathsome banqueting chamber in a years time, the bread will remain untouchedfor until there is life, there is no use for bread. And so, at the opening of my discourse, some of you might say, Bread is intended for living persons. It is for men and women who are quickened. How can we feed upon Christ, for we are dead in trespasses and sins? You speak most truly, but yet I have a marvel to relate which meets the case. Listen! That would be a strange kind of bread, would it not, which, being put into a dead mans mouth, would make him live? Yet such is the Bread that came down from Heaven, whereof if a man eats, he shall live forever!

The Lord Jesus Christ is living Bread. Bread such as we get from the baker is, in itself, dead. And if you put it to dead lips, there are two dead things together and nothing can come of the contact. But our Lord Jesus Christ is living Bread and, when He touches the dead lips of an unregenerate sinner, life comes into them! He brings life even to those who are dead in sin. He says, Young man, arise, and he sits up upon the bier. He takes a little girl by her hand and says, Tabitha cumiMaid, ariseand she sits up in her bed! He calls to Lazarus, who by this time stinks, and He says, Lazarus, come forth and he comes forth, wearing his grave clothes! He has shuffled down from the niche in the cave and he has made his way out of the dampness of the cold sepulcher. Oh, what a wonderful Christ this is, who is not only Bread for the living, but life for the dead! Pray, you who can pray, that He would come here, just now, and be life to those who are in the darkness of the Valley of the Shadow of Death, that they may live! When they live, then how gladsome will my text be to them, for life needs bread whereby it may be sustained!

The first thing that we need, if we have life, is something for that life to feed upon. And here comes in the textI am that bread of life. Your newly-discovered necessities Jesus can meet! Your newly-begotten needs Jesus can supply! Your hunger and your thirst can all be met, not by 50 things, but by one thing, by Jesus Christ Himself, in whom there dwells in fullness all that the spiritual life can possibly require!

I. With that to start with, I now make the first observation upon the text itself, which is thisJESUS CHRIST EXACTLY MEETS ALL THE NEEDS OF THE NEW LIFE. When a man is born again to God and gets a new life, he has new needs, new desires, new pains, new longings. He enters upon a novel condition, full of new needs and cravingsand the Lord Jesus Christ exactly meets the new case. As the key fits the wards of the lock, so does Christ fit the new heart and the right spirit. He knows how to touch the secrets of our soul and supply our most mysterious needs.

According to the text, the Lord Jesus Christ is the ideal Breadthe ideal supply of mans soul-hunger. Grateful Israelites truthfully judged that there never was such bread in all the world as that which fell in the wilderness in the form of manna. It was very wonderful bread, was it not? Men did eat angels food and found it good for them. They went out in the morning and they gathered mannaand they found it most marvelous food to sustain them. It was the ideal food for persons traveling through the great and terrible wilderness. There are different theories of what we ought to eat. One person tells us that if anybody suffers from rheumatism, he must eat so many pounds of meat in a day. Other doctors have vehemently said, You must not touch meat. It will heat you if you do. You must keep to a strictly vegetable diet.

I believe that these learned persons know one as much as the other about it and probably the whole of them put together know so little that a very small round nothing might encompass all their certain knowledge as to health and disease. But there is one thing we do know, that the bread which the Israelites ate in the wilderness, the manna, was the best sort of food. It was Gods own invention and He who created man best knew what nutriment his life would require. It was not aerated bread, but it was celestial bread which had never been soured with earthly leaven, but had dropped immediately from the skythe best food that men could eat if they would be healthy, active and able to endure a hard and toilsome life.

Well now, what that manna was to their bodiesthe ideal food of man, which had nothing injurious in itthat our Lord Jesus is to the soul! In Him is life for men and no disease or death. In the manna there was no adulteration, it was a perfectly pure food. Such food is the Lord Jesus Christ to the spiritual life. He is the Bread that came down from Heaven, He is the true Bread. If our souls live upon Christ and nothing else but Christ, He will breed no disease within the heart. He will not distort the judgement. He will not inflame the imagination. He will not excite the passions. He would be a perfect man who lived on nothing but this perfect Bread. Brothers and Sisters, if you aspire after holiness of the highest type and order, remember that a man is made by that which he feeds upon, and for the best manhood you need the best food. As certain silkworms have their silk colored by the leaves on which they feed, so if we were to feed on Christ and nothing else but Christ, we would become pure, holy, lowly, meek, gentle, humblein a word, we would be perfect even as He is! What wonderful food this must be! O my Brethren, if you have ever tried the flesh and blood of Jesus as your souls diet, you will know that I am not speaking vain words! There is no such sustenance for faith, love, patience, joy, as living daily upon Jesus, our Savior. You who have never tasted of this heavenly Bread had better listen to the Words of God, O taste and see that the Lord is good!

The Lord Jesus Christ is not only the ideal bread, but He is, in Himself, a sufficient bread. That manna which the Israelites ate in the wilderness was all that they really needed. They began lusting and they cried after flesh, and they sighed for the leeks and the garlic, and the onions which had charmed their degenerate palates when they dwelt among the Egyptians. Wretched was their taste! They must have been of a coarse mold to grow weary of the food of angels and sigh for something more rank, more tasty, more heavy. Something injurious they wantedyet had they but been wise and right they would have known that within the manna there was everything that was sufficient and suitable for themfor the God that made man made the manna and He knew exactly what man needed. Out of the ovens of Heaven He sent man bread, fresh and hot, each morning, that he might eat to the full and yet never be surfeited, nor filled with evil humors! They called the manna, light bread, but what should the food be for those who were always on the march but light and easy to digest? Our Lord Jesus is simple in doctrine, but what else do we wish for, even we who are wayfaring men and all too apt to err?

My Brothers and Sisters, if we do but get hold of Jesus Christ and feed on Him, He is sufficient for ussufficient for gigantic labors, sufficient for anguish, for grief, for sorrowsufficient for the weakest of the babes for He is the unadulterated milksufficient for the full-grown men among us, for He is the strong meat of the Kingdom of God. His flesh is meat, indeed! For your spiritual manhood there is bone, gristle, muscle, brain, everything that you need, in Christ. If you feed on Him, He will build you up, not in one direction only, but in all ways, for you are complete in Him thoroughly furnished unto all necessities. Christ Jesus meets all the needs of all His people with a Divine sufficiency.

And then, there is in Christ what there is in manna a sweetness all its own. I cannot tell you exactly how the manna tasted. Some of them said that it tasted like wafers made with honey. The Jewish notion is that it tasted according to every mans own taste, so that if he preferred this flavor or that, the manna had that flavor to him, and thus it was to each one a personal and peculiar delicacy. This I knowthat there is a sweetness about my Lord which is precisely that which delights me. I cannot communicate it to you, for you must, each one, taste for himself. I believe that our Lord has a flavor to me different from that which He could have to you because our circumstances and desires somewhat differ. Though there is in the great Church of God a sweet community of delight in the Lord, yet each Believer has his own special delight. All Israel could claim all Canaan and yet every Israelite had a little plot of land that was his ownand so all Believers can claim all Christ and yet each Believer has a special portion which is altogether his own. Oh, the sweetness that there is in the Bread that came down from Heaven!

Do you not know it? I trust you do and, if so, you do not need me to say more. If you love Jesus, you wish for nothing new. Modern gospels are forthcoming on all sides. You have heard about them, I dare say, but the preachers of them cannot have the delight in preaching their new gospels that I have in preaching the old one. Oh, I say to myself, they may preach better than I can. They may be a world more clever. But they have not such a Subject to preach of as I have. When I get to preaching up Christ and His precious blood, eternal love and Covenant securities, there I beat them all! With such a theme I can compete with the most renowned of the worlds orators! When I speak on these themes, my lips drop pearls and diamonds! Brothers and Sisters, when we declare unto you the Lord Jesus, we sail upon a sea of sweetness! The novelties of modern thought are a Dead Sea, but our Gospel is an ocean of Living Water! He that has Christ to preach has such a subject that angels might envy him and cry one, to the other, Let us go down below and tell mankind of Jesus and His love. Brethren, to me the pulpit is a throne and when I am in full swing, with the Lord Jesus Christ as my Subject, I would not change places with the seraphim! It is a celestial joy to tell our fellow men of such a Savior as Jesus, for all sorts of joys are wrapped up in His thriceblessed name! When Jesus said, I am that bread of life, He meant, I am that choice Bread, that satisfying Bread, that delicious Bread, the likes of which was never found elsewhere.

Furthermore, it was bread suitable for the wilderness. When they were in the wilderness, it was much better for the tribes to eat what they called, light bread, than for them to be filled with the meat that they had in Egypt, or even the old corn which they enjoyed when they came into Canaan. Manna was suitable food for the climate and for their condition and the Lord knew it. So the most suitable meat for us in this vale of tears is Christ Jesus. I believe that there is no meat like it in Heaven! And for this world, with its work and its weeping, with its toils and its troubles, its cares and its changes, its wars and its woes, its fears and its fretsthere is nothing so suitable as the Lord Jesus

*Jesus, joy of loving hearts!   
You Fount of life!   
You Light of men!   
From the best bliss that earth imparts   
We turn, unfilled, to You again.   
We taste You, O living Bread,   
And long to feast upon You still!   
We drink of You, the Fountainhead,   
And thirst our souls from You to fill.*

Jesus is all the Bread that you need while you are on your way to Heaven and God!

What I have to say on this point further isTry it, dear Friends! I would be very practical on this point and say earnestly, taste and test. If you wish to know this Bread that came down from Heaven and how satisfying, how suitable, how sweet it istry it.

Let me hand you out a portion of it. The Lord Jesus, the everlasting Son of God, is also Manman, like ourselves. In all our affliction He was afflicted. He Himself bore our infirmities and He is, at this moment, a Brother born for adversity. Is not this a loaf of nourishing bread for a soul to feed on? I am a mantried, troubled, burdenedand so is my Redeemer! So is He who sits upon the Throne of God! I have to bow in prayer and agonize in supplicationso did He! I have to endure slander and rebukeso did HeHe endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself. Brothers, Sisters, you cannot be in any plight wherein He has never been! You cannot suffer any want so severe, but He also suffered the same! Even if you have not a home, or a lodging, or a bed for the nightThe Son of Man had not where to lay His head. He is a partaker with us of the bitter cup of affliction. Now, is not this choice nourishment?

*Why should I complain of need or distress, Temptation or pain? He told me no less.   
The heirs of salvation, I know from His Word, Through much tribulation must follow their Lord. How bitter that cup no heart can conceive, Which He drank quite up, that sinners might live! His way was much rougher and darker than mine; Did Christ, my Lord, suffer, and shall I repine?*

The sympathy of Jesus, our Brother, is living Bread for sorrowing men. Now for another slice from the same loaf. He died. He bowed His head   
and gave up the ghost. It was for sin and sinners that He died. He Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree. The chastisement of our  
peace was upon Him. He has put away our sin by making full atonement  
to Divine Justice. Sin has ceased to be so far as those are concerned who   
believe in Him, for He was punished in our place and so ended our debt!  
God will not punish those for whom Christ was punished! He cannot exact  
the same debt twice, first of the Surety, and then of the sinner. That cannot be! Substitutionary Sacrifice is the finest of the wheat! A real Atonement is the most satisfactory food for the soul! I know it is so without a  
doubt.   
Poor Sinner, if you can eat this Bread, you will not be hungry any more!   
Feeding upon the glorious doctrine of the Vicarious Sacrifice of Christ you   
will find that His flesh is meat, indeed, and His blood is drink, indeed! I might continue thus to set forth my Lord as Bread for you in His Resurrection, in His glorious Ascension, in His session at the right hand of   
God, even the Father, where He makes intercession for transgressors and   
in the Glory of His Second Advent, but time would fail me. I might cut a   
slice from this loaf and speak to you upon our communion with Him,  
upon our acceptance in the Beloved, upon the Glory which He wears as   
our Representative, and wears for us, but I will notit is enough for me to  
introduce the text and let Jesus say for Himself, I am that bread of life.   
Certainly there never was such a fruitful and satisfying subject as this of  
Jesus, our Lord! Oh, that all ministers were convinced of this! Why leave   
this Bread of Heaven for the unsatisfying husks afforded by other topics? Very well. That is the first Truth of God we are to remember, namely,   
that Jesus Christ fully meets all the needs of the new life.   
II. But, secondly, IN ORDER THAT JESUS MAY MEET ALL OUR   
SOULS NEEDS WE MUST RECEIVE HIM. Bread cannot possibly sustain  
the body unless it is eaten. You know, dear Friends, you might be hungry  
tonight and hear about bread and then be doomed to wait till tomorrow   
evening without having any of it to eatthat would be a tantalizing business, would it not? I might then preach again and tell you about bread   
and you might go without all through Saturdayand come here on Sunday and hear two more sermons about bread and yet, all the while, have   
none of it to eat. It would be trying work. None would like it unless it were   
those people who are attempting to fast for 40 days and are likely to die in  
the process! What good would it do you to keep on hearing of the bread   
and never eat of it? I cannot see any result. Unless it tended to increase

your hunger, I do not know what would come of the wisest discourse on  
bread if you did not eat. Suppose that you should go to a bakers window   
and stand there for an hour and stare at the bread? I do not think that  
the sight would fill you much. No, you must eat, or else there might be   
tons of bread within reach and yet you would die of famine! You might be   
buried in a grave or bread and it would be of no use to you. Even manna   
would not nourish you unless you ate it. You must receive food into yourself, or it is not food to you. The Savior Himself, if you do not receive Him   
by faith, will be no Savior to you. Mark that.   
Here is a Brother who never eats bread but instead of eating, he studies   
the theory of nutrition. He is ready to discuss with anyone the whole system of digestion and assimilation. He has a theory that bread should always be baked in a certain way and he feels bound to discuss and discuss  
and discuss till all is moldy! My dear Friend, you may discuss if you like,   
but I want to eat! And I think that if you intend to live and not to drop   
down dead in your discussion, you had better eat a bit yourselfand not  
put discussion into the place of eating. Some of you have been hearing the   
Gospel for years and you have never fed upon Christ! But you have a   
great liking for religious controversy. Why, perhaps, this very afternoon   
you have been discussing this, ism, and that, ism. Why all this chopping of logic? Why do you not eat, Friend? Why do you not eat? What is the use of talking about bread when your fainting body pines  
for a substantial meal? You are at this time ready to fight anybody about   
the shape that the portions of bread ought to take when they are cut up   
for a feast. No, no, I am not going to accept your challenge! I am hungry  
and need foodand to me the form of it does not matter much. Bread is   
nothing to anybody till he eats itand even our Lord Jesus is nothing to  
any man until he believes in Himuntil he receives Him, until he takes   
Him into himself! That is the one thing that is neededand the Lord Jesus Christ silently hints as much when He says, I am that bread of life.   
When He calls Himself, Bread, He does in effect say, Partake of Me. Eat   
Me. Feed upon Me.   
Here comes in the enquiryHow do we receive Christ into us as we   
take bread into our bodies?

First, by believing everything that is revealed about Him. The Fathers witness and the Holy Spirits witness and His own witness concerning Himselfwe have all these in Gods most holy Word! Take the Book and read it. Augustine, after years of tossing to and fro, found peace with God by hearing a little child say, Take, and read. I suppose that the child was singing to itself and hardly knew what it was saying as it repeated to itself the two wordsTolle, lege; tolle, lege; tolle, lege. Take up and read. That voice struck the ear of the perplexed thinker as though it were the voice of God and he took the Scripture and read the Scriptureand no sooner had he read it than he found Christ! I would entreat each one of you to do this, in order that you may find rest for your soul. Believe what is revealed in Holy Scripture! You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life, and they are they which testify of Christ; but you will do well if you go to Christ, Himself, and find life. To believe in Him, think of Him! As the look of faith which saves is to Jesus, so is it from Jesus. By looking we learn to look. As we know of Him, we believe in Him. Believe what is spoken about Christ and so feed on Him.

Then, next, trust Him for yourself. That is the pointthe hinge of the whole business! He is a Savior. I believe that, but I go further and resolveHe shall be my Savior. May I say that? Yes, for I am permitted to do so, inasmuch as He says, Him that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out. Scripture says that He is exalted on high to give repentance unto Israel and remission of sins. Therefore, I look to Him to give me repentance and remission of sins. I trust to Him in that respect and He is mine! He has said, It is finished. The Atonement is finished and I believe that it is finished for me. A prominent point about the offering under the old Law was that the person who came with the sacrifice laid his hands on it and said, This is mine. You must do the same with Jesus. Lay your hands on Him and say, This is mine. This sacrificial death is for me. Oh, but, says one, suppose He is not mine? What if I were to take Him to myself without warrant? Suppose such a thing for one moment, yet He would be yours! If I were hungry and I ate a bit of bread, and after I had eaten it somebody said, It is not yours, I would reply, Perhaps not, but how will you take it from me? It has nourished me and refreshed me. It is mine and none can deprive me of it.

That is the point, you see! If you take Christ Jesus into yourself, the devil himself may say you had no right to Him, but he cannot take away that which you have eaten. Jesus Himself will not quarrel with you, nor blame you for taking Him, for He has said, Him that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out. You may summon a poor man before the magistrate and say, He is a thief, for he stole bread from my counter. You may put him in prison for the theft, though I hope you would not if hunger drove him to the actbut you cannot get your bread away from him if he has eaten it. So, if you come to Christ and take Him into yourself, He is yours and you shall live by Him! Jesus says, He that eats Me, even he shall live by Me. Nor death, nor Hell, nor time, nor eternity can take Jesus away when once you have Him within you! Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Swallow, then, the Divine Truth of God! Let it go down quickly, for fear anybody should come before it has fully entered into your soul. Once there, it is yours! They say that possession is nine points of the law and I should think in the case of eating that it is the whole 10 points, or any other number of points, for there is no getting repossession of that which a man has actually eaten! Get Christ, and Christ is yoursyours by a kind of possession which will never be disputed before the courts of Heaven!

This, then, is to feed upon Christto believe that which is revealed about Himand then to appropriate Him to yourself by personal faith.   
Furthermore, to feed upon Christ means to meditate much upon Him to think much of Him. Brothers and Sisters, there are many sweet doctrines in the Bible which I delight to make my own by reading, marking, learning and inwardly digesting them. They are parts of the great circle of Truth which is revealed of God. But I find that I am never so comforted, strengthened and sustained as by deliberately considering Jesus Christs precious death and atoning Sacrifice. His Sacrifice is the center of the circle, the focus of the light. There is a charm, a divine fascination, about His wounds.  
O sacred head, once wounded! O, dear eyes, so red with weeping! O cheeks, all stained with spit! I could forever gaze, admire and adore! There is no beauty in all the world like that which is seen in the countenance, more marred than that of any man. This one vision is enough for all eyes for all time! There is no sustenance to the heart like the sustenance that comes of His flesh and His blood given up in anguish and in death to work out our redemption! Beloved, this is the Bread of Heaven. Take, eat, He says, this is My body which is broken for you. What food is this! What life ought that to be which is nourished by such Bread!   
But time flies so quickly that I cannot dwell upon these points as they deserve to be dwelt upon. Oh, live near the Cross! Build your house on Calvary! Frequent Gethsemane! Listen to the groans of your pleading Lord! Be much with a dying Christ. Be much with a risen Christ. Be much with a reigning Christ. Be much in anticipation of a coming Christ. For the more you are with Him, the more will your soul be filled with satisfaction and influenced to sanctification. He shall satisfy your soul as with marrow and with fatnessand your mouth shall praise Him with joyful lipsfor He can say, and none other, I am that bread of life. Receive Him, then, and you shall find it so!   
III. Now thirdlyand this shall be but a word or twonotice this solemn factNOT TO FEED UPON CHRIST IS THE SURE MARK OF DEATH. Terrible fact. The Lord Jesus Christ has said itUnless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. A great preacher, but he does not feed on Christ? He has no life in him! A forward professor, but he does not feed on Christ? He has no life in him! A very knowing theologian and a clever controversialistbut he does not feed upon the Incarnate God? There is no life in him! A daring speculator in modern thought but he does not care, he says, for the blood of Christhe even sneers at the mention of it! He has no life in him! Hard words? Hard words! Hard words, if they are true, are better than soft words if they are false!   
But this is the sure testWhat do you think of Christ? If He is not bread to your souls, you have no life in you! If anybody were to say to me, I have a man at home who stands in my hall and has stood there for years, but he has never eaten a mouthful of bread all the time, nor cost me a penny for food, I should say to myself, Oh, yes, that is a bronze man, I know, or a plaster cast of a man! He has no life in him, I am sure, for if he had life in him, he would have needed bread. If we could live without eating, it would be a cheap method of existence, but I have never discovered the secret and I do not mean to make experiments! If you are trying it and have succeeded in it so far that you can live without Christ, the Bread of Life, I fear your life is not that of Gods people, for they all hunger and thirst, by His Grace, after Jesus, the Bread of Heaven! O my dear Hearer, once a professor, once a Church member, if you have given up Christ and you get on well without Him, you have no life in you! The dead can do without bread, but the living cannot! Jesus tells us, I am that bread of life, and if you are doing without Him, you are doing without the Bread of Lifeand the reason is that you are without life itself!

IV. Next, and the fourth head shall be with equal brevityTHOSE WHO FEED UPON CHRIST ARE SUPREMELY BLESSED. They shall never hunger! They shall hunger after more of Jesus, but not after anything else besides Jesus. I was greatly pleased, some time ago, to hear a gentleman who had tried to preach another doctrine, say that a certain neighborhood which he spoke of was so impregnated with what was called, the Gospel, that he could not succeed with his speculations. He said that if men once drank this Gospel doctrine it made them so bigoted in their love for it that the most clever person could not get them out of it. I thought to myself, This witness is true. An enemy declared it and it was, therefore, all the more striking! The most subtle deceivers may try as long as they please, but when we have once fed upon Christ, they cannot get us away from Him! They tempt us to leave Him. They offer us all manner of novelties, but in vainTry our thought! Try our science! Try our purgatory! Try our larger hope! But we hear the pails rattle and we hear the swine clamoringand we are not anxious to taste the mixture, or unite in the festival! We are not so selfish as to steal this new slop from those whom it delights. Let those have it who can feed on it, but as for ourselves, we mean to feed on the Bread of Heaven! The Gospel is to us such satisfying bread that all the rest is chaff   
*Should all the forms that men devise   
Assault my soul with treacherous art,   
Id call them vanity and lies,   
And bind the Gospel to my heart.*   
Every true child of God is so far a bigot that he prefers the bread of His Fathers house to the husks of the far country! He cannot give up the Gospel and he will not, for it satisfies his whole being. What more does he need? Why should he make a change?   
Moreover, he has in Christ food that he can never exhaust. He may feed and feed and yet he shall never find that he lacks for meat. I have many an old book in my library in which there have been bookworms and I have sometimes amused myself with tracing a worm. I do not know how he gets to the volume originally, but being there, he eats his way into it. He bores a hole in a direct line and sometimes I find that he dies before he gets half-way through the book. Now and then a worm has eaten his way right through from one wooden cover to anotheryes, and also through the cover! This was a most successful bookworm! Few of us can eat our way quite so far. I am one of the bookworms that have not yet got half-way into my Bible, but I am eating my way as fast as I can! This one thing I have proven to myself beyond all questionI shall never, never exhaust this precious Bookmuch less shall I exhaust the wondrous Person of my Divinely-blessed Lord! He is that Bread which came down from Heaven! He is utterly inexhaustible!   
Brothers and Sisters, feeding upon Jesus we have an immortal blessednesswe shall never die! If we have fed on Christ, we shall fall asleep, but it will be in Jesus. Some whom we love have lately fallen asleepthey will awake with Him in the morning. But we shall never die. We shall only pass into a higher stage of life, for that food on which we feed shall be in us the pledge of an immortality equal to the immortality of the Christ who has become our Bread.   
V. I had much more to say to you, but the time has gone. All that I will say further is this. If any of you desire to have Christ, you may depend upon it that you may have Him because bread is meant to be eaten JESUS IS PROVIDED TO BE RECEIVED. What is the use of bread if it is never eaten? If you go to the Orphanage, you will see a large batch of bread kept there upon the shelves. It must not be eaten the first day, you knowit would go too fast and would not be very wholesome for the youngsters. It must get rather staler by being kept a little while. Now suppose that I were to go down there and say to the baker, Lock that door. I want to keep that bread. I am going away to Mentone and I shall take the key with me, that I may save that bread. Suppose I were to do so and come back in a couple of months time? Should I say to myself, I have saved that batch of bread? I am afraid that it would turn out to be very bad economy! Let us go and look at the loaves which we have kept from use! Come away at once! The sight is not pleasant. Decay and corruption have fallen upon what we have hoarded. It would be a poor matter for the bread. Why, it is the very end of bread, the object of bread, the portion of bread, to be eaten! It is honored in being eaten! It would be degraded by being left to grow stale and moldy!  
Now the Lord Jesus Christ is never so famous a Christ as when sinners come and feed upon Him. This precious Bread must be eaten, or it has not answered its design. What say you to a doctor who has no patients? What say you to a Savior who never saves anybody? The honor of a physician lies in the persons that he heals and the honor of a Savior lies in the persons that He saves. Christ has become the Bread of Heaven on purpose for you to have Him, and for me to have Him! He came into the world to save sinnersand if He does not save sinners He has come for nothing! It is His business to save sinners. Now if a man sets up in business and never does any business, his undertaking is a failure. Poor man! you say, he has made a great mistake.   
I know a Brother here who wanted to take a certain shop in a wide street, but his wiser friends said, Do not take that shop for a bakers. It is not in a good eating locality. You must open a shop in one of the streets where there are plenty of poor people who will buy the bread every morning. Make it good and cheap and it will not stay long on the shelves. I noticed in the newspaper that a certain pub was in a good drinking locality. I am sorry that there are such localities. But, assuredly, a good eating locality must be the very place for vending bread. I think that this Tabernacle stands in a good eating locality. Many are here, now, who are hungry after Christ and it is a blessed fact that they may have Him and feed upon Him without stint!   
And what is the price? The price? The difficulty with all other traders is to get you up to their pricebut my difficulty is to get you down to mine for the Bread of Heaven is without price. Even if you offer a farthing, I cannot take your bid. You may have all for nothing and have it at once but not a penny can be accepted from you! The Gospel provides a full Christ for empty sinnerspardon on earth and bliss in Heavenand all for nothing! Take it as a free gift and it is yours. What would you pay? What could you pay? Did Israel pay for the manna? It would have been an insult to God to imagine it! Go your way and bless the name of the Lord, for this is the GospelHe that believes and is baptized shall be saved.

**PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMONJohn 6:24-58..**49 HYMNS FROM OUR OWN HYMN BOOK386, 151, 488.

LETTER FROM MR. SPURGEON   
DEAR FRIENDSThe severe weather of England has breathed upon this happier region and chilled the air day after day. This will render it all the easier to return without experiencing too great a change. My dear friends at the Tabernacle have sent me many a kind telegraphic message and the last which I sent to them in return shall be my word for this week to my Sermon Readers

*And I am sure that when I come unto you, I shall come in the fullness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ. Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.   
Romans 15:29, 33.*   
I ask for the prayers of each reader, that these verses may be true to the

fullest to me and to all my flock.   
Yours in Christ Jesus, Mentone, January 8, 1887.   
*C. H. SPURGEON*

Adapted from The C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307 Sermon #1288 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

TRULY EATING THE FLESH OF JESUS   
NO. 1288

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, APRIL 9, 1876, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.   
For My flesh is meat, indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. He that eats My flesh, and drinks My blood, dwells in Me, and I in him. John 6:53-56.**

OUR Lord Jesus did not, in this passage, allude to the Lords Supper, as some, desiring to maintain their sacramental superstitions, have dared to affirm! I will not dwell upon the argument that there was no Lords Supper at the time to allude to, though there is certainly some force in it, but I will rather remind you that with such an interpretation this passage would not be true. It must be confessed, even by the most ardent advocate of the sacramental meaning, that the expressions used by our Lord are not universally and, without exception, true if used in that sense, for it is not true that those who have never eaten the Lords Supper have no life in them, since it is confessed on all hands that hundreds and thousands of children dying in childhood are, undoubtedly saved, and yet they have never eaten the flesh of Christ nor drank His blood, if the Lords Supper is here meant.

There have also been many others in bygone times who, by their conduct, proved that the life of God was in their souls, and yet they were not able to eat bread at the sacramental table, because of sickness, banishment, imprisonment and other causes. Surely there are some others, though I would not excuse them, who have neglected to come to that blessed commemorative ordinance, and yet, nevertheless, for all that, they are truly children of God. Would the highest of high churchmen send every Quaker, however holy and devout, down to the bottomless pit? If this should refer to the Lords Supper, then it is certain that the dying thief could not have entered Heaven, for he never sat down at the communion table, but was converted on the Crossand without either Baptism or the Lords Supperwent straight away with his Master into Paradise!

It can never be proved, indeed, is utterly false that no one has eternal life if he has not received the bread and wine of the communion table. But on the other hand, it is certainly equally untrue that whoever eats Christs flesh has eternal life, if by that is meant everyone who partakes of the Eucharist, for there are unworthy receivers, not here and there, but to be found by the hundreds. Alas, there are apostates who leave the Lords Table for the table of devils and who profane the holy name they once professed to love! There are also many who have received the sacramental

bread and wine and yet live in sinwho increase their sin by daring to come to the table and who, alas, we fear, will die in their sins as many others have done.

Unregenerate persons are very apt to make much of the sacrament and nothing of Christ. They think a great deal of the bread and wine of the (socalled) altar, but they have never known what it is to eat the flesh and drink the blood of Christ. These eat and drink unworthilycarnally eating bread, but not spiritually eating the Redeemers fleshto them the ordinance is a curse rather than a blessing. Our Lord did not refer to the feast of His supper, for the language will not bear such an interpretation. It is evident that the Jews misunderstood the Savior and thought that He referred to the literal eating of His flesh. It is no wonder that they strove among themselves over such a saying, for, understood literally, it is horrible and revolting to the last degree!

But far greater is the wonder that there are millions of people who accept so monstrous an error as actual truth and believe in literally feeding upon the body of the Lord Jesus! This is probably the highest point of profane absurdity to which superstition has yet reachedto believe that such an act of cannibalism as could be implied in the literal eating of the flesh of Christ could convey Grace to the person guilty of such a horror! While we wonder that the Jews so misunderstood the Savior, we wonder a thousand times more that there should remain upon the face of the earth men in their senses not yet committed to a lunatic asylum who endeavor to defend such a dreadful error from Holy Scripture and, instead of being staggered, as the Jews were, by so fearful a statement, actually consider it to be a vital doctrine of their faiththat they are literally to eat the flesh of Christ and to drink His blood!

Brothers and Sisters, if it were possible that our Lord required us to believe such a dogma, it would certainly need the most stupendous effort of credulity on the part of a reasonable manand the laying aside of all the decencies of nature. In fact, it would appear to be necessary, before you could be a Christian, that you should altogether divest yourself of your reason and your humanity! It were a Gospel certainly more fitted for savages and madmen than for persons in the possession of their senses and in the least degree removed from absolute barbarism! I greatly question whether the creed of the king of Dahomey contains a more unnatural doctrine.

We are not required, however, to believe anything so impossible, so degrading, so blasphemous, so horrifying to all the decencies of life! No man ever did eat the flesh of Christ or drink His blood in a literal and corporeal sense. A deed so beastlike, no, so devilish, was never yet perpetrated, or could be. No, Brethren, the Jews were under an errorthey made the mistake of taking literally what Christ meant spiritually. Judicially blinded as the result of unbelief, they stumbled at noonday as in the night and refused to see what was plainly set forth. The veil was on their hearts. Ah, how prone is man to pervert the Words of the Lord!

I believe that if Christ had meant this word literally, they would have spirited it away, but such is the perversity of the human mind, that when He intended it spiritually then straightway they interpreted it in a grossly carnal manner. Let us not fall into their error, but may Divine Grace lead us to see that our Lords Words are spirit and life. Let us not be held in bondage by the letter which kills, but follow the spirit which quickens. The spiritual meaning is clear enough to spiritual men, for to them belong spiritual discernment. But as for the unregenerate, these things are spoken unto them in parables, that seeing they might not see, and perceiving they might not understand.

Our first head will be, what is meant, then, by eating the flesh and drinking the blood of Christ? And our second point of enquiry shall be, what are the virtues of this act?

I. First, then, WHAT IS MEANT BY EATING THE FLESH AND DRINKING THE BLOOD OF CHRIST? It is a very beautiful and simple metaphor, when understood to refer spiritually to the Person of our Lord. The act of eating and drinking is transferred from the body to the soul and the soul is represented as feedingfeeding upon Jesus as the Bread of Life. Eating is the taking into yourself of something which exists externally, which you receive into yourself and which becomes a part of yourself and helps to build you up and sustain you. That something supplies a great need of your nature and when you receive it, it nourishes your life. That is the essence of the metaphor and it well describes the act and the result of faith.

To eat the flesh and drink the blood of Christ, first, we must believe in the reality of Christwe must not regard Him as a myth, an imaginary personage, an invention of genius, or a conception of the Oriental mind, but we must believe that such a Person actually and in very deed lived and still lives. We must believe that He was God and yet condescended to be Incarnate on earth and here lived, died, was buried and rose again. Except a man eat My flesh and drink My blood. It is a mode of expressing the actual existence and true materialism of our Lords body and the sureness and truthfulness of His existence in human nature. You cannot be saved unless you believe in an historical Christ, a real Person

*A Man there was, a real Man,   
Who once on Calvary died,   
And streams of blood and water ran   
Down from His wounded side.*

That same actual Person has, in His own proper Personality, ascended to the skies. He is now sitting at the right hand of the Father and is ordained to descend, before long, to be the Judge of the quick and the dead. We should not use the terms, flesh and blood, unless we meant to indicate an actual Personsuch language could not describe the creation of a dream, a phantom, or a symbol. Before all things, if you would be saved, you must believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, as having been really manifested in human nature among the sons of men. The Word was made flesh and tabernacled among us, and the Apostles declare that they beheld His Glory, the Glory as of the Only-Begotten of the Father, full of Grace and Truth.

We must believe not only in the reality of the Savior, but in the reality of His Incarnation, acknowledging that while He was Divine, He was Human, also, that He did not assume human nature in outward appearance, as certain heretics have said, but that Jesus came in the flesh and, as such, was heard, seen, touched and handled. He was, in an actual body, really nailed to a tree, was really laid in the grave. Thomas did, in real deed, put his finger into the print of the nails and thrust his hand into His side. We must also believe that He did assuredly and in very deed rise again from the dead and that in His own real body, He ascended into Heaven. There must be no doubts about these foundational facts. If we would feed upon Christ He must be real to us, for a man does not eat and drink shadows and fancies.

We must also truly believe in the death of the Incarnate Son of God. The mention of His flesh as eaten, apart from His blood which is drunk, indicates death. The blood is in the flesh while there is life. His death is more than hinted at in the 51st verse of John 6, where our Lord says, And the bread that I will give him is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. Brothers and Sisters, we must believe in our Lords death as it accomplishes the expiation of sin, for so faith feeds on His body as given for the life of the world.

There are some who profess to believe in Christs life and they hold Him forth as a great example who will save us from selfishness and other evils if we follow Him. Such is not the teaching of the textthe blessing of eternal life is not promised for following Christs example, but for eating and drinking His flesh and blood, or, in other words, taking Christ into oneself! And the promise is not made for receiving His example or His doctrine, but His Person, His flesh, His bloodHis flesh and blood as separated and, therefore, Himself as dead for us and made a Sacrifice for us. Just as in the peace-offerings the offerer sat down and feasted with the priest upon the victim which he had presented, so Jesus Christ, our Passover, is sacrificed for us and we are to feed upon Him as the Lamb of God, receiving Him in His sacrificial and propitiatory Character, into our souls.

It is vain for us to hope for salvation apart from this! The Father sets Him forth as a propitiation through faith in His blood. If we refuse Him in this Character, Christ has become of no use to us. Christ the Exemplar cannot save you if you reject Him as the Christ who bowed His head to death, even the death of the Cross, suffering in His peoples place. Christ as a King cannot save you unless you believe in Christ as a Victim. This is absolutely necessary to saving faithunless you eat His flesh and drink His blood, that is, accept Him in His real Personality, offered as a Sacrifice for sin, you have no life in you!

This is what is to be believed. But in order to eat, a man not only believes that there is bread before him and accepts that bread as being proper food for his body, but the next thing he does is to appropriate it. This is a great part of the act of feeding upon Christ. As a man, in eating, takes the morsels to himself and says, This is bread which I believe nourishes the body and it shall now nourish

me, I take it to be my bread, so must we do with Christ. Dear Brothers and Sisters, we must say, Jesus Christ is set forth as a propitiation for sin, I accept Him as the Propitiation for my sin. God gives Him to be the foundation upon which sinners hopes are to be built. I take Him to be the Foundation of my hopes. He has opened a fountain for sin and for uncleanness. I come to Him and desire to wash away my sin and my uncleanness in the fountain of His blood.

You cannot eat, you know, unless you make the food your own. In fact, nothing is more especially a mans own than what he has eatenhis possession of it cannot be denied, nor can it be taken away from him. So you must take Christ to be as much your own as the bread you eat or the water you drinkHe must, beyond question, be yours personally and inwardly. Looking up to Him upon the Cross, you have to say, Savior of sinners, those who trust in You are redeemed. I also trust You as my Savior and I am, therefore, assuredly redeemed by Your most precious blood. Eating lies, in part, in appropriating food and so, unless you appropriate the flesh and blood of Christ to be your own personal hope and confidence, you cannot be saved.

I have laid stress upon a personal appropriation, for each man eats for himself, not for anyone else. You cannot eat for anybody but yourself. And so, in taking Christ, you take Him for yourself. Faith is your own act and deednobody can believe for you, nor can you savingly believe for another. I say it with reverencethe Holy Spirit, Himself, cannot believe for us, although He can, and does, lead us to believe. And, indeed, if the Divine Spirit did believe for us, we should not obtain the promise, since it is not made to proxy faith, but solely and alone to personal believing. We are not passive in believingwe must be active and perform the personal act of appropriating the Lord Jesus to be our souls meat and drink.

This believing in Jesus and appropriating Him go far to explain what is meant by eating His flesh and drinking His blood. Eating and drinking also consist principally in receiving. What a man eats and drinks, he appropriates to himself, and that not by laying it on one side in a treasury or casket, but by receiving it into himself. You appropriate money and you put it in your pocketyou may lose it. You secure a piece of land and you put your hedge about it, but that hedge may be broken down. But when you receive, by eating and drinking, you have placed the good things where you will never be robbed of them! You have received them in the truest and surest sense, for you have real possession and enjoyment in your own person.

Now, to say, Christ is mine, is a blessed thing. But to really take Christ into you by the act of faith is the vitality and the pleasure of faith! In eating and drinking, a man is not a producer, but a consumerhe is not a doer or a giver, for he simply takes in. If a queen should eat, if an empress should eat, she would become as completely a receiver as the pauper in the workhouse. Eating is an act of reception in every case. So it is with faithyou have not to do, to be, or to feel, but only to receive! The saving point is not a something which comes forth of you, but the reception of a something imparted to you. Faith is an act which the poorest sinner, the vilest sinner, the weakest sinner, the most condemned sinner may perform because it is not an act requiring power on his part, nor the

going forth of anything from him, but simply the receiving into himself!

An empty vessel can receive and receive all the better because it is empty. Oh Soul, are you willing to receive Jesus Christ as the free gift of Divine mercy? Do you, this day, say, I have so received Him? Well then, you have eaten His flesh and drunk His blood! If you have received the Incarnate God in your soul, so that you now trust in Him and in Him alone, then you have eaten His flesh and drunk His blood!

The process of eating involves another matter which I can hardly call part of it, but yet it is indissolubly connected with it, namely, that of assimilation. What is received, in eating, descends into the inward parts and is there digested and taken up into the body. Even so, faith takes up and absorbs into the man the heavenly Bread, Christ Crucified. The Word preached, we read in one place, did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it. Now, in the original, there is the idea of food taken into the body, but never getting mixed with the gastric juices and, consequently, remaining undigested, unassimilated, unprofitable and even injurious. Faith is to the soul what the gastric juices are to the bodyas soon as Christ is received into the man, faith begins to act upon Himto extract nutriment from His Person, work and offices. And so Christ becomes taken up into the understanding and the heart, builds up the entire system of manhood and becomes part and parcel of the renewed man.

Just as bread, when it is eaten, becomes dissolved and absorbed and afterwards is turned into blood and flows through all the veins and goes to make up the body, even so is Christ the soul. He becomes our life and enters mysteriously into vital union with us. As the piece of bread which we ate yesterday could not, now, be taken away from us, because it is a part of ourselves, even so does Jesus become one with us. You ate the bread yesterday and whereabouts it is now no philosopher can tell. Part of it may have gone to form brain and other portions to make bone, sinew and muscle. But its substance is taken up into your substance, so that the bread dwells in you now and you in it, since it makes up your bodily house.

This is to feed upon Jesus Christto take Him in so that your life is hid with Him, till you grow to be like Hetill your very life is Christ and the great fact that Jesus lived and died becomes the mightiest Truth of God under Heaven to your mindswaying your whole soul, subduing it to itself and then elevating it to the highest degree. For the love of Christ constrains us; because we thus judge that if One died for all, then were all dead: and that He died for all, that they which live should not, from now on, live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again. Even as flowers drink in the sunlight till they are tinted with rainbow hues, so do we receive the Lord Jesus till we become comely with His comeliness and He lives, again, in us! This it is to eat His flesh and drink His blood.

But now I will make a series of remarks, somewhat out of order, with the view of setting forth this mysterious eating and drinking in a clearer manner. Observe that Christ is as necessary to the soul as bread is to the body. Meat and drink are absolutely requisiteand so you must have Christ, or you cannot live in the true sense of that word. Take away food from the body, it must diedeny Christ to a man and he is dead while he lives! There is in us a natural desire after meat and drink, an appetite which springs out of our necessity and reminds us of itwe must labor to feel just such an appetite after Christ! Your wisdom lies in your knowing that you must have Jesus to be your personal Savior and in acknowledging that you will perish if you do not receive Him! And it is well with you when this knowledge makes you crave and pine and pant for Him. Hunger after Him! Thirst after Him! Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after Him, for He will fill them.

Meat and drink do really satisfy . When a man gets bread and water, having eaten enough, he has what his nature requires. The need is real and so is the supply. When you get Christ, your heart will obtain exactly what it needs. You do not, yourself, fully know what the needs of your soul are, but rest assured that known or unknown, your necessities will all be supplied in the Person of Jesus Christ. And if you accept Him, as surely as meat and drink stop hunger and thirst, so surely will He satisfy the cravings of your soul. Dream no longer of any satisfaction apart from Him and ask for nothing beyond or beside Him. Christ is All and more than all! He is meat and drink, too. Be content with Him and with nothing short of Him. Hunger after Him more and more, but never leave Him to spend your money for that which is not bread and your labor for that which satisfies not.

Beloved, a hungry man never gets rid of his hunger by talking about feeding, but by actually eating. Therefore do not so much talk about Christ as actually receive Him. Look not on supplies of food and say, Yes, these will satisfy meoh, that I had them, but eat at once. The Lord beckons you to the banquet, not to look on, but to sit down and feast! Sit down at once! Ask not for a second invitation, but sit down and feed on what is freely presented to you in the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ. You need Him to be formed in you the hope of Heavenbut this can never be unless you receive Him into your inmost soul.

In healthy eating there is a pleasure . No healthy person needs to be flogged to make him eat, for the palate is conscious of pleasure while we are feedingand truly, in feeding upon Jesus there is a delicious sweetness pervading the whole soul. Right royal are His dainties! Nothing can more delight immortal banqueters than Jesus delights Believers! He satiates the soul. A thousand heavens are tasted in the Saviors body and blood. If ever you lose your relish for Christ, rest assured that you are out of health. There can be no surer sign of a sad state of heart than not to delight in the Lord Jesus Christ. But when He is very sweet to your taste. When even a word about Him, like a drop from the honeycomb, falls sweetly upon your tonguethen there is not much the matter with you your heart is sound at the core. Even though you should feel faint, it is a faintness of Nature, and not a failure of Grace! And if you feel sick, if it is sickness after Him whom your soul loves, it is a disease which it were

well to die of!

Eating times as to our bodies come several tines a day so take care that you partake of the flesh and blood of Jesus often and often. Do not be satisfied with yesterdays receiving of Jesus, but receive Him again today. Do not live upon old fellowships and experiences, but go to Jesus hourly and be not content till He fills you again and again with His love. I wish that we could become spiritually like certain animals that I know of which stand in the stall and eat all day long and half through the night, too. Here I would gladly possess the appetite of the horse-leech and never feel that I must pause! Happy is that Christian who can eat abundantly of heavenly meat, as the spouse bids him, and never cease eating while Christ is near, but feed on and on till far into the nightand then awake with the dawn to feed on the Bread of Heaven!

It is well to have set tines for eating . People are not likely to flourish who pick up their food just as they can and have no regular meals. It is well to have settled times when you can sit down to the table and take your food properly. Assuredly, it is wise to have appointed periods for communing with Christ, for meditating upon Him, for considering His work and for receiving His Grace. You know with children it is, little and often, and so with us, let it be line upon line, and precept upon precept, here a little and there a little. A bit between regular meals often comes very sweet to a laboring man and so, though you have special seasons for getting alone with Christ, do not deny yourself a snatch by the way. Get a wafer made with honey between meals, and lay it on your tongue to sweeten your moutha choice thought, a Scripture text, or a precious promise about Jesus.

I am sure there is one thing I can say about this feeding upon Christ that never was a man guilty of gluttony in feeding upon Christs flesh and blood. The more you eat of Christ, the more you will be able to eat of Him. We readily weary of any other food, but never of this heavenly bread! We are often in an ill condition in reference to our Lord because we have not had enough of Him, but we can never have too much. When we receive Him to the full, we still find that He enlarges our capacity and we are all the more able to enjoy His preciousness.

Observe that the text tells us that the Believer is to eat His flesh and drink His blood, for observe that Christ is meat and drink, too, He is All in All, and All in One. A man must not only eat Christ, but he must drink Christthat is to say, he must not receive Christ one way, only, but all ways, and not a part of Christ, but all of Christnot merely Christs flesh as Incarnate, but Christs blood as the slaughtered Sacrifice and bleeding Lamb. You must have a whole Christ and not a divided Christ! You have not truly received Christ if you have only said I select this and that virtue in Him. You must open the door and let a full Christ come in to take possession of your soul.

You must receive not merely His work, offices, Graces, but Himself, His whole self. Those receive no Grace at all who reject the blood of Christ, for that has special mention. Oh, what hard stings I have heard said, even of late, about those that preach the blood of Christ! Let them say on if they will, it is at their peril! But as for me, my Brothers and Sisters, I hope I shall deserve their censures more and more and preach the blood of Christ yet more abundantly, for there it nothing that can give satisfaction to the soul and quench that fierce, strong thirst which is aroused within our nature, but the blood of Jesus as of a Lamb slain from before the foundation of the world!

Beloved, it is one sweet thought that the flesh and blood of Christ is food suitable for all conditions. This suits babes in Grace and is equally suitable for old men. This suits sick Christiansthey cannot have a daintier morseland this suits Christians in the full vigor of their strength. This is meat for morning and meat for night and meat for midday! This is meat to live by and meat to die byyes, he that eats it shall never see death! This is meat for feast days and this is meat for days when we mourn and sorrow. This is meat for the wilderness and meat for the royal gardens meat, I was about to say, for Heaven itselffor what better food shall our souls find, even there, than His flesh and blood? And remember all the Lords people are free to eat ityes, and every soul that hungers for it is welcome! No one needs to ask whether he may have it. It is set forth to be food for all believing souls, whatever their previous character may have been. Come and welcome, come and welcome, hungering, thirsting souls! Come eat His flesh and drink His blood!

Thus have I tried to set forth, in broken accents, what it is to eat His flesh and drink His blood. It is to take a whole Christ into you by trusting yourself entirely to Him as a man trusts his life to the bread he eats and the water he drinks. How do you know bread will feed you? How do you know water will sustain you? Well, you know by experienceyou have tried themyou have found that bread and water are good for you. Why do you not take plaster of Paris? Why do you not drink vitriol? You know better!

You know you can trust bread to build you up and water to refresh you and, even so, you do not take in priestcraft and false doctrines, but the blessed Person and work of Jesus Christ in His life and in His sacrificial death. You take these in, for you feel that you can feed upon themthese are the dainty provisions that your soul loves!

II. Now let us briefly consider WHAT ARE THE VIRTUES OF THIS EATING AND DRINKING OF CHRIST. Turn, now, to your Bibles, and in the 53rd verse you find that this act is essential. Verily, verily, I say unto you, except you eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, you have no life in you. It is essential, for if you have no life in you, you have nothing that is good. No life in you.

You know the modern theory that there are germs of life in all men which only need developing. Universal Fatherhood spies some good in all of us and what he has to do is to educate it and bring it out. This is the philosophical notion, but it is not Christs way of putting it! He says, Except you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. No, not an atom of true life! There is no life to be educated. The sinner is dead and in him there is no good thing whatever. If ever there is to be any good thing it will have to come into himit must be an

importationand it can never come into him except in connection with his eating the flesh and drinking the blood of Christ!

But suppose a man has many convictions of sin? He begins to see the evil of sin and he dreads the wrath to come. This is hopeful, but I solemnly remind any of you who are in this state, that unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man you have no life. Until you have believed in Christ, you have no life. Until you have washed in His precious blood, you are still dead in sin. Oh, do not be satisfied because you feel some legal convictions! Do not sit down in thankfulness because you are somewhat disturbed in mind! You never must be satisfied until you have received Christ! You have NO LIFE in you till you have received Christ!

But perhaps you have attended upon ceremonies. You may have been baptized and taken the sacrament. Yes, but if you have never eaten Christ, taken Him into you, you have no life in you! You are dead while you live! Now, here is a proof in our text that life does not mean, existence, as people now talk, who, when they read that, the sinner dies, say that means that he goes out of existence. Ungodly men have an existence in them, but that is a very different thing, indeed, from eternal lifeand you must never confuse existence with life or death, with non-existencethey are very many leagues apart from one another!

The unconverted man, not having Christ, has no life in him at all. You members of the Church, have you life in youreal life? You have not if you have not eaten the flesh of Christ! You may have been many years, professors, but did you ever eat Christ and drink Christ? If not, you have NO life in you! You may be excellent moral people. Your characters may be patterns to others. There may be everything that is beautiful about you. But if Christ is not in your heart, you are the child of Nature, finely dressed, but dead. You are not the living child of Graceyou are the statue beautifully chiseled, but, like the cold marble, there is no life in you! Nothing but Christ can be life to the soul and the highest excellencies to which human nature can reach apart from Him fall short of salvation. You MUST have Jesus, or death abides in you and you abide in death!

That is the first virtue of feeding upon Christ, it is absolutely essential. Now, secondly, it is vital. Read the next verseWhoever eats My flesh, and drinks My blood, has eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. That is to say, he has been quickened by receiving into himself a whole Christhe is, therefore, alive! Though he may be, sometimes, led to doubt it by his state of heart, yet if he has really received Christ, he has been quickened from the dead and is alive! And what is more, he always shall be alive, for he has eternal life. Now, a life that can possibly die out is evidently not eternal life and the life which the Arminian gets as the result of his faith, according to his own statement, is not eternal life because it may come to an end.

Good soul, I know if he has really believed in Jesus, he will sweetly find out his mistake and his life will go on living under temptation and trial, for it shall be in him, a well of water springing up unto everlasting life. It shall be, a living and incorruptible seed which lives and abides forever. Oh, let us believe the precious doctrine of the Final Perseverance of the Saints! He that eats My flesh and drinks My blood HAS eternal life. He has it now! It is a life that shall last as long as God, Himselfeternal as Jehovahs Throne!

And then, as to the body, that will die, will it not? Yes, but such is the power of the life which Christ puts into us, that the body, itself, shall rise again! We have our Lords pledge for itI will raise him up at the last day. As yet the body is dead because of sin, though the spirit is life because of righteousnessbut there is a redemption coming for this poor frameand for this material world in which we dwell. When Christ shall come, then the creation shall be delivered from the bondage under which it was placed and our material bodies, with the rest of creation, shall be emancipated! The bodies of the saints will be delivered from all imperfection, corruption and defilement! We shall live, again, in the glorious image of Christ and the Lord shall fulfill His gracious Word, I am the resurrection and the life; he that believes in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. This eating and drinking of Christ, then, is vital.

In the third place it is substantial, for My flesh is meat, indeed, and My blood is drink, indeed. This is opposed to the unsubstantial character of symbols. The Jewish feasting was a mere shadow, But, says Jesus, My flesh is meat, indeed. This is also said in contradistinction from carnal food. Carnal food, being eaten, only builds the body and then disappears, but it cannot touch the soul. But feeding upon Christ, the soul is fed and fed unto life eternal, so that Jesus claims to be, meat indeed.

Do you ever attend a ministry where the preacher preaches anything and everything but Christ? Do you get fed? Well, if you are of a windy sort, you may get blown up with the east wind as wild asses are when they snuff it up. But I know, if you are a child of God, it does not matter who preaches, or how poor his languageif he preaches Christ you always feel as if you were fedyour soul is satisfied with marrow and fatness when Christ is the subject! There is no such meat for the soul as Christand the sweetest refreshment is from the weakest parts of Christfor Gods strength is perfect in His weakness!

You say to me What do you mean? Well, our Lord in the text says, My flesh is meat, indeed, not, my Godhead. My blood is drink indeed, not My Resurrection and Ascension. Not, My Second Advent, but My weakness as a Man, My death as a Man, My sufferings, My griefs, My groansthese are the best food for Believers. Do you not find it so? O I rejoice to hear of Christ as coming a second time, but there are times when that doctrine does not yield me an atom of comfort! The brightest stars that charm the day for a poor benighted pilgrim are those which burn around the Cross! Strange that we should turn to that spot where sorrow culminated to find our purest comfort, but it is soMy flesh is meat, indeedChrist in His weakness! My blood is drink, indeedChrist pouring out His soul unto death! This is the truest and best food of the heart!

Now, Brethren, if you want to grow in Grace, feed on Christ! If you would become strong in the Lord, feed on Christ! If you want a something that will build you up in all parts permanently and well, feed on Christ, for other things are meat and drink, but His flesh is meat, indeed, and

His blood is drink, indeed! Substantial fare is this! And, lastly, another virtue of this feeding is that it produces union. Notice the next verseHe that eats My flesh, and drinks My blood, dwells in Me, and I in him. How wonderful is that worddwells in Me. You get, by taking Christ into you as a whole Christ, to live in Christ and Christ in you!

There is this difference between the two privilegesto live in Christ is the peace of Justification. You believe in Him, you trust yourself with Him, you feel that you died with Him and that you rose with Himthat you have gone to Heaven with Himand, therefore, you are accepted in Him and so you live in Him! For Him to live in you is another thing, namely, the peace of Sanctification, for when you have fed on Jesus, He enters into you and abides in you, living, again, in you. He speaks through your lips, loves with your heart, looks through your eyes, works with your hands and witnesses among the sons of men by your tongueHe lives in you! Oh, wondrous union! Blessed union!

The next verse makes it more wonderful, still, for it says As the living Father has sent Me, and I live by the Father: so he that eats Me, even he shall live by Me. Three living thingsthe living Father, the living Son and, then, the living Believer. There is the Father with life in Himself as God. Then there is the Son as Mediator, God-Man, deriving life from the Father. And then the Believer, taking the life which came from God through Jesus Christ. O blessed union is this, not merely with Jesus, but through Jesus with the Father! So that Christ says, I live, and because I live, you shall live also. He lives by the Father and we live by Himand all this because we receive Him and feed upon Him!

Oh, my Brothers and Sisters, I charge you, open your mouth wide after Christ and take Him into your very self! Give Him a lodging in your heart, yes, let Him dwell forever in the best pavilion of your nature, in the rarest place of your soul! Hunger after Him! Feed on Him everyday and when you have done so, and He dwells in you and you in Him, then tell others about Him and spread His dear name abroad, that hungry, perishing sinners may know that there is corn in Egypt and bread to be had in Jesus! And may many come and eat and drink of Him as you have done. I charge you, Brothers and Sisters, remember this, and the Lord bless you, for His names sake. Amen.

PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMONJohn 6:26-65. HYMNS FROM OUR OWN HYMN BOOK410, 819, 613.   
Adapted from The C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307. Sermon #1460 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

THE MEAT AND DRINK OF THE NEW NATURE   
NO. 1460

DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON. For My flesh is meat, indeed, and My blood is drink, indeed. John 6:55.

WE know that the Savior spoke of spiritual, not carnal things, and He spoke of Himself not as being in any sense meat for our bodiesthat could not bebut as being food for our souls. This statement is very plain to us, but those who heard it at the first, found it very difficult to understand. Nor need we wonder, for men of the schools who play with letters, words and phrases, frequently meet with difficulties where none exist. The Jews of our Lords day had fallen into the foolish habit of taking words to pieces and dwelling upon the syllables and letters until they seemed to have lost all power of getting at the plain meaning which ordinary language was intended to convey. They blinded their own eyes with the pretense of superior wisdom; made puzzles and riddles out of plain words; raised a lot of dust and sat down in it blinded to the end.

Our God has taught us more and given us to understand more clearly, for His Holy Spirit has given us back the childlike spirit so that we are willing to see the natural sense which words were meant to reveal. Now we see great force and clear expressiveness in that very language which seemed, before, to conceal the Saviors meaning. It was a veil to the Jews and they saw notit is an instructive parable to us, which, instead of hiding the Truth of God, shadows it out to us and softens the light for our weak eyes. We see, I fear, even now but dimly, for our spiritual sight is scarcely clear as yet, but we see, blessed be God for that, and we see Jesus and something of His loving meaning. We do more than seewe enjoy and, therefore, know to the life what it is to feed upon His flesh, which is meat, indeed, and to drink His blood, which is drink, indeed.

We cannot attempt to explain the deep mysteries of our text, but rather, as the swallow touches the brook with his wing and is away again, we will glance at these crystal waters of this sacred Truth of God and then up and away! The text teaches us, first, what Christ must be to us. We shall consider, secondly, what is bound up in this. And, thirdly, what reflections naturally arise out of it.

I. WHAT CHRIST MUST BE TO US. The answer from the text is, He must be our meat and drink. He must be everything to usthe one thing necessary, the indispensable, necessary all-sufficient supply. He must be the source of strength, the support of life and we must feel Him to be so. He must, to come back to the figure, be meat and drink to us. Our Lord, in speaking to the Jews, was doubtless thinking of the Paschal Lamb and of the time when Israel came out of Egyptwhen they not only had the blood of the lamb sprinkled upon their houses for their security, but the

lamb, itself, within them as their sustenance.

They sat down to feed upon it before they enjoyed the fullness of redemption by passing out of Egypt from under the bondage of Pharaoh. They did not understand that symbol and they little knew what our great Lord and Master meant when He employed it to set forth Himself and said, My flesh is meat, indeed, and My blood is drink, indeed. Our Lord Jesus Christ must be to us, then, our spiritual meat and drink. What do we mean by that? First, that the doctrine of God Incarnate must be the food of our souls. Brothers and Sisters, we have no doubt as to the true and proper Deity of our Lord Jesus. We have long since passed out of the region of controversy about that, for He has been God to us in the work of salvation and in the new creation which we have experienced through His power.

We have, moreover, no doubt about His humanity, but we do not usually dwell enough upon it. We are bound to adore His Deity, but we must not forget that He is as truly Man as if He were not God, and as much a Brother to us as if He were not the Son of the Highest. Jesus is assuredly Man. Now feed on this. The man Christ Jesus heads up a new raceas the first Adam headed up the race of old and was our federal head to stand or fall for us, and we were to stand or fall in himso is there now a new Head who brings us up from the ruin of the first Adams fall and puts us into a new position before the living God. There is a Man who has redeemed us! There is a Man who has made all the men in Him wellpleasing to God. There is a Man who represents manhood in perfection in the Glory above. There is a Man in whom all Believers areeven as we read that Levi was in the loins of Abraham when Melchisidec met him!

We are in Christ and we now stand before the eternal Throne in that blessed representative Man. Feed on this doctrine! Jesus is a real Man, though clothed with all power He is God and yet He is the mirror of tenderness! He rules all things and yet is touched with the feeling of our infirmities. You must believe this and you must receive itand you must rest upon itotherwise you have no life in you. Some try to turn this fact into a myth, but, indeed, it is no parable or figure of speech, for the Christ who spoke these words was there before themone whom they had often seen eat and drink! He spoke of Himself with His own lips and was not a phantom or apparition, but a solid existence of flesh and blood. So, then, it is upon the historical Christ, whose existence is a matter of fact, that my soul must feed as I believe Him to be both Human and Divine.

But this is not all the food to be fed upon is not merely God Incarnate, but Christ suffering. Notice that He puts it, My flesh is meat, indeed, and My blood is drink indeedwhen the flesh and the blood are mentioned separately, death is implied. The two being divided and being named together in one connection are the token and emblem of our Saviors vicarious Sacrifice. We also, (I am speaking of the Brothers and Sisters worshipping here), have long ago passed beyond the region of controversy as to the substitutionary sacrifice of Jesus Christ our Lord. If it is not so, then is our preaching vain and our hope is also vain and we are yet in our sins. We have no hope of eternal life save that which begins, centers and ends in the Sacrifice of Jesus Christ! This Man, when He had offered one Sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of Godthat is our sole hope.

He has made expiation for sin   
*He bore, that we might never bear,   
His Fathers righteous ire.*

We are now to build up our souls by feeding upon the suffering, the crucified, the dead, the buried Christ, as having stood as our Representative and as having endured death in our place. You cannot obtain comfort apart from this if you have felt the weight of sin! And you cannot continue happy apart from this great historical fact if you are conscious of sin. Fly, my Hearers, into the wounds of Jesus and, like doves, you shall find shelter in that Rock! And with eager wings you may glide over the waste of human thought without finding a rest for the soles of your weary feet till you light upon the Truth of God of the great Substitution.

The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, is the first bell of Heavens marriage pealand the second has an equally sweet note of its ownChrist died for our sins. Ring them both often! Listen to them as they sound forth, God with us, Christ for us. Incarnation, Substitution was there ever better meat and drink for a hungry soul? This surely satisfies the desire of the most hungry spiritThe blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. I have, as it were, in those few words set out the viands of the feast.

But now I would have you note that our Lord must be to us meat and drinkand meat is not intended to look at, but to feed on. I heard the other day that in a certain Socinian place of worship they have gone the length of setting the bread and wine on the table for the people to look at, but they suppose that it is quite unnecessary that they should actually eat and drink. It is fittingly done of themthat is consistent with their creed. They have no Christ to feed upon! There is nothing in their belief which could feed the soul of a mouse, if a mouse had a soul! Why should they attempt to feed the people in figure when really they have no Incarnate God or atoning Savior? If it is, indeed, true that in one of their places of worship they have exhibited the bread and wine instead of handing it out to be eaten, it is remarkably typical of their bloodless, lifeless gospel! Their Christ who is no Deity! Their Jesus who is no Sacrifice for sin!

How can the soul find food there? But we must beware lest we, ourselves, should ever rest content with merely glancing at Christ and not partaking of Him. What is to be done with food, with meat and drink? It is to be received! Food on the table does not nourish! It must be taken into the hand. The cup on the board will never cheerit must be liftedit must be appropriated. I know that many of you have, by a humble but brave faith, appropriated Christ as He is set before you in the Gospel. He has bid you come and eat and you have come pressed by a sore famine that was in your soul. You have come and you have said, He is mine, and you have taken Him to yourselves by simple childlike confidence in Him. You have done wellcontinue to do the same.   
As you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk you in Him. Go

on receiving Him. To whom coming, says the Apostle, as unto a living stone. Regard Him not as one to whom you have come by one act and have done with Him, but as one to whom you come continually! Of His fullness have all we received and Grace for Grace, but we are going on receiving by continuing to believe in Him! Hold on to this. Having begun in the spirit, do not hope to be perfected by the flesh! Do not think that you are to be fed, afterwards, on something other than Christ, but go on receiving, appropriating and taking home the great Truths concerning your Lord. Here, my Brethren, is the life of your faith.

But even appropriating is not enough to constitute feeding. After taking the morsel, it is put into the mouth and received inwardlythe draught of wine is poured into the throat and it disappears. Receive the Truth of God not only as a matter of creed, but drink it in as the ox sucks in the water when he stands up to his knees in the pool. Take Christ into your very soulinto your hearts belief as well as into your minds belief! Mental beliefs shift and change, but the inward souls belief never alters. I reckon that we know nothing rightly till we have absorbed it and made it part and parcel of ourselves. The vital Truths with regard to our Lord Jesus must go down into the inward parts of the soul, as the food descends into the secret parts of the belly to feed the entire man.

And you know what becomes of the food. It is taken up by the Nature, itself, and becomes transmuted into it. After its digestion, it passes through various processes and ultimately becomes the life-blood out of which is built up nerve, muscle, sinew, bone, flesh, heart. Everything comes of it. Now, you must so believe in Jesus that no longer is it a matter of question with you whether you will retain Him or not, for if you have inwardly received Him, you cannot lose Him forever. Oh that blessed Quis separabit?Who shall separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord? It is difficult to deprive a person of that which he has received mentally, for facts learned in childhood are remembered even to old age.

No one could compel another to forget, but yet without such compulsion the memory might relax its hold through lapse of yearsthe mind might part with that which it has received, but no known power could take away from a man that which he has eaten and assimilated! A person may very readily pick my pocket of my wallet, but what I ate yesterday he cannot steal! That is mineit is joined to myself and has built me up. I do not know what portion of my flesh comes of my morning meal, or of my mid-day repast, but there it is and there it must be. It has entered into me and never can be taken away from me. So when the soul takes in Christs Truth with that simple childlike faith which is the mouth, the Truth goes into the soul and is thought over, trusted in, delighted in and becomes so part and parcel of the inner consciousness and of the new nature of the man that it would be utterly impossible to tear away that Truth from him!

Pound a true Christian in a mortar and every single atom would say, I belong to Christ. Grind him finer than the smallest dust of the threshing floor and every minute particle would still say, Christ is in me. For so it is that the Christ has entered the man, permeated his nature, become his very life and now it is, I live, yet not I, but Christ lives in me. Now is the text fulfilled in us, For you are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall you also appear with Him in Glory. Abide in Me, said our Lord and He gave His own promise to be with us forever. That is the result of eating Christ and to this we must come!

Beloved, I have thus explained the matter as well as I can, but as old Rollock says, The only way to understand feeding upon Christ is to feed upon Christ. This is a practical, personal, experimental business. In learning certain acts you must, yourself, become a practical scholar, the master cannot teach by merely setting the copythe scholar must imitate it line by line with his own handand so here I can teach little by words only, you must practice what is spoken. Now feed on the Lord Jesus! Let each one of you do it. I know what some will dothey will not feed on Christ, but they will pick over the heavenly bread like dainty folks who have no stomach for their meat. This bit of Christ they would have, but the other does not suit their tasteJustification by Faith they would have, but not Sanctificationthey do not like that.

It is a whole Christ you and I must havea whole Christ as to every part of His teaching, Character, work and offices. We must receive Him into ourselves without division, rejoicing to take Him just as He is. Especially must we receive the spirit of Christ, for, if any man have not the spirit of Christ he is none of his. We must partake in the loving spirit, the self-denying spirit, the generous spirit which lives not within itself, but goes forth in forgiveness of injuries and in seeking to benefit all mankind. We must have Jesus in us, delighting to take in the whole of Him, for He says farther on in this very chapter, He that eats

Methat is even more comprehensive than His, flesh and His bloodHe that eats Me, even he shall live by Me. The entire Christ must be taken into the soul to build up the inner man.

II. Now, secondly, WHAT IS BOUND UP IN THIS EATING OF HIS FLESH AND DRINKING OF HIS BLOOD? Here we will take you back to the context. And notice, first, that there is, for this eating the flesh and drinking the blood of Christ, such an essential necessity that he who has not so eaten and drank has no spiritual life at all. It is a strong word, Except you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. He does not mean that they have no natural lifeHe is speaking about spiritual things.

Some that are as foolish as Judaizers in the matter of sticking to the letter tell us that this means existence and that no mans eternal existence is certain except that of a Believer in Christ. That dogma is not taught here, certainly. Our Lord is not speaking of existenceHe is speaking of a far higher thing than existence, namely, life. Have you ever learned the difference between death and non-existence and between life and existence? If you have not, you are babes in understanding and you will often be blundering and losing your way in the midst of texts of Scripture. A man may exist in everlasting death, as, alas, all who die unbelievers must do. But blessed is he who lives! Blessed is he who shall live forever! Let

me repeat the word, livesI did not say exists.

What a glorious thing is life! Yet, if I had to explain to you what life is, I might find it far easier by some action of my own to show that I lived than to tell you exactly what life is. He, however, who eats Christ has life. He who has not done so has not life. Do you understand thisthat unless you have received Christ by faith into your souls you have no life? You can work, you can walk, you can speakyou have all sorts of natural lifebut you have not the life everlasting of which Jesus speaks! The life of God is not in you! You are dead and what a frightful condition that is and to what greater horror does it lead! For wherever there is death, the dead thing will go a stage farther on. And what is that stage? Corruption!

Only leave a corpse alone long enough and it must corrupt. Flesh corrupts necessarily. Already there are some signs of corruption about every ungodly manoutward sin and especially the inward sin of rejecting Christ are grievous corruptions. Your worm has begun to devour, even the worm that never dies. Then will be reached another stage, for corruption must be cast into the fire. For utter rottenness, the end must be burning! O Sinner, your fire has begun to burnthe fire that will never be quenchedfor sin is the kindling of Hell! It is an awful thing to abide in death and yet he that believes not on Christ is condemned already, because he has not believed on the Son of God! It is enough to make you spring from your seats, O you that are unbelievers, to think that you are not waiting to be triedyou are condemned already!

This is not a state of probation, as I often hear it said. Your probation is past! You are condemned already because you have not believed on the Son of Godand death is now upon you. The sentence has already begun to take effect and it will go on to the consummation of corruption till, at last, the Lord shall say, Bury My dead out of My sight, and you must be driven from the Presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power. There is no life in you unless you have received Christ! Will you think of this, you thinkers? Only think of your being dead! Will you think of this, you ceremonialists to whom the outward Baptism and the outward Lords Supper and the church attendance and the chapel going are everything? Unless you have fed on Christ there is no life in you!

Then comes, in the next place, the further Truth of God, namely, that all who have received Jesus Christ as their meat and drink have eternal life. Whoso eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life. I do not know how our Brethren who doubt the final perseverance of the saints manage to escape from the plain teaching of the text. There are always ways of getting over everythingyou can drive a coach and six, they say, through any form of human language. But it does seem to me that if I have eternal life I must eternally live and cannot possibly die! if I have eternal lifeif words mean anythingI am an eternally saved man! If I have received Jesus Christ into my soul, I have the life in me which will no more die than the life of God, for Gods own life is eternal life and if I have received such life as His, how can I perish?

I shall not be slain by sinthe life in me cannot sin because it is born of God! The life in me will throw off the darts of temptation if it is eternal life. There remains nothing for it but to shake off the death which often surrounds it by reason of the old man and to mount up like a bird set free from its cage, singing because of its escape, singing in the joy of life and winging its happy way upward to the Throne of God! Rejoice then, dear Friends, that if you have received Christ, you have eternal life in actual possession at this moment! Sometimes I dont feel it, you say. Do not try to live by feeling! It is the most uncertain thing in the world. You might as well try to live by the barometer. Feeling goes up and down, up and down and changes more often than the moon. It is hard, uncomfortable living. Live by faith, for it is written, the just shall live by faith. Your life is a life of trust. Keep to it.

Ah, but I see so much about me that grieves me. Thank God it grieves you! If you see sin and it does not grieve you, it is a token of death! But if it grieves you, there is life in you, notwithstanding all the death that surrounds it. You may have seen a spark in the midst of a heap of autumn leaves which are all damp and will not burn, but only smolder and smoke. And yet that spark continues to live and the very smoke from the heap proves it is so. There is One who will not quench the smoking flax but will fan it till it rises to a flame, and then it will devour the leaves which covered it and dry up the dampness which sought to destroy it!

Furthermore, if you believe in Jesus and have received Him, you have gathered a life in which Christ gives us the victory, even through His namelife which will rise and rise and rise and conquer all sin. The Believers inner life must come to absolute perfection and tread every sin beneath its feet. Very different is this from the doctrine that a man who is a child of God may sin as he pleases and yet be saved! That doctrine is of the devil! But this is quite another doctrine and ministers to holiness. The quickened man will not willingly and habitually sin, for His Seed remains in him and he cannot sin because he is born of God. The tone and tenor and bearing of his life will be towards holiness and not towards sinand the Lord who is able to keep him from falling will preserve him to His eternal kingdom and glory and He that has begun a good work in him will perfect it unto the day of Christ.

Our Lord, having thus given us the negative and the positive in our text, tells us that His flesh and blood, or Himself, received into the soul are most efficient nourishmentin it is satisfaction. My flesh is meat indeed. The Greek word is truly, or, some say, true meat. Now that which we eat for the body is not true meat. As George Herbert says, When you are at your meat, eat a bit and then say, Earth to earth I commit. It is a deadly business. It is burying earth in earth and that living grave of earth will be, itself, buried in earth, by-and-by. The eating of material meat is the poor building up of a fabric that must ultimately crumble into nothingness. The meat we eat has all the elements of dissolution about it before we receive it and it only feeds for a short time and, therefore, it is not meat, indeed.

In the matter of mental food, how much there is which is not bread and can never satisfy the mind. There is nothing in the world that can fill a soul to the fullest, but Jesus. Perhaps I address some thinker who has been trying to satisfy his soul by sniffing up the east wind of speculative philosophy. Ah, well, if you swallow a dose of Kant, or Hegel, Schleicrmacher, or any one of those gentlemenif you do not feel as if you had been eating bubbles and bladders, your mental constitution and mine greatly differ! There is nothing in them but gas, or less substantial vapor. Why, a man may take down their booksa whole dozen of themand devour their contents and then say, What is it? Is it not much ado about nothing? These thoughts are dreams, vacuums, airy nothings! All the philosophies that ever were invented could not satisfy a soul!

The worst of it is that many do not want to be satisfied. We, they say, would sooner be seekers after truth than finders of it. They somewhat differ from men of practical common sense who, ordinarily, would rather have money than earn it and would rather eat their dinners than hunt for them. Still, that is their way and, if they like it, I suppose they must have it. Every creature after its own order! But if you want to be fed, dear Friends, depend upon it, nothing will feed you but Christ! There was a man of great appetite who lived many years ago and he began to feast ravenously. He was such a drinker that I may say of him that he drank up Jordan at a draught and he was such an eater, that, if you heard the story of what was brought to his table, you would be like the Queen of Sheba, utterly astonished, and say that the half was not told you!

His name was Solomon and he fed his soul with all the arts and sciences and with all the poetries and luxuries of the age. Nor did he refrain from laughter and wantonness. There was not a cup he did not drain, nor a dainty from any land, nor a fruit from any tree of which he did not eat. Yet when he rose up from that abundant banquet, all he had to say was, Vanity of vanities; all is vanity! I have seen a poor soul feed on Christ in a very humble cottage, upon a bed in a little room where she has lain alone almost all day and all night long, year after year, with many aches and pains and scarcely able to lift her hand to her headwith little but dry bread and a cup of waterand yet I have seen in that bedridden womans pain-worn face a fullness of satisfaction! I have known her speak like one that had not a wish ungratified, nor a grief worth mentioning. I have beheld her when, in her sufferings she could scarcely speak, and yet her every word was essential poetry when she spoke of

Him, her best Beloved, who had filled her soul even to overflowing!

There is no food indeed, no drink indeed, for soul and spirit, but that which you find in the Incarnate God and in the Sacrifice of Christ! O you hungry, come here and eat that which is good and let your soul delight itself in fatness! O you thirsty, come here, for behold the waters are flowing freely and the wines on the lees are ready for you in Christ Jesus! That is what is bound up in feeding upon Jesus! There is satisfaction in Him!

And then there is bound up with it one other matter, namely, indwelling. I go over the same ground again. The Lord Jesus says, He that eats My flesh and drinks My blood, dwells in Me and I in him. When you have eaten bread, it dwells in you and you in itit goes into you and it is in youit becomes part of yourself and you live by it and in its strength. It is a part of the fabric in which you dwell. Even so, he that believes in Christ lives in Christ. He does not merely go to Christ, but he enters into Christ. I delight to remember that I am not merely under the shadow of my Lord, but, as David in the caverns of Engedi, so does my soul hide herself right away in Jesus. We dwell in Him and are at home!

Moreover, He enters into us by our feeding upon Him so that He becomes our life, the spring of our being, the object of our desire, the motive force of our service! We are woven togetherChrist warp and ourselves woofwoven together in a living loom and so conjoined that it were hard to tell where He ends who has no end and where we begin who are lost in Him! We are less than the least of all saints and yet members of His body who is Lord of All! We must leave the mystery remarking that if we have fed on Christ for ourselves, we have proof of what good meat it is we have fed on and we shall always pray, Lord, evermore give us this bread.

III. I need your attention for a few minutes while, in the third place, we consider WHAT REFLECTIONS ARISE OUT OF THIS TRUTH. I will simply throw them out for you to turn over for yourselves. They occurred to me when I was hearing a Brother preach upon a kindred subject. They took hold of my soul! May they prove useful to you. And the first was this. If I have a life that feeds on Christ, what a wonderful life it must be. My bodily life is wonderful, yet it only feeds on the fruits of the earth. My mental life is a marvel, but I know that I can build it up with literature and thought. Above all these I have a life which cannot feed on anything but the flesh and blood of the Son of God! What a life that must be!

What a wonderful being a man is when God is in him! I almost reverence the meanest saint when I think of this, for he bears about with him not a Kohinoor, but a gem of life, compared with which the queenly diamond pales into a glittering vanity! O Love Divine, do You tabernacle in the sons of men? I have been speaking of mysteries, but I ask you to explain which is the greater mystery, the Incarnation of God in Christ or the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in Believers? They are two wondrous stoops of Deity which can only be likened to each other, being each one without parallel. The spiritual life given to the regenerate must be a life of inconceivable excellence and heavenliness since it can only feed on Christ Himself.

The next thought is, if we have the life that feeds on such meat as this, how strong it must be. They say of such-and-such men that they may well be strong, seeing what good food they have. Yes, but see what food we havehow strong we must be! Do we know our own strength? I do not mean our natural strength, for that is weakness, but I mean the strength which lies in the new Nature when it has fed on Christ! O Brothers and Sisters, we are strong to do! We are strong to be! We are strong to suffer! And to take an easy illustration of thisthe one that occurs to me first look at how the saints have suffered. Take down Foxes Book of Martyrs. Read of Marcus Arethusa, stung to death by wasps without a sigh!

Think of Blandina tossed on the horns of bulls, exposed in a red-hot iron chair and yet never flinching! Give up Christ? They never dreamed of such a thing! Think of Lawrence on the gridiron and other innumerable heroes who were made strong because Christ was in them! Yes, and turn to humble men and women over yonder in Smithfield who could clap their hands while every finger burned like a candle and could shout, None but Christ! None but Christ! Why, they fed on the flesh and blood of Christ and that made them mighty! They were tortured on the rack like Anne Askew and yet they scorned to yield. Brave woman! The priests and the friars could not vanquish her! Neither could all the Bishop Bonners in the world burn Christ out of poor Tomkins!

When Bonner held the poor mans finger over the candle and said, How will you like that in every single limb of your body? Tomkins smiled at the bishop and said that he forgave him the cruelty that he was doing him. Christ in a man makes him a partaker of Divine strength. Do you not think, my Brothers and Sisters, that as you are not called to suffer, you ought to lay out your strength in the line of doing, giving, self-denial and serving Christ by holy living? Certainly you should try to do so and your strength will be found equal to it! You do not know how strong you are, but Paul shall tell youI can do all things through Christ that strengthens me. Well may you do all things if you have fed on Him who is All and in all!

Then a third reflection crossed my mind. If we have a life that feeds on this, how immortal it must be. We have a text to prove that and we have given it to you alreadyHe that believes on Him has everlasting life. When a man has nothing but bad food, you do not wonder that he dies. It is little marvel that they died by millions in India and China, considering how little nourishment they had during the famine. But if you and I eat Christ, eat the Incarnate God and drink His blood, how can we die? What? Kill a man that has even a particle of Christ in him? The devil cannot do ithe knows his Master! And what does Christ say? I give unto My sheep eternal life and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand.

Oh, blessed Truth of God! We live, not only because our life is itself eternal, but because it feeds on eternal meat! We keep on receiving Christ day by day, for we live upon Him. Eating is not a work that we finished 25 years ago, but we continue to feed upon Jesus and, therefore, we live. Feeding upon Christ does not mean being converted and then saying, I am safe and have no more need to care. Ah, no! It means beginning to receive Him in conversion and continuing to feed upon Him forevermore! And they who do this may be sure that their life is immortal! The next thought that struck me was thisif we feed on such meat as this, how that life must develop. I do not quite see in myself and, I may say that I do not see in some Believers, the full result I should like to see from such food.

Has this man been eating such Divine food? Let us hear him. He cries, My leanness, my leanness, woe unto me! He is doing Christs work spasmodically, feebly, sleepily. He does it without joy and is soon weary. Is this all he is going to do? Is this all he is going to be? Oh no, Brothers and Sisters, It does not yet appear what we shall be. We shall grow! We shall grow! When I hear a man talk about being perfect in the flesh, I hope for the best and trust that he is not willfully lying. At any rate, I do not believe him! I would like to see his perfection rather than to hear him talk about it! I have generally found that when a cart needs a bell, it is a dust cart. I never knew the people of the Bank of England ring a bell when they were going through the streets with bullion and I do not think it is likely that a man who has much Grace will boast of it!

Yet I do believe that we can be developed into something very wonderful. A man may grow in Grace and in the knowledge of the Lord till his conversation is in Heaven and he becomes wholly consecrated to the Lordhating sin and living like Enoch who walked with God. There have been such men and there are such men and women still among us whose lives glitter with the light of Godwhy should not we be like they are? They are stars in Gods firmament and they shine in the Glory of the Most High! The Lord grant us that feeding on the Divine meat we may develop till the image of Jesus is perfected in us!

And, lastly, he who is thus fed, dear Friends, what company he must keep! He that eats My flesh and drinks My blood, dwells in Me, says Christ, and I in him. What heavenly company is this! He goes home at night to his poor family, perhaps, and there is nothing great about his house that you can seebut if your eyes are opened you will see that it is a kings palaceand if you are one of the Lords and can step inside, you will see that he has come to the general assembly and Church of the firstborn whose names are written in Heaven and unto God the Judge of All, and unto the spirits of just men made perfect, because he that has Christ in him has Heaven around him!

All good things are attracted by Christ in man. Put down a little honey and see how wasps and flies and bees come all around it! What is the sweetest honey in the universe? It is Christand if you have Christ in you, His name is as ointment poured forth, therefore do the virgins love Him and they will come where He is. I will tell youChrist is never without God and he that has Christ has the company of the Father! And Christ is never without the Spirit of God, for the Spirit of God is upon Him and he that has Christ is never without the Spirit! What Divine society is this! Our Lord Jesus is never unattended by a retinue of sublime intelligences and so if Christ is in you, He will give His angels charge over you to keep you in all your ways! They shall bear you up in their hands lest you dash your foot against a stone.

O Prince of the blood royal of Heaven! O Peer of Gods own kingdom, you are more nearly related to the King of kings than the peers of the realm can be to the Queen, for are you not married to the Prince Imperial? Is He not coming to receive you to Himself, that where He is, you may be, also? If you are feeding on Him, your union with Him is complete! If He is your food; if He is your raiment; if He is your dwelling place; if He is your All in All, I think I may compare you to that angel of whom Milton sang, even Uriel, who dwelt in the center of the sun! It is there we livein the very substance and essence of all things and all things move around us

like satellites around a central globe, for we are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a peculiar people inasmuch as we have fed on Christ and Christ dwells in us and we in Him!

I have not said anything to the unconverted and yet I have meant it all for them. When you spread a dainty feast, you practically invite the family to come and dine. It is the very best way of enticing them. If they are hungry, the meats on the table will make their mouths water and they will long to partake. Oh, my Hearers, whoever you may be, if your mouths water after Christ, come and have Him for He is free to every soul that hungers and thirsts after Him! The Lord give Him to you at once, for Jesus sake. Amen.

**PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMONJohn 6:41-71.** HYMNS FROM OUR OWN HYMN BOOK260, 820, 761. LETTER FROM MR. SPURGEON:

BELOVED FRIENDS, By the time that this note is printed, the Special Services at the Tabernacle will be drawing to a close and it will be meet to harrow in the seed with renewed supplication. Shall so much effort be in vain? It cannot be and yet everything depends upon the mighty working of the Spirit of God and, therefore, we must seek His face if we would see large results! I suggest that every sermon reader should spend a special time in prayer, next Lords Day, in pleading for the revival of Evangelical religion.

The Times pronounced the funeral oration of the Evangelical party, but it is not dead, even, within the Established Church and certainly not among Dissenters! Let us, however, pray that it may exhibit more vigorous life. There is need of such supplication, but it must be presented in faith and with holy importunity. So let it be.

For myself, one word only. I am recovering and rest is restoring mind and heart. Pray for me.   
Yours to serve always,

*C. H. SPURGEON,* Mentone, February 20, 1879.   
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THE SOULS FOOD AND DRINK

**NO. 3192   
A SERMON  
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, APRIL 7, 1910.**

DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,  
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON,  
ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, OCTOBER 5, 1873.

For My flesh is food, indeed, and My blood is drink, indeed.   
John 6:55.

IT was our Lord Jesus Christ who uttered these words and some of those who heard Him misunderstood His meaning, for they asked, How can this Man give us His flesh to eat? This is not altogether surprising, for there are still millions of persons upon the earth who will persist in understanding literallywhat our Lord intended to be understood spiritually. To us who know the meaning of Christs words, it seems monstrous that anyone could have supposed that Jesus

meant men to eat His real, literal flesh and to drink His actual blood! I must confess that, to me, it seems an instance both of the utter depravity of human nature and of the absolute insanity to which sin has driven mankindthat there are still so many persons existing in what we call this enlightened age who actually believe that we can eat the flesh of Christ and drink His blood! This is a cannibal notion which only needs to be mentioned to be denounced. Instead of having anything sacred about it, such teaching is utterly detestableit is inconceivably idiotic and blasphemous! Idiocy and blasphemy seem to be blended together in it in about equal proportions. It is strange that such blessed words from such blessed lips should have been so shamefully misunderstood and misrepresented.

Beloved Friends, as many of you as have been taught of God, know the spiritual meaning of these words. You know that the Doctrine of the Incarnation of Christ is food to your soul and you know that the great Truth of the substitutionary Sacrifice of Christ which is expressed by His blood, is the most nourishing cordial to your heart. You know that, in this sense, Christs words are full of deep spiritual teachingMy flesh is food, indeed, and My blood is drink, indeed. That word, indeed, seems to contrast this spiritual nourishment with all ordinary food and drink. The best of literal food only feeds the body for a time, for that body ultimately decays. It is not in the power of food to repair the waste that is continually going on, that the physical system shall forever abide firm and strong. This food is food, but it is not food, indeed. There are also various kinds of drink that refresh and invigorate the bodyand by means of these we are enabled to continue from day to daybut where is the water, where is the crystal fountain that can give immortality? Where is the juice expressed from any fruit that grows beneath the sky that can rid the body of all disease and pain and cause it to liveon without end? You all know, then, among all the many kinds of literal food and drink, there is not any food that is worthy to be called food, indeed, nor any drink that is worthy to be called drink, indeed.

That word, indeed, also implies the contrast between this spiritual nourishment and all mere mental food and drink. Our soul needs foodand the proper food for it is truth, wisdom, knowledge. Solomon said, That the soul is without knowledge, it is not good. No disciple of Christ who has the spirit of his Master, is opposed to the spread of wisdom. The children of light wish to have every kind of light disseminated as widely as possible. Everyone that does evil hates the light, but he that does good loves the light and says, The more light there is, the better. But there is no mental food save that of which I am about to speak which is food, indeed, and drink, indeed! Paul truly says, Knowledge puffs up, and so it does if it is not kept under proper control. When a man has fed on the most profound knowledge, the spirit produced by such food has often been a proud and arrogant one which has led him to rebel against the Infinite Wisdom of God, and set up his own opinion in opposition to the Truths of God revealed in the Scriptures. What earthly knowledge is there that can afford suitable food to our entire manhood? Suppose I could compass the whole range of scienceif I could thread the spheres as on a string, if I could bore the rocks and read the whole of their ancient history, if there were no secret of science left unrevealed to meyet, if I had an aching heart, all my knowledge would not satisfy my soul or give me rest. In fact, the very acquisition of knowledge has often led to an increase of care. Solomon said, Much study is a weariness of the flesh, and many have found it to be so. It certainly is not food, indeed, or drink, indeed. Poets have drunk at the Castilian Fountain and their verses have astonished whole nations, yet they have gone to their graves unsatisfied and despairing. Mathematicians, with wondrous minds, have mapped out the heavens, studied the stars, laid down the laws that govern the planets and traced the pathways of comets for thousands of years, yet their verdict has been the same as Solomons, Vanity of vanities; all is vanity.

But I have to speak to you concerning knowledge which is satisfying, concerning truth which does content the spirit and, in doing so, I must draw a clear, hard and fast line. No one knows the flavor or effect of food and drink who has not tasted them. It is no use for me to speak to anyone about food which he has never seen, or handled, or tasted. If he is to appreciate my testimony concerning it, he must have partaken of it. Or if my testimony is concerning a certain drink, he must at least have sipped of it. Otherwise, let me speak as earnestly as I may, he will be unable to comprehend what I am saying. Now, my Lord Jesus is food, indeed, but the soulmust feed upon Him if it is to know how He nourishes it! He is drink, indeed, but unless this drink enters into the soul, it will be a stranger to the spiritual power which Jesus always imparts when He is received into the heart by faith! If you have really received Christ Jesus the Lord. If He is in you the hope of glory, then He is the food of your soul and you can, from your own experience, confirm His declaration, My flesh is food, indeed, and my blood is drink, indeed.

I. While I am speaking, let us, each one, try to feed spiritually upon the two great Doctrines to which the words, flesh, and blood, may be taken to refer, namely, the Incarnation of the Son of God and His death as His peoples Substitute. And first, let me say that THESE DOCTRINES ARE MOST COMFORTING FOOD TO THE SOUL.

Where will you find any other Doctrines so comforting as these? I, a sinner, have broken Gods righteous Law and so offended Him that I am driven from His Presence and am shut off from all true joy and peace. But, in order to redeem man, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, Himself, became Man. The Word was made flesh. Why it makes the joy-bells ring in my heart as I tell you again the old familiar story! The angels, when they were sent to tell men that unto them was born a Savior, proclaimed with joyous sounds the glad message that God had come down to earth. What joyful news it is for you, O men and women, that God has taken humanity into union with the Deity, that the Infinite became an Infant, that He who made the heavens and the earth was wrapped in swaddling clothes just as you and your own babes have been! Surely, now that God has thus become one with us, there must be peace on earth and good will toward men! He cannot be unwilling to bless those who have that human nature which He has, Himself, assumed! Even as I talk of this great Truth of God, I feel in my heart a joy that comforts meand so Christs flesh is food, indeed, to my soul! And when I think that, in that flesh, Jesus lived here on earth for over 30 years and knew all the weakness, temptation and suffering to which that flesh is liablewhen I think how He proved Himself to be bone of our bone, and flesh of our fleshthen I understand how He sympathizes with the weak, tempted and suffering sons of men! And this makes the sad heart glad and so, again, Christs flesh is food, indeed! Then, Beloved, when you think that He at whose belt hang the keys of Hell and of Death, once toiled and suffered and, at last died, just as you have to toil and suffer and dieand when you remember that from the heights of Glory, Jesus looks down both as the Son of God and the Son of Mary, does not this feed you with

true soul-comforting food?

Remember, also, that whatever Jesus did as Man, He did as the great Representative Man, who has all the while been acting on behalf of His people. Adam was a representative man, but I get no food for my soul from him. He took my bread away, he took my life away, for in Adam all died. But when Christ came here as the Representative of His people, what did He do? He kept the Law of God perfectly and His obedience was reckoned as the obedience of all who were in Him! As Adams sin was imputed to all who were in him as their federal head, so Christs obedience was imputed to all who were in Him as their federal Head. The condemnation of our Surety and Substitute was our condemnation, too. And when He was taken away and put to death, we were crucified in Him. And when He was laid in the grave, we were buried with Him and, blessed be God, when He rose from the dead, we rose with Him and we were justified by His Resurrection! He could never have come out of the prison of the grave if He had not paid all His peoples debts. And when He was set free, they were set free! His Resurrection was the guarantee of their resurrection. Is there not most comforting food for your soul in this great Truth? Is not Christs flesh food, indeed, when you look at it as the representative body of your Substitute and Surety?

Best of all, Christ, has gone back to Glory as the Representative of His people. He did not take His soul, alone, when He ascended to His Father, leaving His body in the tomb, but that very flesh which was pierced by the nails, that very flesh through which the soldiers spear went to His heart, He carried right up to the Throne of God and, in so doing, He carried us who are in Him up there and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Him! What joy it gives us to remember that   
He is your own personal Savior, your ever-present Friend, your living Brother, bone of your bone and flesh of your flesh, your Surety and Substitute who bore your sins in His own body on the tree, then your love goes out to Him in a vehement flame! I do not wander that Mary Magdalene was among the holy women who were last at the Cross and first at the tomb, for Christ had done so much for her that she loved Him much. And in proportion as yourealize what His Incarnation and His death have done for you, your love will feed upon that food, indeed, and drink, indeed, until it shall become stronger even than death itself!

There sits in our flesh,   
Upon a Throne of light   
One of a human mother born  
In perfect Godhead bright!

II. Changing the direction of our thought, yet still keeping to the same main track, let us turn to the second clause of the text. My blood is drink, indeed. That is to say, CHRISTS REDEEMING SACRIFICE IS MOST SOULSATISFYING. It is not merely soul-comforting, but soul-satisfying!

We have stated the case hundreds of times in this place, but must state it yet again. Man had sinned and God was willing to forgive. But the inflexible law of the universe is that sin must entail punishmentand it is so good and righteous a law that to alter it would be ruinous! Therefore punishment for sin there must bebut Jesus endured the punishment due to all His people! In order that He might be able to do so, He took upon Him our flesh, and that flesh was made to bleed even unto death in the accomplishment of that purpose. We believe in the real, literalsubstitutionof Christ in the place of all whom He had covenanted to save, and as many as believe in Him may know assuredly that their sins were transferred from them and laid upon Him! Then, when their sins were laid upon Christ

Jehovah b adeHis sword awake  
against the Sin-Bearer and He smote Christ instead of His peopleand His flowing blood brings peace and pardon to them as He dies, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring them to God! I cannot help saying that this Doctrine fills my soul with an indescribable contentment! I am satisfied to the fullest when this Truth enters my heart and so, Christs blood is drink, indeed, to me!

For see, Beloved, Gods justice is satisfied. How could it be otherwise when God, Himself, makes the Atonement? When Jesus Christ, the Son of God, made Himself liable for His peoples guilt, what a complete vindication of the justice of God was there! More than that, the great Covenant of Grace was ratified by the blood of Christs atoning Sacrifice. No testament is valid as long as the testator lives, but Jesus has died and, therefore, every legacy of His love is made sure to all those to whom He has willed it. The Covenant made with Adam fell through because Adam could not keep it. But the Covenant made with the Second Adam, the Lord from Heaven, stands fast as the everlasting hills, for Christ has kept it in every particular, offering to God complete obedience, both active and passive, in His life of holiness and in His death of agony! O then, my Soul, God is satisfied, your sin is pardoned, Covenant blessings are secured to youso is not Christs blood drink, indeed, to you? As we think that the Son of God became the Son of Mary in order that He might die for us, that He might take our place, and die in our place, what can we need more to chase away our fears, to fulfill our hopes and to confirm our faith? If any of you need more than that, it is not possible for us to present it to you, or even to imagine it! What the Son of God said was finished has been finished and, therein our souls may rest, and rest forever!

III. But, beloved Friends, we not only need spiritual food to comfort and to satisfy our souls, we also need SPIRITUAL FOOD TO STRENGTHEN OUR SOULS. And here, again, Christs flesh is food, indeed, and His blood is drink, indeed!

How strong are they who live upon the Truth of an Incarnate God, and of that Incarnate God dying in the place of His people! What strength it gives to faith! I have seen weak faith and I have seen strong faith, but I have generally found weak faith associated with dependence upon feelings, but I have never known strong faith existing anywhere except in connection with Emmanuel, God With Us, living and dying in our place! I have seen poor humble men and women who knew little more than that they were lost through sin and that Christ had come to save them, yet they have lived and died strong in faith, giving glory to Godfor their faith had been nourished upon this food, indeed, and drink, indeed, of the Incarnation and substitutionary Sacrifice of Jesus Christ, the Son of God and the Son of Mary!

And fervent love is produced by the same spiritual food and drink. If Christ is to you merely some historic person who once appeared upon the earth and is now gone forever, your love for Him will be very faint if it exists at all! But if

This spiritual food and drink will also make us strong for service. There was a manyou will all recognize his portrait by the bare outlinewho was at first a great enemy of Christ, but who, after his conversion, lived upon the food of which I have been speaking. And you know what an untiring servant of Christ he became. He went from city to city preaching the Word. He was stoned and left for dead, but he rose to his feet and went on preaching! His very dreams were full of service for his Master, for in a night vision, there stood by him a man of Macedonia who said to him, Come over into Macedonia and help us. And immediately he obeyed the Spirits call. The Lord blessed the Word, but His servant was arrested, beaten and thrust into prisonyet he and his companion made the prison cell ring with their joyful songs of praise unto their God! This man preached the Word throughout a great part of the then known world. We read of him at Damascus, Jerusalem, Ephesus, Athens, Corinth, Rome and it is probable that he even came as far as these islands of the West. And wherever he went, he preached Jesus Christ and Him crucifiedand all the while he was sustained by the food, indeed, and drink, indeed, of the Incarnation and the atoning Sacrifice of the Son of God! If I had the time, I might tell you of other great workers for the Lord Jesus Christ whose lives were crowded with holy serviceall of whom derived their strength from this same food, indeed, and drink, indeed, of which I have been speaking.

But, Beloved, if you need further proof that the flesh of Christ is food, indeed, and His blood is drink, indeed, let me remind you of the many who have been made strong for suffering through this spiritual nourishment. You are all more or less familiar with the amazing story of the persecution of the early Christians and of their heroic endurance even unto death. What was it that sustained them but this food, indeed, and drink, indeed? Then, all along the ages, and in almost all lands, there have been brave men and women, and even boys and girls, who counted not their lives dear unto them, but gladly gave them up rather than deny their Lord and Savior. Foxes Book of Martyrs has preserved the record of many notable instances that I need not now repeat, but you will do well to keep the stories in mind, and to teach them to your children, that they, also, may learn what suffering can be endured by those who have had such food for their souls as our text describes! No doubt there were many brave utterances like that historic saying of Latimer, Be of good comfort, Master Ridley, and play the man! We shall this day light such a candle, by Gods Grace, in England, as I trust shall never be put out. Surely these men had food to eat of which the poor puny professors of these days seem not to have tasted! They were made strong for suffering through partaking of this food, indeed, and drink, indeed, whereof if a man eats and drinks abundantly, he shall be fitted to perform such exploits as were worked by the heroes of faith of whom Paul wrote in his Epistle to the Hebrews.

O Sirs, if you want to be strong to live, or work, or suffer for Jesus, you must feed upon Jesus! It is only in the strength of this food and this drink that one can, in these days, live an honest and upright life. It is only in the force derived from this food and this drink that anyone can bear a bold and faithful testimony for Jesus. And, mark you, it is only by feeding upon such food and such drink as this that one will be able to face death with a brave countenance and look forward to the unseen world with eyes undimmed! Yes, I have seen weak women with the hectic flush of consumption on their cheeks, and with the unnatural brightness which that disease imparts to the eyesand I have heard them talk of dying as calmly as if they were speaking of going out for a days excursion! I have even heard them singing as though their death day had been their wedding day, so glad were they at the prospect of soon being where the day breaks and the shadows flee away forever! Joan of Arc was never such a heroine as these women have been, for they have vanquished even death, itself, and waved the banner of the Cross all through the Valley of Death-Shade. It was this food, indeed, and this drink, indeed, that helped them thus to dieno, that

prevented them from dyingfor to them death was but a translation from a world of mortals to a world of immortal spirits around the Throne of God on high!

IV. I want now to say something that cannot often be said in a great promiscuous congregation, lest it should be misunderstood. But it is a fact that certain kinds of food and drink produce EXHILARATION in those who partake of them, so that men become joyous and excited after they have been sitting long at a festival. There is often much evil in the excitement which results from these earthly feasts, but there is one kind of food and drink which gives an exhilaration which is not only harmless, but is truly blessed! And that is the food, indeed, and drink, indeed, of which I have been speaking to you. Have you experienced that exhilaration, my Brother? Do you know what this holy excitement is, my Sister? Have you, beloved Friends, ever thought of Christ dying on the Cross for you until you felt that you must sing for very joy of heart? Have you ever realized that your sins were washed right away in the Red Sea of your Saviors blood and that there was not even one of them left to oppress you? Then you must have felt that Dr. Watt was not in the least exaggerating when he wrote those lines that we have often sung

Yes, we will praise You, dearest Lord,   
Our souls are all on flame!   
Hosanna round the spaciousearth,   
To Your adored name.   
Angels, assist our mighty joys,   
Strike all yourharps of gold!   
But when you raise your highest notes,   
His love can neer be told.

Yes, I am quite sure that you have felt so glad that you have wanted all the angels to assist your mighty joys! When you have realized all that Christs Incarnation and death have meant for you. When you have in a measure comprehended the transcendent Grace that made Him stoop so low as to become near of kin to you, your heart must surely have danced at the sound of His name! I feel persuaded that there must have been times in this Tabernacle when you were so joyful that you could hardly remain in your seats. When you have almost wished that, like David, you might see the Ark of the Lord come along and that you might dance before the Lord even as David did! You know that there is no other joy that is even for a moment worthy to be compared with the joy which comes to us through Jesus Christ! And the man who has once had a sip from that well wants to lie down beside it and drink it dry! He knows he can never do that, but he wishes that his soul could be so enlarged that he could take in all the love of his Incarnate Godthe wondrous heights, and depths, and lengths, and breadths of that love which must forever surpass our knowledge! O you who want to find the highest joy that can be found on earth, here it is! Jesus wounds are the Fountains where heavenly bliss is distilled! In Emmanuel, God With Us, born at Bethlehem and dying on Calvaryin His Incarnation and His atoning Sacrificeyou will find that food, indeed, and drink, indeed, which shall give the loftiest spiritual exhilaration to all who feed upon them!

V. Now I close my discourse by reminding you that WHOEVER EATS THIS SPIRITUAL FOOD SHALL LIVE FOREVER.   
Just before our Lord uttered the words of our text, He had said to the Jews, Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which comes down from Heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from Heaven: if any man eats of this bread, he shall live forever: and the bread that I will give is My flesh which I will give for the life of the world. If you had lived with the children of Israel in the wildernessand you had eaten manna as they didyou would have died as they did. If you come to the Communion Table, and merely eat bread, not discerning the Lords body, you will die. Or if you go to a so-called priest and he gives you a consecrated wafer, and you eat it, you will die. But whoever spiritually feeds upon Jesuswhoever feeds his soul upon the great central Truth that God in human flesh was made the Substitute for all who believe in Himhe shall never die! His body may pass through the change that we call, death, but his spirit shall live forever and, in due time, his body and soul shall be reunited and his complete manhood shall be forever with the Lord.   
O Sinners, unless you feed upon Christ, there is nothing but eternal death before you! But if you receive Him into your soul even as you receive food into your body, you shall never die and the bliss of Heaven shall be your everlasting portion! I have preached to you in very simple language, but there is in my theme a mystery that excels all the wisdom of the sages. Let me try to put it before you once more before I close. It is a fact that the Word, who was God, and who made Heaven and earth, and without whom was not anything made that was madeit is a fact that this Word was made flesh and dwelt among men! In other words, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, did come into this world, was here born of a virgin, here lived and labored as a Man, and here died for those who believe in Him, for God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life...he that believes on Him is not condemned: but he that believes not is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only-begotten Son of God. After Jesus had died in the place of all who believe in Him, and after He had risen from the grave as the sure sign that His redeeming work had been accomplished, and that His people were forever free, He returned to His Fathers right hand in Glory. And there He sits as the Representative of all His chosen until the appointed time for Him to come again to this earth, to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe. Be it known unto you, therefore, brethren, that through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by Him all that believe are justified from all things from which you could not be justified by the Law of Moses.   
There is the Gospel as Paul preached it! May the Spirit of God enable you to receive it by faith in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and the Son of Maryand so you will find that His flesh will become to you food, indeed, and His blood drink, indeed. God grant it, for Jesus Christs sake! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: JOHN 6:22-59.

Verses 22-24. The day following, when the people who stood on the other side of the sea saw that there was no other boat there, except that one which His disciples had entered, and that Jesus went not with His disciples into the boat, but that the disciples were goneaway alonehoweverotherboats from Tiberiascame nearthe place where they ate bread after the Lord had given thankswhen the people therefore saw that Jesuswas not there,neither the disciples, they also got into boats and came to Capernaum, seeking for Jesus. [See Sermon #947, Volume 16SEEKING FOR JESUSRead/download the

entire sermon, free of charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.] Everything looked very favorable, did it not? These people put themselves to considerable trouble in order to get where the Savior wasthey were not satisfied to be away from Himthey were seeking for Jesus.

25, 26. And when they had found Him on the other side of the sea, they said unto Him, Rabbi, when did You come here? Jesus answered them and said, Verily,verily, I say unto you, You seek Me not because you saw the miracles but because you ate of the loaves, and were filled. He did not gratify their curiosity by telling them how or when He came there,

for that was no concern of theirs. Neither is it the business of Christs preachers to spin ingenious theories about the Gospel, or to tell pretty tales to amuse their hearers. Their business is to deal faithfully with mens hearts and consciences as their Master did when He said to these people, You seek Me not because you saw the miracles. They said that at first, no doubt. Christs miracles dazzled them so they sought Him in order to see more miracles worked by Him. This was not the highest motive for seeking the Savior, but they had found a still lower onethey were now following Him because they ate of the loaves and were filled. Yet the Master did not repel them and thus He teaches us that it is better to follow Him from the lowest motive than not to follow Him at all. Perhaps some of us have been too severe upon certain people. We have said that they come to our place of worship out of mere curiosity. What if they do? It is well that they come at all, so let us not cut even the spiders web that links a man in any sense with Christthat web may grow into a thread, that thread into a cord, that cord into a cable and there may yet be an unbreakable union between that man and Christ! That which begins in an inferior way may lead to something higher and better. Still, it is wise to let people know that they are not deceiving Christ, even though they deceive themselves as to their motive in seeking Him. So He said to them

27. Labor not for the food which perishes, but for that food which endures unto everlasting life, which the Son of Man shall giveunto you: forHim has God the Father sealed. They labored hard in order to get the bread that perishes, so Christ bade them devote their energies to a better objective. This is a very extraordinary verse if we regard the letter of it and not the spirit. Christ told these people not to labor for that which they could only get by laborLabor not for the food which perishes. Yet few men get their daily bread or meat without laboring for it. And then Christ told them to labor for that which nobody ever does get by laboringLabor for that food which endures unto everlasting life. This is an instance of how the mere letter of the Word kills. We must take the spirit of itand then we understand that what the Savior meant was thisDo not be spending all your energies to get that which will melt away when you get

it, but spend your time and strength in seeking after that which will last through all time and be yours to all eternity.

28. Then said they unto Him, What shallwe do,that we might work the works of God? They wanted to do the greatest of all works for, by, the works of God, they evidently meant the most important, the most sublime, the greatest of all works. What shall we do in order to work such works as these?

29. Jesus answered and said to them, Thisis the work of God, that you believe on Him whom He has sent. This is an amazing statement which is just as true, now, as when Christ uttered it in Capernaum! The greatest and best work that any of you can do is to believe on Jesus Christ! Though, in another sense, this is not a workat allbut ceasing from your own works and resting in the finished work of Jesus Christ. But if any man would do that which is most acceptable to the thrice-holy God, let him believe on Jesus Christ whom God has sent!

30. They said therefore unto Him, what sign will You show us, then, that we may see and believe You? What work will You do? This was a shameful question to put to Christ when they had so recently been miraculously fed by Him and so had received the best sign of His Divine Power in the multiplication of the loaves and fishes!

31-34. Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, he gave them bread from Heaven to eat. Then Jesus said to them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from Heaven, but MyFather gives you the true bread from Heaven. For the bread of God is He who comes down from Heaven and gives life unto the world. Then they said unto Him, Lord, give us this bread always. This would have been a good prayer if they had understood the

meaning of the Saviors words but, as it was, it was a blind prayer. They did not know what Jesus meant when He spoke of the bread of God which come down from Heaven. They were thinking about the bread that perishesthe bread for the bodyso they prayed blindly when they said, Lord, give us this bread always. Do you not think that many a prayer which children are taught in their childhoodand which men and women continue to pray for yearsmay be as blind a prayer as this one was? They know not what they ask and so the question very naturally arises as to whether it is a prayer at all!

35. And Jesussaid to them, I am the Bread of Life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger and he who believeson   
Me shall never thirst. [See Sermon #1112, Volume 19SOUL-SATISFYING BREADRead/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at   
http://www.spurgeongems.org.] I will take away his need by removing his hunger. I will take away his pain by removing his thirst.

36. But I said to you that you have seen Me, and yet do not believe. See, then, how little there was of advantage in the mere sight of Christ. Many seem to think that it must have been much easier for people to believe in Christ if they had actually seen Him, but it was not so. There were multitudes that saw Him and saw His miraclesand even ate the bread which came from His wonder-working handsyet they believed not. Faith does not come in that way, for it does not come by sight, but sight comes by faith! Seeing is not believing, but believing is often seeingit opens the eyes so that they are able to see what before was hidden from them.

37. All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me. Gods own elect shall surely come to Christ. They shall all believe in Him and be saved by Him.   
37. And him that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out.[See Sermons #1762, Volume 30HIGH DOCTRINE AND BROAD DOCTRINE;

#2349, Volume 40ALL COMERS TO CHRIST WELCOMED; #2954, Volume 51THE BIG GATES WIDE OPEN and #3000, Volume 52NO. 3000OR, COME AND WELCOMERead/download all these sermons, free of charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.] Whoever he is that comes, I will never reject him.

Whoever he may be that accepts Me and believes in Me, he is Mine and I will never cast him away from Me. 38-44. For I came down from Heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him that sent Me. And this is theFathers will which has sent Me, that of all who He has given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of Him that sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son, and believes on Him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day. The Jews then murmured at Him, because Hesaid, I am the bread which came down from Heaven. And theysaid, Is not thisJesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother weknow? How is it, then, that He says, I came down fromHeaven? Jesustherefore answered and saidto them, murmur not among yourselves. No man can come to Me, except the Father which has sent Me draws him. [See Sermons #182, Volume 4HUMAN INABILI

TY; #2386, Volume 40THE DRAWINGS OF DIVINE LOVERead/download both sermons, free of charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.] I did not expect

that you would receive Me. I did not imagine that you would believe Me. You have not yet been drawn to Me by the Father, so I knew that you would not come to Me. But he who is drawn by the Father will come to Christ. And Christ tells us what will be his future lot

44-46. And I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the Prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man, therefore, that has heard, and has learned of the Father, comes unto Me. Not that any man has seen the Father, except He who is from God, He has seen the Father. He corrects the notion into which they might have fallen that

they could ever see the Father as He had seen Him. Into that vision none of us can ever enter, for there is a peculiar Divine relationship between Jesus and the Father which we cannot know.   
47. Verily, verily, I say unto youJesus uttered this great Truth of God with very special emphasis. Verily, verily, I say unto you   
47. He that believes on Me has everlastinglife. [See Sermons #1642, Volume 28VERILY, VERILY and #2706, Volume 46FEEDING ON THE BREAD OF LIFERead/download both sermons, free of charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.] That text is worthy to be printed in letters of

gold, but even then the letters would be far inferior to the message itself! If it is written on all your hearts by the Holy Spirit, you will not need any other sermon than this Divine textVerily, verily, I say unto you, He that believes on Me has everlasting life.

48-51. I am the Bread ofLife. Your Fathers did eat manna inthe wilderness and are dead. This is the bread which came down from Heaven that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from Heaven: if any man eats of this bread, he shall live forever: and the bread that I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. Here we have the Doctrine of the great atoning Sacrifice by which sin is put away, and that is not merely Christ Incarnate, but Christ yielding up His life, dying in the place of guilty sinners. That is the food, whereof, if any man eats he shall live forever.

52. The Jews therefore quarreled among themselves, saying, How can this Man give us His flesh to eat? These Jews were still stumbling at the letter of Christs wordsstill in their blind carnality misunderstanding Christ.   
53-56. Then Jesus said to them, verily, verily, I say unto you,Except you eat the fleshof theSon of Man, and drink His blood, you have no life inyou. Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood, has eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For My flesh is food, indeed, and My blood isdrink, indeed. He that eats My flesh, and drinks My blood

dwells in Me, and I in him. [See Sermon #1288, Volume 12TRULY EATING THE FLESH OF JESUSRead/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at

http://www.spurgeongems.org.] Do not any of you interpret this teaching of Christ as the Jews did, after a carnal fashion, and fancy that we literally eat the flesh and drink the blood of Christ when we come to the Communion Table. The Lords Supper was not instituted at the time that our Savior spoke these words and He was speaking of quite another matterthe spiritual reception of Christthe real and true feeding by faith with our spirit upon the Lord Jesus Christ.

57-59. As the living Father has sent Me, and I live by the Father: so he that eats Me, even heshall live by Me. This is that bread which came downfrom Heaven: not as yourfathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eats of this bread shall live forever. These things said He in the synagogue, as He taughtit in Capernaum.

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PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #3424 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

MEAT INDEED, AND DRINK INDEED NO. 3424

A SERMON   
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 1914. DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON. For My flesh is meat indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. John 6:55.

THE crowd had followed Jesus for the loaves and fishes. He gently upbraids them for being guided by so carnal an appetite and impelled by so coarse a motive to follow Him. Then He tells them that there is a spiritual meat which is far bettera spiritual drink far richer than those things which nourish the body and gratify the animal tastes. After which, speaking of Himself spiritually, He says, My flesh is meat indeedreal meat, such as supports the soul, and, My blood is drink indeedreal drink, the best, the truest beverage, such as invigorates the spirit for immortality!

Why , you may ask, on the outset, does our Lord speak of His flesh and blood as separated? I tried to explain that some time ago when we gathered around this Table. There must be, in the Lords Supper, bread and winebut bread separated from the wineas our Lord speaks of His flesh as separate from His blood, and this was to indicate that it is as a dying Savior that He is most precious to us. The blood separated from the flesh indicates death. It is to the death of Jesus that the Believer first turns His eyes and it is when considering the living, reigning Christ as having once been slain that our richest comfort comes to us. So it is not an unnecessary multiplication of words, or a vain repetition of the same idea, when our Lord says to us, My flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He thereby denotes Himself as the

dying Christ.

Taking the words as they stand, our first point will be that I. THE FLESH OF CHRIST IS MEAT INDEEDSPIRITUAL MEAT. The likeness is emphaticit is meat indeed. It is like meat because

meat, or food, sustains the body . The body could not be kept in vigor ordinarily or without a miracle, except by the use of food. We pine, we languish, we sicken, we die without bread! So the soul without Jesus, supposing it to be alive, must soon sicken, pine, be famished and decay. You, O Believer, with all your strength would be weak as water at this moment if Jesus were not now your present support! All your past experience would go for nothing if you had not now a present Christ to stay your hopes upon. It would be only a matter of time with youyou would before long sink into the corruption of an open apostasy. Like a man shut up in a dungeon and deprived of food who drags out for a few days, a most painful existence and, at the last, expires and becomes carrion, so must it be with you. Unless Jesus Christ is your daily meat, you would go back to the carnal elements of the world and become corrupt and depraved as others are! Christ is the only true sustenance of the quickened soul. But, mark you, let a man eat what meat he may, it does not always so sustain him but that he is not sometimes weak and stretched upon the bed of languishing. It cannot so sustain him but that before long he must be carried to his grave. But if your souls learn to feed on Jesus, they shall enjoy the blessed immunity promised to the inhabitants of Zionthey shall not say, I am sickthey shall never die! They shall feed on this immortal bread such as angels eat. You shall be carried up to the seats of the immortals to dwell forever with the Christ upon whom you have fed, coming to Him first to appease your hunger and believing on Him continuously to sustain your life!

Meat not only provides substance, but it assists growth. The child cannot develop into an adult if he is denied his daily food. He must certainly die in infancy or in childhood if he is without the nutriment which is requisite to the building up of his bodily frame. Now, Brothers and Sisters, we are babes in Grace, many of us. We have been brought to Jesus feet, and as such, we are of those who make up His Kingdom, but we need to grow into spiritual manhood. We are not content with little faith, dim hope and a spark of love. We need to attain unto perfection in spiritual thingsI mean to be perfectly developed men and women strong in the fullness of spiritual energyand this can only be by Christ. Only can you grow as you increase in the knowledge of Him and in subjection to the influences of His indwelling Spirit. As food makes our bodies grow, so Christ is food to our soulsHe is meat indeedfor He makes us grow after a Divine sort. Let a man feed upon what meat he may, he shall not come unto absolute perfection. But let him feed on Jesus and he shall! Through the Grace of God in Christ Jesus we shall yet come to the fullness of the stature of men in Christ. Up there they are all men in Christ. Before the Throne of God they are all perfect and without faultand this because they have fed upon this sacred meat which makes them grow until they come unto the perfect image of Him they feed upon!

Meat does not only sustain and cause growth, but it makes up for the daily waste of the body. Some people forget that every exertion of the body wears it away as truly as the machine spends its fuel and wastes itself. As even an engine of iron needs repair, so does this body of ours, and the meat we feed upon goes to repair the daily waste to which bone, and muscle, and nerve are all subjected. Beloved, Jesus Christ, in this sense, is meat. He restores my soul. He makes up for the waste of temptation, for the wear and tear of care, for the fret of trouble, for the fume and flurry of manifold anxietiesfor everything that would waste a man away. My soul once again renews her strength like the eagle when she sips from the brook that flows from the foot of the Cross. Oh, Believer, you will soon degeneratethis world of sin will soon make you backslide and lose every good thing you have unless you go continually to Christ and feed on Him! But feeding on Him, the world shall not hurt you, temptations shall not wound you, your trials shall not overwhelm you, for you shall find His flesh to be meat indeed! The best meat that mans body can receive will not always repair the waste. After a certain period of life, the body must decay, and the most nutritious diet cannot prevent the hair, the teeth, the eyes, the legs, the armsthe entire manfrom discovering that the hour of prime has passed and that the time of decay has arrived! Bend must the man and lean upon his staff, and eat or drink what he will, according to the strictest diet and regimen of the physician, yet still the time of waste has come. They who look out of the windows shall be darkened. The teeth shall fail because they are few, and the pillars of the house shall tremble. But, Beloved, His flesh is meat indeed, because they that feed upon Him shall still bring forth fruit in old age! They shall be fat and flourishing, to show that the Lord is upright. Their last days shall be their best days and, instead of declining, they shall gather strength with the multiplying years till the very moment when heart and flesh shall fail, and then shall be the instant when the strength of their souls and their portion forever shall be most fully revealed to them!

Moreover, meat is a great remover of pain and disease. Without meat, or without food of some kind, a mans inward constitution becomes full of gnawing and anguish. Bitter are the grips of hunger. Perhaps no pain can be more severe, when a man is long exposed to it, than hunger, with the exception of thirst. No doubt, lack is the root of multitudes of the diseases of the poor. Generous diet often does more for the sick than the best medical prescriptions. It is certainly so with Believers in Christ. His flesh is meat indeed in this respect. The pains of conviction, the throbs of a guilty conscienceall are stopped when a man gets Christ! If a man is spiritually sick with worldliness, with doubt, with pride, with envywith anything that is the common sickness of the child of Godlet him get but a hearty feast upon the flesh of Jesus, and the disease will fly away! Christ puts such vigor into the spiritual system of His own people when they feed on Him, that it drives out diseases as strong men cast them off by the very force of constitution! Blessed and happy is he who eats this flesh, for it is in this sense, meat indeed!

Once more, meat is used constantly by us for the development of strength. The man ill-fed cannot lift the weights that another can who has a more generous diet upon his table. Lowness of food brings littleness of strength. Now Jesus Christ is the only food that can make His people strong for service. Feed on Him and you shall run and not be weary! You shall walk and not faint. It is meat indeed because it gives us strength that is all but boundless. It clothes a mortal man with the might of God. It makes the feeblest Christian in the Church, when he has fed upon Christ, to be as a giant to suffer or to do!

I cannot enlarge upon all these points, though there is enough in any one of them for a sermon, but, dear child of God, seek after Christ and be not satisfied until daily you are fed and nourished upon Him.

The word, indeed, gives the sentence an air of strong protest. We must take this into consideration. Why does He say that His flesh is meat indeed? It is in opposition to mere animal and corporeal food which is meat, but not meat indeed. You think that bread is solid. So it is, speaking one waybut what does it support? It supports the body, and the body, you say, is substantial. So indeed it is to the eye and to the touchbut what is the body? All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof as the flower of the field; the grass withers and the flower thereof fades away; surely the people are grass. This body is so little a while, here, and so soon dissolved, that I may safely call it but a shadow! And the food that feeds the shadow is but a shade. And what is the soul within us? Why, that, you say, is unreal. Truly so, Sirs, to smell, to sight, to touchbut not to real thought! The real thing about a man is his inward self, which you cannot seehis secret, impalpable, unseen, immortal self that never dies! Times tooth does not touch it, nor does the scythe of Death cut it down. The soul is the real thingnot the bodyand, Sirs, the food which feeds the soul is the real food, after all, and though the men of the world turn on their heels and say, Ah, no, the bread and cheese that we put into our mouthsthat is the real thinggive us plenty of that! Sirs, tis the shadow, but the Truths of God you give your souls to feed uponthat it is which in Gods sight, in the sight of wise men and in your sight, if you have any spiritual discernmentis meat indeed!

It is meat indeed in contrast with the typical meats of the Old Testament. There was the Paschal Suppersurely that was a glorious feast when, by it, the people went their way out of Egypt rejoicing. Yes, but twas only a deliverance from a common temporal slavery. They that eat the Paschal Lamb are delivered from the bondage of death and Hell, for His flesh is meat indeed! In the wilderness they ate the manna. Yes, but every day it seemed to tell them its own unsubstantial character, from the fact that if they kept it till the next morning it bred worms and stank. But our Lord Jesus Christ is food that never corrupts! Feed on Him, lay Him up in your hearts and you shall find no corruption there, nor shall you die. In the old Tabernacle and the Temple there were the loaves of showbread and these were meat for the priest. Ah, but the showbread was nothing but a typeand to the priest, however devoutly he might receive it, the showbread, in itself, was no food for his real self, but only for his corporeal frame. And I may say the same of the bread which we have upon the table here, tonight! There is nothing in itit is a mere emblem and a sign. But Christs flesh is meat indeed! When I have sometimes seen this text put over the table commonly used for what is called the Sacrament, I have trembled lest people should be led into the grievous and unnatural error of Transubstantiation. When our Lord said, My flesh is meat indeed, He could not mean that bread on the table, for the Lords Supper was not then instituted! In this particular text, at any rate, there can be no allusion of any kind to what is called, the Mass, by some, or by others called, the Sacrament, because these things were not brought forward by our Lord until within a few hours of His death and He is now speaking months before that time! Beloved, the bread is bread, and nothing but bread, and so far as it points you, like a signpost, to the real flesh of Christ, so far so good. If you stop there, I can only say of it that bread is meat, but the flesh of Christ is meat

indeed. When our Lord says, My flesh is meat indeed, He clearly distinguishes it from every other kind of soul food. There are many sorts of soul food. Some men feed their souls on their own works. Oh, they say, we have prayed. We have fasted! We have given to the poor. We have been upright, we have been righteousand their soul feeds on that, though it is all wind! But if they trusted in Christ, it would be meat indeed. Some feed on ceremonies. They have been baptized, christened, confirmed and I know not what besides. Fine confectionery this, but it is all wind! Christ received into the soul and trusted in for salvation, is meat indeed! Some have grown up with false doctrines, or with true ones exaggerated, and these bring them to a very fine development of self-conceit and bigotry but they make no solid food for the mans mind. But oh, Beloved, when a man can say, My hope is in the Crucified aloneI look to Him every day, my meditations are on Him, my reading is much about Him, my prayers are sent to Heaven all through Him, my praises are for Him, He is my souls great joy, comfort, strength, and helpthen he has got the meat indeed! He will be a strong man to overcome his sin! He will be a holy man, a happy man, a heavenly man and, by-and-by, he shall be caught up to dwell where Jesus is, on whom he has fed.

I hope I have made this clear. It is thinking upon Jesus, trusting in Jesus that is the eating Jesus, Himself, being the food. Those who trust in Him and rest in Him have got the best of soul meat. They have got meat indeed!

II. CHRISTS BLOOD IS DRINK INDEED.  
Like drink to the body, the blood of Jesus, that is to say, the merits of His atoning Sacrifice sustains. The body is not to be built up without some liquidthe system needs it. The soul is not to be sustained without considering and resting on the substitutionary suffering of Jesus. That Jesus died in my place and suffered for my sin is to stimulate my hope, my comfort, my joyin a word, my whole souljust as drink invigorates the physical system.   
Drink refreshes the body. The traveler is faint. It is a hot, burning day. That cool brookhow different the man looks when he bathes his face in it and drinks a sweet, cooling draught. And so the blood of Jesus refreshes the man who trusts in it. If I trust that Jesus was punished for me and I am clear that Jesus died for me, how my soul seems to have got a new life! How it revives! Though he were dead, yet should he live who could believe in this. He who could trust in the precious blood, though despair held him in a fainting fit so that he could not stir hand or foot, yet if this precious Doctrine of a Savior dying for him were believed by him, his heart and his spirit must revive at once!  
Drink also cleanses the body. I do not mean washing, but that the reception of the water into the system flushes all the various departments of the frame and, no doubt, the liquid always has upon the human body a healthy influence. Unless it is taken, however it may be, intemperately. It is, to a great extent, made the life-fluid of the system. Now, whenever you get Jesus Christ into the soul, how it seems to set the veins right even if the blood is wrong! How it flushes out all impurities from the spiritual systemand the more you really come to rest upon a bleeding Christ, the more sure you are to get rid of your sinsI mean your reigning sins, your besetting sins, for we can overcome them only through the blood of the Lamb. Christs blood is thus drink indeed!  
Drink also cheers the man. How many a faint heart has been cheered when the cooling draught has been brought! The fainting one has opened her eyes and smiled. And, oh, how the thoughts of a dying Christ revives the fainting soul and make the spirit sing that once was ready to moan and cry, I am forgotten! I am forsaken. I am lost!   
Notice the word, indeed, how it comes in againMy blood is drink indeed, in opposition to all carnal drink, for as I said about the foodthat it is but a shadow to support a shadow, so it is with the drinkit is but a shade to support a shade. Christs blood supports the spirittherefore, it is drink indeed.  
How superior to all typical drinks! There was the water which flowed from the Rock when it was struck. There were the various drinks with the meat offerings, but Jesus Christ is the fullness of which these were but the shadows!   
Christ says, My blood is drink indeed, as though utterly ignoring all other soul drinks. Some men drink until they are drenched with earthly pleasure. Others drink until they are inflated with their own selfrighteousness. The Devil has his cups and he knows how to fill them to the brim and make them sparkle and fascinate the eyes. But let mens souls drink of these draughts till they come to the dregs, they shall never be satisfied! And in the world to come their misery shall be greater if they have had any satisfaction here. But oh, if your soul can get to the precious blood of Christ and rest there, and you can rejoice that Jesus died for you, you may drink but you shall never be inebriated! You may drink, but you shall never know satiety! You may drink and you shall have a satisfaction which nothing can destroy, which time or habit cannot cause to pall on your palate and of which eternity shall be but a blessed prolongation! Drink, thirsty soul, drink at the Fountain of the Saviors blood and you shall thirst no more, but cry, I have enough! I have found in Jesus atoning blood all that my soul can want! Put these two things together. It appears, according to the text, that   
III. OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST IS BOTH MEAT AND DRINK TOGETHER,   
So I would have you notice the suitability of Jesus Christ to mans needs. Man needs meat and drink. Jesus is what man needs! You need pardonyou have it in Christ. You need lifeeternal lifeyou have it in Christ! You need peace, comfort, happinessyou have it all in Christ. No key ever fitted a lock as well as Christ fits a sinner. You are empty Christ is full! You cannot have a need that He cannot supply. There never was and there never will be, a soul that was past the power of Jesus. Oh, what a suitable Savior He is to me! That I can say, for if Jesus Christ had been sent into this world for me, only, He could not have suited me better than He does! And if He had been sent for you, only, poor trembling Sinner, He could not have fitted you better than He will! Why, when I think of Jesus, He seems to be all mine, and I am sure I cannot afford to do without a bit of Him. I need Him altogether and He just exactly fills my soul up to the brimand you shall find it true, also! He will be your meat and your drink and if you get Him, you will say   
*All my capacious powers could wish,   
In You do richly meet.   
Nor to my eyes is light so dear,   
Nor friendship half so sweet.*   
If Jesus Christ is thus meat and drink together, what fullness there is in Him! He is not only one thing, and not only the other, but He is both! A man with meat would die, let him have as much as he pleased of it, if there were nothing to drink. A man with drink would die if there were nothing solid for him to eat. Jesus does not give us part salvation, but He gives us all of it! You shall find in Jesus Christ everything that will be needed between Hell and Heaven. All the way, from the gates of Hell to the pearly gates of Paradise, every need of every pilgrim is met in Him. Ten thousand time ten thousand as His people are, yet all of them receive all that they need from Him, for, It has pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell. All fullnessmark the word. Fullness is a big word but all fullness is bigger, and all fullness dwells in Him that is, it is remaining in Him, always fullness and always remaining all fullnessthat is the greatest word of all. He is both meat and drink, He is all that we need!  
Consider, too, that if Christ is both meat and drink, what need we have of Himbecause there is no need in the world, I suppose, that is greater than the need of foodof meat and drink. You hear the cry of, Fire! in the street and it startles you. But those who have ever heard the cry of, Bread! in a bread riot, say that the cry of, Fire! is nothing to it. There is something so sharp, so awful, so determined, so ferocious, so like the yell of wild beasts, about men and women that scream for bread, that it is the most awful thing that is ever heard. And, Drink! What a word that must be for a number of poor wretches shut up, as they were, in the Black Hole of Calcutta, raving through those little windows at the guard outside for drink and stretching out their hands and beseeching them to turn their carbines upon them and shoot them, rather than let them die there a lingering death of suffocation and of thirst! How, when a little water was passed in, they fought and struggled for it, if so be a man might but get a drop, or suck a handkerchief that had been dipped into it, and linger on a little longer. Now, nobody can have a greater need than an actual need of bread and water, but that is what you need, my dear Friends. You need Christ! Your soul needs this very bread and water. Think not that you are rich and increased in goods if you have not got Christ, for in truth you are naked, and poor, and miserable! If you do not trust Him, love Him, serve Him, your poor soul has not even a drop to drink! What can it do but die? And oh, what must be its wretchedness when your soul shall ask for a drop of water to cool its tongue, tormented in that flame? While others are feasting, you shall have the gnashing of your hungry teeth to be your endless portion. God grant you may not be so cruel to your souls as to starve them by going without Christ.   
Yes, and if Christ is meat and drink, what need there is of a real reception of Him. If you get meat and drink, you cannot make any use of them unless you eat and drink them. Take meat to a hungry manhold it out on your finger and ask him, Dont you feel better? No, he says. Look at it, Man; look at it! No, I feel more hungry. But cut it! Here is the knife. Oh, he says, what is the use of that? You mock me! I need to get it between my teeth! I need to get it worked into my system, or else it is of no use to me. Hearer, of what service is it to you that you come and listen, Sunday after Sunday, some of you, but never decide to trust Christ and take Him into your soul? Why, you do but hear me, as it were, pour out the water, and you do not drink! You see it sparkle as I speak of it, but you do not receive it. What is the good of it to you? Oh, you will perish, some of youyou will perish with the bread within your reach with the clean brook of Eternal Life flowing at your feet! Oh, why this folly? It is not so in other things. Men are not satisfied with seeing gold they want to take it home and put it in their pockets! And how is it that they are content with hearing about Christwith talking about Christ but never asking for real faith, and for vital union with the Lord Jesus Christ? See to this, I pray youand see to it soonor death will see to you!

Moreover, Beloved, if Jesus Christ be both meat and drinkBeloved in the Lord, I speak to you nowwhat reason there is for giving thanks! I said, in the reading, that a man is very unmannerly, very beastlike, who sits down to his meat and his drink without thanks. Well, then my Soul, whenever you come to feed on Christwhenever you think on Himand that should be always, always give thanks! The true spirit of a Christian is perpetual thankfulness. I like the remark of a dear friend who is present now, who, when the November fogs began, said to me on a Sunday morning, I tell all my family to be more cheerful than ever, now the dreary weather has come, so as to shake off all these things that are around by keeping up cheerfulness within. Now, you are always feeding on Christ, and so every time you feed, you ought to give thanks! Therefore, as you are always feeding on Christ, rejoice in the Lord always, and again, I say, rejoice. They used to call this Supper in the ancient Church, as we sometimes do now, the Eucharistthe giving of thanks. Well, let the life of the Christian be a constant Eucharist, and as he feeds on Jesus always, let it always be with this tribute of praise, Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable Gift.   
Yes, and if Jesus Christ is meat and drink, then here is a reason why you Christians should be very earnest to tell of Him to othersto hand Him out. Oh, if we had this house full of bread, tonight, and there were a famine all over Londonin the East End, the West End, and the North, and the Southand men were dropping down dead in the streets, and they were crowding outside there, out at the Elephant and Castle and down Newington Causeway, I know what I would say if the bread belonged to meBrothers and Sisters, come and help me out of the windows with it! Let them come in at every door! Let them crowd at every window and let them have something to eat! And if they were thirsty, and we had the mains laid on here, and there was no water to be had anywhere else, oh, I am sure there is not a little child here that would not be glad to take his little tin can and hand out a draught of water to the thirsty people! Well, you then, with little abilities, who love Christ tell about Him to others! He is meat and drink to the famished, thirsty ones! If He were merely a dainty, I could not press it, but as He is a very necessity to the dying sons of men, tell them about Him! And if they despise Him, well, then, you have done your part. But if they perish without your telling them of Christ, their blood may lie at your door! Oh, think, while you are going home tonight, walking down the streets, whether there is any house you pass where there is a man living who can charge you with having neglected him! Do not let it be so any longer, but seek that, as Christs flesh is meat indeed and His blood is drink indeed, you may hand out Jesus Christ to the famishing crowds that they may be satisfied! The Lord bless you richly, for His names sake.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **JOHN 6:41-66.**

Verses 41-44. The Jews then murmured at Him because He said, I am the bread which came down from Heaven. And they said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How is it then that He says, I came down from Heaven? Jesus therefore answered and said unto them, Murmur not among yourselves. No man can come to Me except He who has sent Me, draw him. And I will raise him up at the last day. Christ never retracted a Truth of God or diminished its force because it was rejected, but He rather seemed to say, You refused this Truth. I knew you would. You need not murmur: you are none of Mine. If you had been, the Father would have drawn you. You will not come. So you are set against the Truth of God that you cannot see it. So blind are your eyes that you do not behold it. No man can come to Me, except the Father, who has sent Me, draws him.

45. It is written in the Prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man, therefore, who has heard, and has learned of the Father, comes unto Me. Beware, dear Friends, of any learning of Christ except by Divine teaching, for what we learn merely from the lips of our fellow men will never be vitally learned or really understood. We must be all taught of Godand so we shall be if, indeed, we are among these whom the Father draws towards Christ. All His teachings draw that way, and when they are taught into the inner mannot so much to the mind as to the soul and heartthen do we know the Truth, indeed!

46, 47. Not that any man has seen the Father save he which is of God, he has seen the Father. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believes on Me has everlasting life. One of the richest passages surely of all holy Scripture! It is all marrow and fatness, but here you seem to have the quintessence! We have eternal life if we are Believersnot shall have it, but have it now! We have a life which is eternal. It is idle to talk of our losing it, because it would not be eternal if we did! We have a life within us which can by no possibility ever die, but must live on forever. He that believes on Me, though he has many tremblingsthough he may be the subject of many infirmitiesyet he that believes on Me has everlasting life. O my Soul, exult in that glorious Truth of God! You have everlasting life as surely as you have faith in Christ!

48. I am that bread of life. The food on which that everlasting life livesliving bread for living souls. O Brothers and Sisters, the dead letter is of no use to us! All the truth in the world, unless it be quickening, cannot feed our quickened natures. It is Incarnate Truth, even Christ, that we must feed upon! I am that bread of life.

49, 50 Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which comes down from Heaven, that a man may eat thereof and not die. For that manna of theirs was corruptible. We read that it bred worms and stank, and though it was an angels food for a time, yet it was but temporary. It only fed a temporary life and, like that life, it passed away. But Jesus Christ is incorruptible, and they that live on Him live on incorruptible food which nourishes the incorruptible seed which lives and abides forever!

51, 52. I am the living bread which came down from Heaven: if any man eats of this bread, he shall live forever: and the bread that I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. The Jews, therefore, argued among themselves, saying, How can this Man give us his flesh to eat? They misunderstood the Master. They tarried in the letter, and did not reach to the spiritthe meaningand that letter killed them, for the letter kills: the spirit gives life. The inward meaning is that on which the soul feeds. And so the unhappy Humanist believes that he can literally eat the flesh of Christ, which, if it were true, were monstrous and could be of no service to him! Of what value is one flesh more than another flesh, if it is to be considered carnally? He loses the inner meaning. Blessed are they who are drawn of the Father and taught of the Lord who spy out what is, after all, so little concealed beneath the thin veil of the metaphor.

53. Then Jesus said unto them. What? Do you think He explained it? No, He did not explain to these Jews. They were given up to judicial blindness. They had so long refused to see, that now they must not see, for on them was come the curse that, seeing they should not see, and hearing they should not perceive. Oh, how terrible this is when this falls on a man! And I think I know some upon whom it must have fallen. They have indulged the philosophical vein, always spiritualizing and cutting out the soul of Truth, and they are given up to spiritualizing as many of the great German philosophers evidently have been, who cannot now receive a plain statement, however simple are the words, but from their natural habit of continually twisting and tearing to pieces, they do so with everything! And a man may be an unbeliever so long that it will never be given to him to be a Believer again! God grant we may never make scales for our own eyes, and so plug up the souls mental vision with the miry clay of sin, that henceforth, even though the eternal Christ flashes the Divine Truth into our eyes, we shall only be dazzled by it into a greater darkness! So it was with these men. Jesus did not explain to them. He just repeated the Truth more emphatically and made it more offensive to them than before. May a preacher sometimes be offensive in his preaching? He must be! He must sometimes feel that such a truth will only move mens wrath if he preaches it. Nevertheless, we are not to put the Truth of God to the verdict of a juryneither is Truth to be submitted to what is called, the inner consciousness of a set of sinners whose consciousness is all defiled! As well make a company of highwaymen a jury about theft as make unconverted men to be a jury about what is the Truth of God! It cannot be. Christ does not condescend to that. He tells them the Truth more fully and more offensively than before.

53. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except you eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood. Which He had not said before, and was more startling still!

53-57. You have no life in you. Whoever eats My flesh, and drinks My blood, has eternal life: and I will raise him up at the last day. For My flesh is meat indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. He that eats My flesh, and drinks My blood, dwells in Me, and I in him. As the living Father has sent Me, and I live by the Father: so he that eats Me, even he shall live by Me. You see here three living personsthe living Father, the living Son and the living Believerand truly, these three live one life which comes from the Father by the Son into us, and we are made partakers of the Divine Nature, according to the Apostles wondrous language, having escaped the corruption which is in the world through lust. This is a great mystery which only he understands who feels it within himself.

58-60. This is that bread which came down from Heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eats of this bread shall live forever. These things said He in the synagogue, as He taught in Capernaum. Many, therefore, of His disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is an hard saying: who can understand it? It was not merely the blinded Jews, but even His disciples who did not understand. Now, Brothers and Sisters, the test of a true disciple of Christ is that he is willing to believe what he does not understand! If you will only follow Christs Words as far as you can comprehend them, the spirit of discipleship is not in you. You are the disciple of your own understanding! Christ is not Master, but your judgment is. But he that submits himself to the Words of Christ, often finds it profitable not to understand. Say you so? How is that? It is profitable to feel that we have come to the end of our own understanding. I have no doubt that a wise fathers talk is good to his children, even though the child does not as yet understand him. He will lay it up in his memory. He will understand, one of these days, but the childthe true childs heartsays, I believe you, Father, though you do puzzle me. You have given me a paradox which I cannot grasp, but I believe you: you are true. We say that of Christ and may we have even more of that spirit of a little child, without which we cannot receive the Kingdom of God! The other spirit is very rife in the worldthe spirit that makes man, virtually, his own teacher. And, truly, I wonder not at it because there was originally so much of submission of the judgment to the dictum of the Catholic Church, or the dictum of the Pope, which is degrading! But to submit to Jesus and to His teachingthat is ennobling! May we have the same sacredly blind faith with regard to Christ which some have had to human authority, believing everything He speaks! But some of these disciples did not.

61-62. When Jesus knew in Himself that His disciples murmured at it, He said unto them, Does this offend you? What and if you shall see the Son of Man ascend up where He was before? What will you say then?

63. It is the spirit that quickens; the flesh profits nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life. You are not to take them as if they were flesh, and understand them carnally. They do but embody My wordsdo but embody a living soul of meaning, which it will be for you to receive if you are, indeed, quickened. And then it will quicken you, and you will understand Me, and live in Me.

64. But there are some of you that believe not. And if they do not believe, then they miss the whole soul of the thing!   
64, 65. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray Him. And He said, Therefore said I unto you that no man can come unto Me, except it were given unto him of My Father. No, not even though he were an Apostlethough he came so near to Christ as to pray to Him and hear His secret and most private communications, and to see His singular and special miraclesyet he would not understand, except the Father gave it as a special act of Grace.   
66. From that time many of His disciples went back and walked no more with Him. Did He need them? I think not. He desired not to have around Him a mass of chaff, but the pure winnowed corn. Consequently He used His own Word as the winnowing fan. And I believe, Brothers and Sisters, that wherever Christ is faithfully preached, preaching is the best form of Church discipline. Somehow or other, carnal minds get weary of it, and they go awayand those that have not a longing and a love for the Truth of God drop off of themselvesso they walk no more with Him.

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PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #2677 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

SPIRITUAL RELIGION   
NO. 2677

A SERMON   
INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS-DAY, JUNE 3, 1900.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT NEW PARK STREET CHAPEL, SOUTHWARK, ON A THURSDAY EVENING, EARLY IN THE YEAR 1858.

**It is the spirit that quickens; the flesh profits nothing. John 6:63.**

To a casual reader, it looks as if the meaning of this passage lay upon the very surface, but he who has studied the chapter carefully has discovered that it is a sentence replete with many difficulties as to the exact interpretation of it. I shall not, however, waste your time by entering into any critical discussion of it, but shall only try to give you simply what I believe to be the mind of the Spirit, as uttered by the lips of Jesus in this passage. And after I have done that, I shall then revert to what I shall call the meaning which any person would give to it who is not a diligent and careful student of Scripture. That meaning being true, although not the special Truth of God taught in this passage, I shall briefly enlarge upon it.

It is the spirit that quickens; the flesh profits nothing. I suppose there is not a man in the world who could form any intelligent idea of what a spirit is. It is very easy for persons to define a spirit by saying what it is not, but I question whether there is, or ever could be, any man who could form any idea of what it is. We sometimes talk about seeing a spiritignorant persons in ages gone byand some living now in benighted villages talk about seeing spirits by night. They must know that such talk is a contradiction. Matter can be seen, but a spirit, if it clothed itself in any light substance, could not even then be seenit would only be the substance that would be visible! The spirit itself is a thing which can neither be tasted, handled, seen, nor discerned in any way whatever by our senses, for if it could thus be perceived, there would then be proof positive that it was not a spirit at all, but that it belonged to the material realm. We divide all things into matter and spirit. And whatever can be recognized by the senses in any way, is matter, depend on it. A spirit is itself a thing too subtle to be either seen or in any other way perceived by the senses, so I repeat what I said just now, that I suppose there is no man living, and that there never will be any man in this mortal state who will be able to accurately define a spirit so as to say what it is, though he may be able to say what it is not.

Now, there is a region where there are spirits dwelling without any bodies being connected with them. It is certain that, in the world to come, in that state which now intervenes between the death of the saints and the day of the resurrection, they are dwelling before the Throne of God in a disembodied statepure spirits, without any corporeal form whatever. It is quite certain that the saints before the Throne have no semblance of bodily shape whatever. They are pure spiritsbeings whose substance we cannot imaginepurely immaterial, as they are also immaculate. But, on earth, you can find no such thing as a pure spirit. We are all spirits in bodies and, somehow, from the fact that wherever we find souls and spirits, they are always found in bodies, we are very apt to confuse bodies and spirits together. But let us always understand that bodies and spirits are distinct things and though it has pleased God, in this world, never to make a spirit without making a house for it to dwell in, called the body, yet the body is not the spirit. It is the spirit that quickens; the flesh profits nothing.

You will easily perceive the truth of this passage if you will recollect that, in mans body, no one can tell where the life is situated. In vain the surgeon lays the body on the table and dissects ithe will find life neither in the brain nor in the heart. He may cut the body in pieces as he pleases, but he will not find anything that he can lay hold upon, tangible and real, and say, That is life. He can see all the effects and evidences of life. He can watch the various parts of the body moving. He can behold all the appearances of life which are caused by a supernatural something, but he cannot see life. That is altogether beyond his skill and, after all his searching, he must lay down his scalpel and say at once, There now, the task is all over. There is a spirit that quickens this body, but in my search after life, this flesh profits me nothing. I might as well search for a soul within a stone, or within one of the pillars that support this house, as search for a soul within mere flesh and blood if I look for something which I can see, which I can lay hold of, or which, by either taste, sight, smelling, or any other sense, I can distinguish and can designate as being a spirit.

So, Brothers and Sisters, this illustration just brings me to the Truth of God that is taught in our text. We are here assembled, at this moment, spirits, souls. Here we are, also, bodies, but these bodies are not ourselvesthey are the houses in which we live. I question whether there is any man who can define what he, himself, is. The most that any man can say is, I am. I know I have an existence, but what kind of thing my spirit is, I do not know, I cannot tell. I have no knowledge of what it is. I feel it. I know it moves my body. I feel its outward manifestations. I am certain of my existence. But what I am, I know not. God alone can say. I AM THAT I AM, is comprehensible only to God Himself. Man is a being incomprehensible to himself and though the Lord may allow him to say, By the Grace of God I am what I am, he cannot tell what he really is he cannot fully comprehend his own existence!

Understand, then, that, as in our being there is a mystery in our flesh, so religion, the true religion of the blessed God, in order to be made like unto us and to be a something suitable to us, must be a religion of spirit. But, because we also have a body, it must have a body in which to clothe itself. I want, if I can, to make this plain to you. And if you do not understand it now, I hope you will before I have done. We are spirits in bodies. Well, then, in order to meet our cases, the great work of God in us must be a spiritual thing! But in order that I may be able to talk about it to you and that you may be able to hear it with your ears, that spiritual thing must be encased in a body. Or else, if it were a purely spiritual thing, I could not explain it to you any more than I could explain to you about a spirit, if there were no body in which a spirit could be found, and no body in which I could be able to live to talk about it.

I want to show you this Truth very clearly, because there are some persons who are so busy about that which concerns merely the body of religion that they altogether forget that religion has also a spirit. I believe that what our Lord Jesus meant in this passage was, The mere embodiment of religion profits nothing; it is the spirit that quickens. Just as, to use my figure over again, in order to perform an act the mere flesh and blood and arms and legs profit nothing, it is the spirit that quickens all the bones and makes the nerves act as they ought to do and the sinews work as they should. And so religion has its outward form, it has its ceremonies, it has its external and visible developmentsits bodybut the mere outward body of religion is of no use whatever unless the inward and invisible spirit quickens it.

I. To begin, then, I WILL FIRST SHOW YOU THIS TRUTH AS OUR SAVIOR, I THINK, MEANT IT WHEN HE FIRST OF ALL STATED IT.   
There were some people, in our Saviors day, who admired Christ merely as a Man. And they thought there was some marvelous efficacy in His flesh and blood. To them He said, using almost the very words of our text, Even My flesh will profit you nothing; it is the spirit that quickens. I must state this Truth of God very cautiously, yet very plainly. When our Savior was upon this earth, there were some, I repeat, who admired His Person. You remember how our Savior rebuked the woman who said to Him, Blessed is the womb that bore You, and the breasts which nursed You? He would not have people simply admire His flesh and think so much of His mere Humanity, so He said to her, More than that, blessed are they who hear the Word of God and keep it.   
There were some other people who wanted to take the Lord Jesus and make Him a king, but, in effect, He said to them, My flesh, even if you exalt it to a throne, will profit you nothing. I did not come here that you might bow down and venerate My mere fleshthat you might think the mere admiration of My mortal frame is vital religion. It is the spirit, the Gospel that I came to preach, that will benefit you. It is not these outward appearances. It is My thoughts, Words and acts which are to bless you. Hear what the Savior says in the next sentence, It is not your admiration of My flesh that is of any use to you, for My flesh profits nothing; it is the spirit that quickens; and if you want to know what is the spirit of My Incarnation, I tell you that the Words that I speak to you, they are spirit, and they are life. It is not your venerating My flesh and blood, it is your reception of My doctrines that will be the heart and soul of the religion that I desire you to possess.   
Our Savior was, however, led to make these remarks from the fact that the ignorant Jews, when Jesus talked about eating His flesh and drinking His blood, really thought that He meant that they were to turn cannibals and eat Him up. You may well smile at so ridiculous an idea, yet you know that the idea is still prevalent in the Church of Rome. The Romish priest solemnly assures us that the people who eat the bread and drink the wine, or the stuff he calls bread and wine, do actually act the part of cannibals and eat the body of Christ and drink His blood. You say to him, You mean, my dear Sir, that they do it in a figure, spiritually. No, he says, I do not. I mean to say that after I have pronounced certain words over that bread, it becomes Christs flesh. And after I have said a certain prayer over that wine, it becomes His actual blood. Well, we reply to him, it is very singular, and you certainly cannot expect us to believe you while God allows our heads to be occupied by brains! But even if we do believe you, my dear Sir, we refer you to this passage which says, It is the Spirit that quickens; the flesh profits nothing. You tell the people that they do actually and really receive the body and blood of Christ. Suppose they doit is no earthly use to them! And even if they could carnally bite the flesh with their teeth and drink the blood down their throats, it would be of no more use to them than the eating of the flesh and blood of any other man. It could be of no service whatever to them, for Christ Himself denounces the error of transubstantiation and declares that even His flesh profits nothing! It is only the spirit, the spiritual receiving of that flesh and blood, that can be of any use whatever.   
While I am referring to this point, allow me to say just a few more words upon it, for Popery prevails in this day, and the doctrine that the bread and wine are turned into the body and blood of Christ is the bulwark of Popery. Dr. Carson, of Coleraine, son of Dr. Carson the eminent Baptist, has challenged Dr. Cahill in a remarkable way. He has challenged Dr. Cahill to prove that he can turn the bread and wine used in the sacrament into Christs body and blood. He offers to give Dr. Cahill a hundred pounds if he will let him make a wafer for him and, if Dr. Cahill will then put it on his own tongue and swallow it in Mr. Carsons presence, if the Doctor is not dead in an hour, says Dr. Carson, Ill give him a hundred pounds. No, says someone, that is not fair. Oh, but if he can turn it into the body and blood of Christ, it cannot hurt him, whatever it may contain. But would you make it of poison, then? Yes, the deadliest I could find. Would you give him poison? I would not give it to himhe would swallow it himselfhe would do it of his own voluntary choice. Of course Dr. Cahill will not submit to that test! He knows that he cannot turn the wafer and the wine into the body and blood of Christif he could, Dr. Carson says it would not hurt him, for the body and blood of Christ would poison no one.   
But some wise Romanist says, That is not a fair test. Dr. Cahill does not pretend to turn poison into the body and blood of Christit is only pure bread and wine that can thus be manipulated. Very well, says Dr. Carson, Ill try him another way. I will let him choose a youth from seven or eight Catholic boys. He shall take a quart of wine and turn this wine, in his own peculiar way, into the blood of Christ. The boy shall drink the quart of wine and if he is not drunk in six hours, I will pay the hundred pounds. Now, says Dr. Carson, if that liquid is really the blood of Christ, it will not make him drunk! He might drink a barrel of it and it would not make him intoxicated. But Dr. Cahill dares not accept such a trial as that, for it would very soon be found that the so-called consecrated wine would make the boy intoxicated as quickly as any other wine would! Therefore it cannot be turned, even by the great Doctor, himself, into the blood of Christ. [We assume Dr. Cahill is a priest.]   
The fact is, the lie is so foolish, the delusion is so absurd, that any child of a reasonable age would as soon think of believing the cock and bull story which we used to read in our childish days, about what the bull said, and what the cock said, to be actual truth, as to imagine it to be a literal fact that any priest, or any man in the world, could ever turn bread and wine into flesh and blood! But even if they could, hear again the words of our textIt is the spirit that quickens; the flesh profits nothing. So, then, after all, the Roman Catholic sacrament, if it is actually a cannibals feast upon the body and blood of Christ, is of no earthly use! But that Divinely-appointed ordinance wherein we do spiritually receive the flesh and blood of Jesus and, in a spiritual way hold communion with Him, is that alone which quickens!   
This brings me to the Truth of God that I want you, dear Friends, especially to understand. As Christ Jesus in His flesh was the embodiment of His own doctrine, and yet not His flesh, but the spirit of His doctrine quickens souls, so the outward forms and ceremonies which Christ has made to be the body to contain the spirit of His Truth, are of no earthly use at all unless the Spirit of God is in them!   
Take, for instance, the ordinance of Believers Baptismthere are the pool and the water. That pool and that water are, so to speak, the flesh and blood of dedication. The right observance of that holy ordinance signifies that we do solemnly devote ourselves to the Lord Jesus. Suppose, however, our hearts are in a wrong condition, or that we are not converted personssuppose there is no influence of the Spirit resting upon us during the act of Baptism? Then the act of Baptism is like the flesh apart from the spiritit is a dead thing, it profits nothing because it is without the soul. We come, the next Sabbath, to the Lords Tablethere is the bread broken by Gods servant. There is the wine reverently handed round by the deacons of the Church and it is sipped by the communicants. But, mark you, however devoutly the whole service is performed, unless the Spirit of the living God breathes through the Divine ordinance, the fleshthat is, the mere embodiment of communionwill profit you nothing! You might sit at a thousand communion tables and you might be baptized in a myriad poolsbut all this would not avail one jot or tittle for your salvation unless you had the Spirit of God to quicken you!   
No, to go further, it is not these two outward ordinances only that need the Spirit in themit is so in everything else. You have sometimes read, dear Friends, of some eminent Christians who grew to have much fellowship with Christ by prayer. Perhaps you imbibed the idea that if you were to go home and spend as many hours in your closet as they did, you would get as much profit by itbut not thinking about the Holy Spirit, you simply devote yourself to private prayer as you might to any manual exercisewith a hope of profiting by the exercise. I tell you, you might be on your knees till your knees were worn bare and you might be in your closet till the steam of your devotion ran down the walls, but unless the Spirit of the Lord was in that closet with you, the mere fleshly exercise of praying would no more avail and profit you than if you had been chanting songs to the moon, or standing in the street to sell your goods!

Another hears that a certain person has been very much blessed by reading a text of Scripture. Oh, he says, has that text been blessed to such an one? Then Ill go and read the same passage. You think that if you do the same as he does, you will be equally blessed and you are marvelously surprised that when you read the passage, it does you no good. It made his spirit leap for joy. It filled his soul with the wine of the Kingdom of God, but to you it is like a dry well, or an empty bottle. Why is this? The mere letter, in which the promise is revealed, profits you nothingit is the spirit of the promise, it is the life of the Holy Spirit running through the veins of the promise that alone can profit you! You hear that another man meditates on Gods Law day and night and becomes like a tree planted by the rivers of water. You say, I will take care that, every morning, I will read a chapter out of the Scriptures and that, every night, I will read two chapters. There are certain people who think that if they read a good passage out of the Bible, they have done a great deal. In that kind of spirit, they might just as well read a portion out of Hudibras, for they just read it straight through, without thinking or understanding it.   
Many of our ministers think that in the public service they must read a certain quantity of Scriptures and they take, perhaps, three long chapters out of Ezekieland not a soul in the congregation knows the meaning of what they are reading! If they were to read a Dutch sermon in an English chapel, it would do the hearers just about as much good, for no one understands what they read. Instead of reading, as Ezra did, and expounding the meaning to the people, they must go on over hedge and ditchone continual steeple-chase! Instead of stopping to crack the shells and give the kernels of Truth to the people, they read right on, without attempting to give any explanation of the passage. To such persons, we would simply say, Your Bible reading is but the flesh, it is of no use to you, it is the spirit that quickens. The mere flesh, the outward fashion and form of Bible reading will not profit anybody. One sentence of the Bible prayed over and bedewed with the Spirit, and made alive, though it is only a short sentence of six words, will profit you more than a hundred chapters without the Spirit, because they are fleshdead! But the one verse with the Spirit is the thing that quickens.   
I do not know whether I have as yet brought out the full meaning of the text, but I want to let everyone understand that it is not the mere outward embodiment of our religion that saves the soul and that profits usit is the inner spirit of the thing that does us good. Mark, I would not find fault with any of these forms, any more than I would find fault with our bodies because they are not spirits. Our bodies are good things for our spirits to live in and the forms of religion are good things for the spirit of religion to live inbut the form without the spirit, though it is the most decorous, and apparently the most devout that can be presented to God, can be of no use for our souls eternal profit and ultimate salvation. It is the spirit that quickens; the flesh profits nothing.  
Now, my dear Friend, Mr. So-and-So, if you will just take out your pencil and cast up your accounts for all the years of your life, the sum of them all will come to very little if what I say is true. I think, you say, I am a tolerably good sort of man. I have a few faults, but just look at what I have done! I have been to Chapel twice every Sunday almost since I was a boyI dont know that I missed once, except when I was illthat has been very good of me, and no mistake. I always read the Bible every morning. I always have family prayerthat is very good of me. Another item to be reckoned to my accountI say my prayers when I go to bed at night, and when I get up in the morning. I very frequently go to Prayer Meetings. I dont think anyone can reasonably find fault with me. Really, I think I do everything to make me a truly religious man.   
Ah, and did you put at the end of it, Lord, I thank You that I am not as other men areunjust, extortioners, and so on, or even like that poor fellow, a Sabbath-breaker, whom you saw going the opposite way as you were coming to your usual place of worship? It is a pity you didnt finish it up in that fashionbut if you did not in words, you finished it up so in your heart! I pray God to show you that all these beautiful things of yours are good for nothing! There are your Chapel-goingsall flesh! There are your Bible readingsall flesh! There are your family prayers all flesh! There are your good works and excellencesall flesh! You have never received the Spirit of the living Godyou dare not say that you have. Well, then, all these things will profit you nothing whatever.   
It is the spirit that quickens, you know, my dear Sirand let me speak very pointedlyyou know that you never enter into the spirit of the things of which you have been speaking. Though you go to your church or chapel regularly, yet you know that you might very often just as well be at home, for when the worshippers sing, you do not sing with all your heartand when the minister preaches, it is seldom there is much that touches you, unless it is what you call a good intellectual discourse, which happens to please youand you believe it just because it agrees with your views. You know that, into the inward soul, marrow and heart of devotion, you have never yet learned to penetrate. Your devotion is like a certain ox which was slain as a sacrifice in the time of siege in Rome, and was said to forecast evil because, when the sorcerer slew it, he declared that he could not find a heart anywhere. He looked through all the entrails, but no heart could he discover and, therefore, the Romans declared that their city must be destroyed. It was an omen of ill fortune, they said, when the sacrifice had no heart in it.   
It is just the same with you. You have done all these things and there has been as much reality in what you have done as there was devotion in the poor fools windmill, when he tied a prayer to it and put it up in the gardenevery time it blew round, he counted that as one more prayer. There was as much heart in your prayer as there was in his windmill that is to say, none at all! Go on no longer with this useless round of performances, I implore you. I would not have you give up the performances, but seek the spirit that can make them true and acceptable in Gods sight. Stop awhile and ask God to give you that inward spirit that quickens, for that is what is neededthe flesh profits nothing.   
But I must also speak to you who are the children of God, and I must ask youHow often do you forget this all-important Truth of God? I know it is not likely that I would leave my chamber any morning without prayer. But, oh, Brothers and Sisters, I have often left it without having the spirit of prayer! I should not like to pass a day without reading the Scriptures, but I am afraid it is very often the mere flesh of formal reading and not the spirit breathing in the Word. And how often is our conscience satisfied with the mere form without the spirit? Now, if we were what we ought to be, we would never be content with the form unless we could also see the spirit in it.   
Mother, would you be content to have at home a child who was dead? Suppose someone should say to you, Why, this child is just as good a child as ever it was! Look at it! It has not lost a leg, or an arm, or any part of its body! Ah, but, you would say, it is dead. Oh, says one, there is no great difference. It looks as beautiful, now, as ever it did. Ah, says the poor mother, but there is a vast deal of difference between what it was when it was alive, and what it is now it is dead. Just transfer that idea to your poor dead prayers, your poor dead Bible readings, your poor dead sacraments, your poor dead goings to chapel and all that! Ah, how many of our sacrifices are just poor dead things when we bring them to the Lord! They have died in the night and then we come and offer them before God! How frequently do we satisfy our conscience with having the fleshthe embodiment of the sacrificeand yet, all the while, we forget the spirit! But let us remember that God only looks for the life. He does not trouble about the body and we ought, in all we do for him, to take care, first of all, that the spirit is there and then we may rest quite sure that the flesh and blood of the devotion will take care of themselves.   
II. This, I believe, is the true meaning of the passage. But the common rendering of it, if anyone reads it without noticing the context, would be, Why, that means, It is the Spirit that quickens. That is to say, IT IS THE HOLY SPIRIT THAT QUICKENS; THE FLESH PROFITS NOTHING.   
Our friend will excuse me when I say that it cannot mean that. You notice that the s in the word, spirit, in the text has not a capital letter. If it meant the Holy Spirit, it would be so marked, to separate it from the spirit to which I have just referredthe inward spirit, the life of a thing. This word, spirit, here does not mean the Holy Spirit. Still, almost every ordinary reader would make that mistake and say, It is the Holy Spirit that quickens; the flesh profits nothing. Well, it is a mistake that will not do him any hurt, because if it does not say so here, it does say so somewhere else! And if it is not true in this one particular text, it is true all over the Bible! And it is true in a Christians experience, so that a man may make a great many worse mistakes than that. Well, then, let us for once make that mistake, and then let us get the Truth of God out of it It is the Holy Spirit that quickens; the flesh profits nothing *Can anything beneath a power Divine   
The stubborn will subdue?   
Tis Yours, Eternal Spirit, Yours   
To form the heart anew.   
Tis Yours the passions to recall,   
And upwards bid them rise   
And make the scales of error fall   
From Reasons darkened eyes.   
To chase the shades of death away,   
And bid the sinner live   
A beam of Heaven, a vital ray   
Tis Yours alone to give.*   
How often have I thought, when I have been preaching, There is a young woman in the gallery and down there in that area is a young manhow interested they look during the sermon! I have met with them, I have admired their characters. They have had an amiable carriage and deportment. There has been much in them that everybody would tell others to imitate and emulate. I have said, Ah, I shall soon have them added to the Churchthere is so much that is good about them, it will be such an easy transition for themthey are so moral and so excellent, surely it will be very easy for them to take a step into the Kingdom of Heaven. I dont say that I have said so much as that in words to my heart, but that has been about what I have thought. Well, there has been a very different sort of fellow, a strange looking object, certainly, who came running into the Chapel one Thursday evening, towards the end of the service. He was not even washed, nor in any way prepared for Divine worshiphe only came to hear something that would make him laugh, as he thought. I did not expect to have him converted, but the next time I sat to see enquirers, in he camecleaned and brushed upbut I recognized him, for all that, and I said to him, Didnt you come into the Chapel, one Thursday night, after you had been hammering and tinkering away somewhere? I thought you looked a strange customer, certainly. Yes, he said, and the Lord met with me that night!

Now, I sat many and many a time to see enquirers, but I did not see the young man or the young woman come. Why was this? The Lord meant to teach His servant that the flesh profits nothing. That man seemed to me far from God, but that young man and that young woman seemed very near. But the Lord said to me, I will let you learn that all their morality and all their goodness did not put them near the Kingdom of Heaven, or help towards their salvation. I could save one as well as the other, and if I chose to show My Sovereignty, I might even let publicans and harlots enter the Kingdom of Heaven before those who, becoming proud of their morality, would not stoop before Me.   
Have you not, sometimes, met with a person of such a peculiar character that you have said, Is it not a pity someone cannot talk with that man? I often have notes of this sort. A father writes to me, I wish you could get hold of my son. He is a very interesting young man. If you were to put the Truth before him to suit his turn of mind, he would be sure to lay hold of it, for if you knew how he was mentally constituted, you would say at once there was a peculiar adaptation in his mind for the reception of the Gospel. Well, I have been told that a dozen times, but I never found it true even once! The flesh profits nothing. No peculiar adaptation of mind is any more susceptible of Gospel influences than another. Dead sinners are all dead and all dead alike! Some may be black and some may be whitesome may be well washed and dressed, and some may have all the mire and filth of sensuality about thembut they are all dead! And when converting Grace comes to deal with them, it finds as much for its exercise in the one case as in the other. It finds as much to help it in the one heart as in the otherthat is to say, it finds nothing to help it at all. It brings all that is helpful within itselfit kindles its own fire with its own torch! It blows the fire with its own breath and asks for nothing in the sinner, be he who he may!   
Then, again, we have sometimes said, If such-and-such a man were converted, dear me, what a shining Christian he would make! He is a man of brilliant talents, of great intellectual power and of extensive fortune. Oh, if he were but converted, what a jubilee it would be to the Church of God! How much he would do for Christ! Well, do you know, I have always found out that these fine people who, when they were converted, were to be something extraordinaryif they have been converted and we have got themhave not turned out to be quite so great after all! I knew a minister once, who, with great joy and gladness, baptized a man. It was on a New-Years Day and I remember with what selfcongratulation he said, The Lord has sent me one of the best New-Years gifts I ever had. And he looked upon that man and said, Ah, this is a Brother! He is a great gain to the Church. He is a man of such active spirit, of such an excellent turn of mind and he is everything that could be desired. Well, I have just happened to live long enough to see that man tear the church apart and drive the minister out of his pulpit! And he is still alivea thorn in the side of that church and a huge prickly bramble that they would be glad enough to eradicatebut they have not the power to do that. No, the Lord will show us that the flesh profits nothing. You may have him, says the Lord, if he is such a fine fellow, take him. You will find he will not be much good to you, after all. I will let you know that the flesh profits nothing. It is the Spirit alone that quickens.   
On the other hand, we have seen some come whose flesh could not help them. They were the poor, the mean, the illiterate, the despised and we have seen the Grace of God blaze up in their hearts to an intense degree of fervor! And we have seen them stand confident and strong, notwithstanding the nothingness of the flesh. And then we have said, Verily, O God, it is marvelous how, when the flesh is weak, Your Grace is strong. And we have heard an answer from the excellent glow, which said, Ah, the flesh profits nothing; it is the Spirit that quickens.   
Now, I do not believe that there is any form of our flesh, nor any act of our flesh, nor anything that our flesh can do, or attempt to do, or think of, or suggest, that can in any way assist in the great spiritual work of our salvation. It is the Spirit alone that quickens, and you will find, till you die, that the flesh profits nothing, and profits no one except the devil. It often profits him, but in Gods ways. And in Gods holy Gospel, you will always find the flesh lusting against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh. You will have to feel this Truth, that the flesh at its best estate profits nothing. It is the Spirit that quickens.   
Now, my Brothers and Sisters, in conclusion, I will ask you this questionHave you received the influences of the Holy Spirit? And have those influences led you to worship God, who is a Spirit, in spirit and in truth? For, if not, though some may put you in the cradle of ceremonies and rock you to sleep, I will not be one of them! Although men may tell you you are right enough because you are outwardly so religious, because you are no Sabbath-breaker, no swearer, no drunkard, I warn you that unless you are born again from above, you cannot see the Kingdom of God! And when drunks, harlots and all manner of ungodly persons shall be driven from the Presence of God, you, also, shall share their fate, for you are dead in trespasses and sins, even as they are! If you would ever enter Heaven, you must be quickened by the Holy Spirit. No more shall I say, but earnestly entreat the Spirit of the blessed God to impress upon your hearts this solemn thought and lead you to renounce the works of the fleshand put your trust in Him who is the Savior of all men, especially of those that believe. May the Lords mercy rest upon you all, for Jesus sake! Amen.

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A BLOW FOR PUSEYISM

NO. 653

**DELIVERED ON SUNDAY MORNING, OCTOBER 8, 1865, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**It is the spirit that quickens. The flesh profits nothing: the words that I speak unto you,   
they are spirit and they are life.   
John 6:63.**

OUR Lord had plainly told His hearers that He was the Bread of Life. And that except they ate His flesh and drank His blood there was no life in them. His hearers understood this in a sensual manner and they very naturally put the question, How can this Man give us His flesh to eat? Now the Savior had never intended to be understood in a carnal manner. It was far enough from His design to inculcate the carnal eating of His body and therefore He at once told them that His words were not understood.

And He delivered Himself of a great general principle, as truly applicable to our day as to His own. In effect He taught them just thisIt is not the eating My flesh in a carnal way, even if you could do it, which would be of any service to you. For that would be only feeding the flesh, which profits nothing. A spiritual feeding can alone quicken and bless you. It is this which you cannot understand. And therefore you hear My words as if they were as dead and fleshly as yourselves, whereas My teaching bears no gross and sensuous meaning, for the words which I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.

If I am not mistaken, this verse contains a great principle which needs, in these days, to be proclaimed on the housetops. It is the medicine which would cure the diseases of this present time if men were divinely led to receive it. The text is very deeplike all the teaching of our Savior recorded by John, the words are extremely simplebut the mystery is most profound. May the Holy Spirit lead us all not only to comprehend its teaching, but to feel its power.

What is meant by the flesh here? The word flesh in Scripture has eleven or twelve different modifications of its one abiding meaning. In this passage it means that which is outward and sensuous and appeals to the eye, or the ear, or to other powers of mans bodily nature. There was much of this in the Jewish faithbut whenever the worshippers rested in it and did not reach to its spiritual teachingit profited them nothing. Paul uses the same term when, speaking to the Judaizing Galatians, he asks them,

Having begun in the Spirit, are you now made perfect by the flesh?

Which we understand to mean, having begun by Gods Holy Spirit with a spiritual love to God, a spiritual faith in Jesus and a spiritual life within, do you mean, now, to be made perfect by external ordinances, resting and abiding in them as though they had a power to bless? External ceremonial religion is well and aptly set forth here as flesh. What is the meaning of the term spirit here? If the Holy Spirit had been intended, in the judgment of our translators, they would have placed a capital S. It cannot, however, refer to the Holy Spirit because the explanatory key sentence is thisThe words which I speak unto you, they are spirit.

Now, as we all know, words cannot be the Holy Spirit. The word spirit stands here in contrast with the term flesh. Flesh is external religion, the carnal part of itthat which the eye sees and the ear hears. Spirit is the inward part of religionthat which the soul understands, receives, believes and feeds upon. It is thisthis spiritual element in religion which quickens it and makes it a living thingwhile the mere external, the flesh, except as the Spirit quickens it, profits nothing.

This spiritual religion is consistent with the spiritual nature which God the Holy Spirit gives to us. And as Christs teachings are themselves living and spiritual, they are the proper food of spiritual men. The Jews commonly thought that religion lay in ceremonial observancesin eating certain meats or abstinence from themin washings of the hands before eating. In various baptisms, in going up to the temple to pray, and such like outward performances. Jesus tells them to their faces that this flesh religion profits nothingit is dead, unquickened and unquickening!

What, then, is the life of godliness? What is the vitality and essence of acceptable worship? His answer, virtually, is, It is not your outward observances, but your inward emotions, desires, beliefs and adoration which are living worship. Then He adds, in effect, My words are not concerning outward observances, but are of a spiritual character. I come not to you with touch not, taste not, handle not, or with wash, vow, stand, sit, kneelMy words deal with inner life and spirit and are addressed to your spiritual natures. The words which I speak unto you are spirit and life.

I. Our first point will be THE UNPROFITABLE FLESHthe external observances of religion are, in themselves, utterly unprofitable. To begin with the greatest monstrosity of this kind in the present daythe real and corporeal Presence of the Lord Jesus Christ in what is superstitiously called the Blessed Sacrament! I would scarcely mention this if it were a doctrine merely of the Church of Rome. But when I read the newspapers and other productions of the High Church party, I find that transubstantiation with all its fullness of absurdity is extensively preached and believed in the Church of England!

And there are hundreds of clergy who speak of the Lords Table as an altar and of the Supper as the celebration of a sacrifice, while the symbols are spoken of as though they were to be reverenced even as the Lord Himself! It is laid down as a doctrine, that every time the bread is broken by these priests, the very body of Jesus Christ is actually received by the persons participating! That this is monstrously absurd, I think every intelligent person knows! But it has been said that the more absurd it is, the more room there is for faith! And now some have even been thankful for having its absurdity proven, For, they have argued, it will be the more meritorious for us to believe it.

To such persons we would briefly say, if Jesus Christs body is really received into your mouth, broken with your teeth and made to enter into your stomach, then, in the first place, you are guilty of a gross act of cannibalism and nothing better, inasmuch as you eat human flesh! And, in the next place, you cannot derive any virtue from it, for Jesus Christ tells you at once, It is the Spirit that quickens. The flesh profits nothing.

If you did actually eat the very body of Christ it would affect your digestive and secretive organs and through them your flesh, just as other bread, or, if you like it better, other flesh would do! And how could this affect your heart and soul? Does Divine Grace operate through the stomach, and save us through our bowels? Prove this and you will make converts of us!

But do not men receive the body and blood of Christ in the Lords Supper? Yes, spiritual men do, in a real and spiritual sense, but not in a carnal sortnot so as to crush it with their teeth, or taste it with their palate, or digest it by the gastric juices! They receive the Lord Jesus, as Incarnate and Crucified, into their spirits, as they believe in Him, love Him, and are comforted by thoughts of Him. But how is that a real reception of Him? cries one! Alas, this question reveals at once the worlds thoughts! You think the carnal, alone, real, and that the spiritual is unreal. If you can touch and taste you think it realbut if you can only meditate and love you dream it to be unreal.

How impossible it is for the carnal mind to enter into spiritual things! Yet, hearken once againI receive the body and blood of Christ when my soul believes in His Incarnation. When my heart relies upon the merit of His death. When the bread and wine so refresh my memory that thoughts of Jesus Christ and His agonies melt me to penitence, cheer me to confidence and purify me from sin. It is not my body which receives Jesus, but my spirit! I believe in Him, casting myself alone upon Him. Trusting Him, I feel joy and peace, love and zeal, hatred of sin and love of holinessand so as to my spiritual nature I am fed upon Him.

My spiritual nature feeds upon truth, love, Divine Grace, promise, pardon, covenant, atonement, acceptanceall of which I find, and much morein the Person of the Lord Jesus. Up to the extent in which my

spirit has communion with the Lord Jesus, the ordinance of breaking of bread is living and acceptable because the spiritual element quickens it. But to the extent in which I merely receive the bread and wine and my spirit is not exercised about Jesus Christto that extent it profits me nothingit is a mere external ceremony and nothing more. The bread is only bread, the wine is merely wine, the eating is simply eating bread and no more. The whole outward ceremony is what it seems to be and not a jot more! But the unseen fellowship of hearts with Jesusthis is the quickening element and this, alone.

The same principle applies in the case of Baptism. According to Gods Word, Romans 6:4 and Colossians 2:12, Baptism sets forth our union with Jesus in His death, burial and resurrection. Is there anything in the water in which the person is immersed? Nothing whatever! Is there conveyed, by the water, or in the water, any spiritual gift or Grace? Not in any way except so far as thisif the water reminds the spiritual nature in the man of the death of Christ. Then his spirit enjoys communion with Christ in His death. If the water forcibly portrays to him the Saviors burial so that his spirit feels itself to be buried to the world. If rising out of the water reminds the man of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, so that he, in spirit, rises from a dead world into a newness of life, then there is life in the Baptism. The Holy Spirit quickens itbut the mere waterthe carnal part of the ordinance, in itself profits nothing!

The putting away of the filth of the flesh is nothing, but the answer of a good conscience toward God is the vitality of Baptism. It is only vital up to the extent in which the spirit exercises itself. This speaks strongly against the Baptism of infants. We do not enter on this subject from love of controversy, but the question is fairly involved in the subject. If the baptized person, infant or adult, enters in spirit into the meaning and teaching of Baptism, he is truly baptized. But, inasmuch as in our firm conviction a babe does not enter in spirit into the subject at all, it has only received the unprofitable Baptism of the flesh, since the Spirit which quickens was absent.

Whether you are infants or adults, if your renewed spirit enters into the form, it quickens the form and makes it live. But if you come to it without spiritual life and without exercising spiritual emotions, the water, the fleshly part of the ordinance, profits you nothing. It is only so far as your spirit has fellowship with Jesus Christ in itboth in the act and in meditation upon it afterwardsthat Baptism becomes of the slightest possible profit to you. We put the two ordinances together and say to youyou will find in these just as much as your spirit shall get from them and not an atom more! Only so far as the symbol aids thought and emotion can it be of service. The outward does not profit a little, it profits nothing whatever.

Take next the doctrine of the Apostolic succession. There are certain persons still out of Bedlam who say of all ministers but those of their own sect, no matter how much the Lord may have honored them in the conversion of sinners and the edification of saints, they are intruders and not true ministers of Jesus Christ! Their clerics are the legitimate successors of the Apostles and they only. For the moment we will allow the historical questionwe will suppose that up to Judas, or some other Apostle, they can trace a line through Popes of Rome, or Archbishops of Canterbury. We will suppose that a little stream comes trickling down to them through the dunghill of the dark ages, having its original rise in the Apostolic era.

Well, what now? Hear this Word of GodThe flesh profits nothing. The mere fleshly connection between bishop and bishop established by successive laying on of hands and anointing is utterly valueless! The great question is concerning the spiritual succession! Do we see in you the same spirit that was in the Apostles? Open your mouths and let us hear the same simple, unadorned Gospel which the Apostles proclaimed! Let us hear you say with Paul, You observe days and months, and times and years. I am afraid of you lest I have bestowed upon you labor in vain. Let us hear from your lips the Doctrines of Grace and faithful warnings against looking for salvation by our own works!

Let us perceive that you are free from the beggarly elements of ceremonialism, and are not to be judged in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath (Col. 2:16). Is there as little pomp about you as about the tentmaker of old? From where do these silk chasubles, albs of fine linen, stoles of watered silk, maniples, capes and garments covered with gold and silver and embroidery come? The Apostolic fishermen surely did not fish for souls in such fine raiment!

Show us Apostolic simplicity, faith and truthfulness! We care not a fig either way for your fleshly succession! We demand that you prove your spiritual one! It was a tolerably impudent thing for a bishop once to say, in reference to John Williams and other missionaries in the South Sea Islands, They act as pioneers. They prepare the way for a more regular force. The missionary in due time is followed by the Churchman who erects the converts into an orderly edifice, having for its foundation the lively stones of an Apostolic priesthood, qualified to offer the oblation of a spiritual sacrifice.

Now, my Lord Bishop, you shall, yourself, decide which is the more Apostolicyourself at home at ease, in enjoyment and luxuryor John Williams, traveling from island to island with his life in his hand. He is casting down idols by the power of the Gospel and transforming savages into Christian men! You live in state and he dies a martyr! You boast and he toils! You talk of your own priesthood and he of Jesus Christ! You are filled with zeal for a

sect and he with love for soulssurely if wit remains beneath your miter, you, yourself, can judge which of the two is the more

Apostolic!

If the Apostle Paul, himself, came to find out his successor, where would he look for himin the missionary doing Apostolic workor in the bishop talking about what he will do after the other has laid the foundation and stained it with his blood? When we see the Divine calling of our honored pastors denied and hear the impudent claims of a tribe of hireling priests, we can only cry, To what an extent pretense may run! Let them boast the fleshly succession, but let us seek spiritual union with the Apostles Lord.

The Puseyites of our Saviors day said, We have Abraham for our father, just as these say, We are the successors of the Apostles. And we meet our modern Pharisees with the same rebuke with which the Baptist met their ancient types, They which are of faith, these are children of Abraham, and successors of the Apostles, too! Let us remain content with spiritually following Jesus and doing His work. And let the sons of the bondwoman boast a worthless fleshly succession if they willIt is the spirit that quickens. The flesh profits nothing.

These things more concern other people than ourselves, therefore let us come a little nearer home. Much is said nowadays about an ornate form of worship. The excellency of melodious music is much extolled. The swell of the organ, it is said, begets a hallowed frame of mind. But how far is the effect sensuous and how far spiritual? Is it not to be feared that an anthem in a service is often no more a spiritual exercise than a glee at a concert? Music has charms and he who cannot feel them is to be pitied.

But, acceptable heart worship is quite another thingno arrangement of notes and chords can ever do the work of God the Holy Spirit. Unless music can aid in making sinners penitentin leading souls to Jesus Christ, or uplifting saints in holy joy to the Throne of Godwe must hold that in vital godliness, it profits nothing. Architecture, with its arched roofs and noble pillars and dim religious light is supposed to impart a reverence and awe which befit the solemn engagements of Sunday and draw the mind towards the invisible God. Well, if combinations of stone can sanctify the spirit of man, it is a pity that the Gospel did not prescribe architecture as the remedy for the ruin of the Fall! If gorgeous buildings make men love God and long-drawn aisles renovate mens spiritual nature, build, all you builders, both day and night!

If bricks and mortar can lead us to Heaven, alas, for the confusion which stopped the works at Babel! If there is such a connection between spires and spiritual things as to make human hearts beat in unison with the will of God, then build high and loftily and lavish your gold and silver! But if all that you produce is sensuous and nothing more, then turn to living stones and seek to build up a spiritual house with spiritual means!

We are told, nowadays, that the pompous array of ministering priests, the beauty of symbolism, the painting of windows, the smoke of incense and so on, tend to draw people into the place of worship and that when there, they aid in elevating their minds. What does Scripture say about it all? This thing was tried among the Jews and Christs remark when He comes to sum up the long trial is, It is the spirit that quickens. The flesh profits nothing. The real inward spirit of man is not blessed by sounds which charm the ear but appeal not to the understanding. Nor by colors which delight the eye but gladden not the affections of man!

To gratify taste is well enough for the carnal, but it profits nothing in the sight of God. It may be as well to be artistic as to be plain, but it is of no matter either way if tested by the Wordin the balances of the sanctuary these matters are lighter than vanity. We must make precisely the same remark concerning eloquence. Here we deal more closely with our own Brethren, who, in this thing look to the flesh as others do. Many persons have come to think that oratorical ability is essential in the minister.

It is not enough, some think, to preach the Truth with the Holy Spirit sent down from Heavenwe must also preach it in the wisdom of words with excellency of speech! The trappings of oratory and the drapery of eloquence are thought to be profitable. Ah, dear Friends, one half of the emotions excited in our places of worship are of no more value than those excited at the theater. The mere ring of words is no more than a sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. The flesh profits nothing.

So far as the Truth of God itself moves our inmost souls, preaching is of real service. But if that which you hear only commends itself to you because of the sweet voice that speaks itor the telling tones in which it is deliveredyour hearing is a carnal exercise and profits you nothing! It is only when your spirit grasp the truths. When your heart embraces Christ. When your soul beholds God by the eye of faith that you derive benefit! We may bring this principle to bear on the revivals over which we have watched with much hope but with more anxiety. In many revivals there has been too much aim at getting up an excitementa carnal enthusiasm.

Excited persons pray one after the other. Excited persons speak and the stamp and motion of the hand and the tear trickling from the eyeall these are supposed to be of great service. I grant you that excitement may sometimes be used by God to stir the spirit of man, but unless, my dear Hearers, your religion is based on something more than animal excitement, it is based upon a lie! Your spirit must come to know its ruin before God, and be humbled. Your spirit must come to take hold of Jesus Christ and believe in Him. Your spirit must undergo the Divine change which only God the Holy Spirit can workor else that excitement shall be nothing more than the blowing up of a bubble which shall burst and leave not

a trace behind.

Take care of any religion which merely tickles your fancy, excites your passions, or stirs your blood! True Grace penetrates the very core of our nature. It changes the heart, subdues the will, renews the passions and makes us new creatures in Christ Jesus! To come yet closer to ourselves, in the matter of prayer and the ordinances of Gods House, I am afraid we too often forget this great rulethat it is the spirit that quickens and that the flesh profits nothing. We pray, I suppose, as a matter of habitevery morning and evening. But how often we spend our few minutes and we rise from our knees satisfied.

And if anybody should ask, Have you been praying? We would say, Yes, but it has been the flesh prayer, the dead form without the life of the heart. In reality there has been no prayer at all! It has been the flesh, which profits nothing. It is only that prayer in which the spirit talks with God that is real prayer! The carnal man is quite satisfied if he can get through a certain string of expressions, but the spiritual man is not content with this. Luther used to complain very much of distractions in prayer and some said they could not understand it. No, Luther might have said, I dare say you cannot, for, being unspiritual, you do not understand spiritual difficulties.

Bernard complained much of the wandering of his thoughts in prayer and when someone said he thought Bernard must be a very great sinner to let his thoughts wander so, Bernard said, I will give you a trial. I will give you a horse if you can say the Lords Prayer and think of nothing else. So the man began, Our Father which are in Heaven, when he stopped short and turning round, said, But you must give me the bridle to get him home with. So hard is it to keep the mind upon the object of devotion!

While the sinners words are going up to God he thinks that he is praying, but he has not prayed at all unless his heart has talked with God. Why, Brethren, some of the best prayers that have ever been prayed had not a single word to express them with. They were heart prayers and went up to Heaven in all their naked unclothed glory, like disembodied spirits and God accepted them. Many a prayer that has had the choicest words to garnish it has been nothing but a dead prayer wrapped up in cerements and only fit to be cast into the grave forever.

So with public worship. You would feel unhappy if you had spent the whole Sunday without going to a place of worshipbut you are quite at ease if you come here and leave your hearts at home. When we are singing, you sing with us. And when we are praying, you cover your eyes, too. And when we are preaching, some of you think of what I am talking about and some do not. But when you get through the appointed hour, you feel quite easybut oh, remember that the mere carnal act of being here profits nothing.

Oh, dear Friends, shake off the idea that going up to a place of worship, or opening a Bible, or reading family prayer, or kneeling down, can, as mere acts, save your souls! I do not speak against them as to their profit in some respects, but as to salvation and the real vital work, which is acceptable before God, the mere form profits nothing! It is only as your spirit prays, as your spirit seeks, as your spirit worships, as your spirit listens to Gods Word, that there is any quickening power in it whatever!

Once more. There are certain persons who take considerable delight in having seen, as they think, visions and other manifestations of Christ with their eyesand having heard certain texts mysteriously spoken in their ears. Now I am not going to deny that you may have seen these visions and heard these sounds. I do not think you did, but whether you did or not is no matterthey profit you nothing. That which merely comes to this eye is nothingit must come to the souls eye of faith. That which comes to this ear is nothing unless it gets into the hearts earunless your soul hears it.

If I were to see all the devils in Hell I should not think myself damned because of that. And if you have seen all the angels in Heaven you must not think you are saved because of that! It is not what a man sees with his eyes, or hears with his earsit is what the spirit receives which saves the soul. God is a Spirit and they that worship Him must worship him in

spirit and in truth, for the Father seeks such to worship Him.

II. The text mentions the QUICKENING SPIRIT. That which puts life into our religion is its being received and acted out by a spiritual nature. For, first of all, it is the spiritual nature which quickens the man. The man who has not received, by the work of God, the Holy Spirit, a spiritual nature, is described by Paul as being dead in trespasses and sins. The Spirit finds men carnal and breathes into them a new and better nature, and then they become what they never were before, quickened, spiritual men.

This spirit of theirs is a quickening spirit, for it quickens all the ordinances. A carnal man is baptizedbut it is the fleshly Baptism which profits nothing. A spiritual man comes to Baptism, and he is baptized and he quickens the Baptismit becomes a real living Baptism to him, for he has fellowship with Jesus Christ in it. A carnal man comes to the Lords Supper and he eats and drinks, what? Damnation unto himself, not discerning the Lords body. A spiritual man comes there and he eats and drinks and what, then? Why it becomes a living ordinance to himthe bread sets forth to him the body of Christ and the wine sets forth the bloodand in spirit he feeds upon his incarnate Savior.

The possession of a spiritual nature and the exercise of that spiritual nature in the ordinances quickens them. So it is with prayer. The mere act of speaking one form of words is of no more profit than the repeating of any other. The Lords Prayer, said backwards, is quite as acceptable to God as the Lords Prayer said forwards unless the spirit enters into it. You might as well repeat the multiplication table as repeat the collect of the day as far as God is concerned, unless your spirit prays.

But when the spirit is engaged in repentance, in faith, in joy, in love then the prayer is quickened. So with all the actions of mans life. If I give bread to the hungry, if I visit the sick, if I subscribe towards a good objectthat is all nothing unless my heart is in the deed. But if I feed the poor because I love Jesus. If I seek to glorify God in my deeds of charity and holiness, they become living actions. Apart from all that they profit nothing to me before God. The spiritual part of my nature must quicken my whole life and make it real life, or else it will be a dead carnal existence before the Lord.

The spiritual nature has for its Author the Divine Father. The sixty-fifth verse of the chapter in which our text is found tells us that no man can come unto Christ except it is given him of the Father. To be spiritual is a gift of God the Father. He has begotten us again into a lively hope by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. The new life is the actual operation of the Holy Spiritno man becomes spiritual except the Holy Spirit enters into him. Deity comes into contact with humanity and quickens the spiritual man. The mark by which this spirituality is discovered is faith. Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God.

Every man who rests upon Christ for salvation has the proof of his being spiritual. Modes of speech, or dress, or worship are not the marks of the spiritualonly simple, spiritual faith in the Lord Jesus is. True religion has always been spiritual, but mere professors have ever been content with the outward form alone. Among the Jews, when symbols were abundant, the mass either stuck fast in the types and could get no farther, or else they went clean away to idolatry. In these latter times the Lord has taken away almost all that is ceremonial in our religion. Two simple forms, alone, remain.

And now there is another grand trial to see whether men can live in a spiritual religion and that trial has come to prove just thisthat none can do so but those who are born of God. The most of mankind cannot get on with a religion in which there is nothing to see, nothing to please the ear, or to gratify their taste. It is only the spiritual man who is so overwhelmed with the glories of God that he does not need the glories of man! He is so overcome with the splendor of Christ that he does not want the splendor of the masses! He is so taken up with the magnificence of the great High Priest that he does not care for gorgeously appareled priests!

Blessed is that man who sees, though his eyes are blind! Who hears, though his ears are deaf! Who tastes, though his appetite fails! Who lives, though his heart and flesh failblessed is he who sees Him who is invisible and has revealed unto him what eye has not seen and what ear has not heard! This will not suit many of you. A religion of thinking and believing is too hard for you. Repenting, believing, trustingthese things men will not do. They will kneel down any quantity of times! They will even, if told by a priest, lick the floor with their tonguesor they will walk with peas in their shoes, or whip their backsbut when it comes to believing, hoping, trusting, fearing and so on, men are so little inclined to mental operations, especially under the dictation of a higher authority, that they will not have anything to do with them.

What? they say, a religion in which there is nothing for me to see! What? An unseen altar? Yes, an unseen altar. Am I not to see the sacrifice? No. Never to see it? Then I do not understand it. What? A God, but no symbols! No crucifixes! No crosses! What? No holy wafer, no sacred place, nothing sacred? No, nothing visible to be reverenced, nothing whatever but the unseen God. What? Not even my place of worship, is not that to be holy? No, if you are a Christian, all places must alike be sacred to you. Neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem shall men worship the Father, but those that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.

You must be yourself a temple and God must dwell in you! You must be yourself a priest and everywhere you must offer spiritual sacrifice. The spirit quickens, but the flesh profits nothing.

III. The Savior tells us in the closing sentence THAT HIS WORDS ARE SPIRIT AND LIFE. Beloved, never was there a more true sentence spoken! Listen to other teachers and you get precepts concerning washing, eating, bowing, etc., which are fleshly. But hear Jesus and His wordsthey all aim at the heart. Listen to the Puseyite and hear his wordYou should take care to attend Matins and early celebrations in our holy and beautiful Church! You should decorate the altar, get a surpliced choir, have processions and put on the holy garments.

Now you see at once that these are not spiritual thingsthese are not life. Ritual performances are very pretty spectacles for silly young ladies and sillier men to gaze uponbut there is no shadow of spirit or life in them. The High Church ritual does not look like a Divine thingon the contraryif I stand among the throng and gaze at all its prettiness, it looks amazingly like a nursery game, or a stage play!

Lack of taste, you say. Not so, I reply. My eyes admire your glittering colors and the splendor of your services is taking to me, as a man. I enjoy the swell of your organ and I can even put up with the smell of your incense (if you buy it good), but my spirit does not care for these fooleries it turns away sickened and cries, There is nothing here for me. There is

no more nourishment for the spirit in all this than there is food for man in a swines trough! The words of Jesus Christ are throughout unceremonial and unformalthey are spirit and they are lifeand we turn to them with all the greater zeal after having seen enough of your childish things!

On my Lords words I fix my hope in the battle now waging with ceremonialism and I wish that all ministers of Christ would scorn to use any other weapons. I know the talk is that we ought to vie with the false churches in the beauty of our servicesbut this is a temptation of the devil! If the simple preaching of the Cross will not attract the people, let them go away. Let the Lords servants renounce the sword and shield of Saul and go forth with the Gospel sling and stone! Our weapons are the Words of Jesusthese are spirit and these are life. Architecture, apparel, music, liturgiesthese are neither spirit nor life. Let those rest on them who willwe can do without them, by Gods help. Our sires, in the Puritan age, fought and won the battles of Christ without these things. In later days Whitfield stirred his age with nothing but the Word of God. Rowlands and Christmas Evans roused the men of Wales with no attraction but the Cross.

My dear Brethren in Christ, ministers of the Gospel who are now presentlet me beseech youstand to the Gospel! Set your backs against the tendency of the times to depart from the simplicity of Jesus Christ! If men will not come to hear us because we preach the Gospel, draw them by no other attraction! I rejoice in the vast crowd so constantly assembled here because my enemies, themselves, are witnesses that there is nothing in me to which the honor can be ascribed! An uplifted Savior still draws all men to Him!

Dear Friends, pray that the great and blessed Spirit, who first gives spiritual life, may continue to feed and nourish and perfect that life in you until you shall come to that Heaven where ALL is spiritual! Where they need no candles, nor light of the sun. Where no temple is found, because the Lord God and the Lamb are the temple! Where spiritual life shall be developed into its purest form! Where, in spiritual bodies, you shall see the spiritual God and reign before His Throne, world without end. Amen.

*PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMONJohn 6:26.* Adapted from The C.H. Spurgeon Collection, Version 1.0, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307 Sermon #2898 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

THE SEARCH WARRANT   
NO. 2898

A SERMON   
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, AUGUST 25, 1904.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON A LORDS-DAY EVENING, DURING THE WINTER OF 1861-2.

**But there are some of you that believe not.   
John 6:64.**

ARE there really? Yes. He that searches the hearts says so. Then it is high time for us to enquire, What is it to believe in Christ? What is it to believe to the saving of the soul? It is not merely to consider the Gospel to be true. It is not simply to endorse the Doctrine that Christ is God. Those who hold a sound creed may be destitute of precious faith and those who are able to defend the Divinity of Christ with admirable scholarship may, nevertheless, be without God in the world. To believe in Christ includes much more than a religious profession. It is so to believe the Gospel as to forsake all other beliefs for the possession of its blessed hope! It is to imbibe the spirit of the Word of God while you accept the letter of its pure teaching! Or, in other words, it is to come to Jesus and to prove, in your own souls, His power to save.

Just as the faith of Abraham led him to leave his kindred and his fathers house under the guardian care of Jehovah, so saving faith leads a man to leave his self-sufficiency with all the carnal pursuits and ambitions that encircled, like a farmstead, his natural and primitive home and to go forth, led by Jesus Christ, not knowing where he goes. Just as faith led the harlot Rahab to anticipate the doom of Jerichoto hang the scarlet line in her window and then to rest securely in her house though the town walls upon which it was built, were shakingso, by faith, the sinner comes to the blood of sprinkling, hangs the promise of Redemption in the window of his soul and though he feels himself to be, naturally, no better than others, yet he rests secure because that scarlet line is there and he is safe! Or, to use another figure, just as the Hebrew householder slew the lamb, dipped the bunch of hyssop in its blood, sprinkled it upon the lintel and the two side posts of his house and then calmly ate the Passover supper, though he knew that the destroying angel was flying through the land of Egypt and though, perhaps, he could even hear the shrieks of the dying and the wailing of the bereavedyet he remained quietly in his house knowing that though he might be the guiltiest of men, the blood secured his safety according to the promise of God!

To believe in Jesus, then, is to trust our souls salvation to what Jesus has done for us, to prove what He is doing in us and to rely entirely upon His promise to save us even to the end. It is to drop from the giddy elevation where we stand on the rotten timbers of self-righteousness and to fall into the Omnipotent arms of Him who stands ready to receive us. It is to tear off the rags of our own spinning that we may be clothed with the righteousness which is from Heaven. Faith is the reverse of sight! It is to believe that we are saved when sin tells us that we are lost. It is to believe that Christ has cleansed us when we still feel defilement within. It is to believe that we shall see His face in Glory when clouds and darkness enshroud our path and doubts and fears distress our heart. This is the faith which saves the soul!

We are not saved by faith, itself, as a meritorious work. There is no merit in believing in God and even if there were, it could not save us, since salvation by merit has been once and for all solemnly excluded. Nor does faith save us as an efficient cause. Faith is the channel of salvation, not the fountain and source of it. Hence faith, though it saves, never boasts. He that boasts has not faith and he that has faith can say, God forbid that I should glory save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. When the poor man who was bitten by the fiery serpent looked to the bronze serpent upon the pole, it was his eyes that saved himyet it was not the merit of looking, nor was it his eyes that were the efficient cause of his cureall the glory of it was to be given to God who had ordained that the bronze serpent would be the means of healing to all who looked to it. So, faith is the eye with which we look to Christ, yet it has neither merit nor efficacy in itselfall the merit and efficacy lie in the precious blood of Him to whom we look.

Again, faith is an empty hand. Yes, it is the filthy hand of the leprous sinner and Christ puts His mercy into that black hand. Is there any merit in the hand? God forbid! Is there any efficiency to save in the hand? Oh, no, my Brothers and Sistersthe hand which gives must have the glory, not the hand which takes! He who bestows the blessing must have the honor of it, not the faith by which we receive the blessing from Him. Now, having thus spoken upon what faith is, and having tried to show you its peculiar position in the work of salvation, I am solemnly reminded, by our text, that there are some of you that believe not. The context shows that these words were spoken by Christ to His disciples. They were gathered around Him and He was addressing them. Some of them had murmured because what He said to them was too hard for them to receive and the Lord Jesus, being able to read their hearts, could say to them, There are some of you that believe not. And the Inspired Evangelist adds, For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were who would not believe, and who would betray Him.

I am going to speak first about those whose unbelief is secret. And secondly, about those who are known to us to be unbelievers.  
I. First, THERE ARE SOME WHOSE UNBELIEF IS SECRETit is known only to Christ.

If you had looked upon those disciples of Christ, you would have judged that they had received the gift of eternal life. You would have said, God forbid that I should condemn any of those men who have come out from an ungodly generation and have professed to be followers of the Prophet of Nazareth! Although it would be wrong for us to judge our fellow creatures, Jesus judged His disciples and judged them rightly, for He can penetrate even to the heart. He can discern the secret thoughts, intents and motives of all men. And the day is coming when He will finally judge the whole race of mankind. His eyes even now pierce through the hypocrites disguise, but His hands shall tear it away when He shall say to those who cry to Him, Lord! Lord!Verily I say unto you, I never knew you; depart from Me, you workers of iniquity. We know not the hollowness of their pretense, but Christ knows all about it. And if the Holy Spirit shall help us, we may be enabled to show it to them. Oh, that it may be so, even now, that they may stand with their souls revealed, and their consciences convictedand that they may now seek faithseeing that they have it not!

What reason for alarm and for heart-searching there is here, for it is to be feared that even in the ministry there are some who have not faith! Yes, Brothers, there have been in all ages men who have worn the robes of Gods ambassadors, but who have not been at peace with Him. It is a solemn and dreadful fact that there have been men who have broken the bread at the Lords Table and who have been leaders in Gods Israel, yet who, notwithstanding that, have had neither part nor lot in the matter! Brothers in the ministry and young men who occasionally go out to preach the Word and who are hoping, by-and-by, to have a settled pastorate, let us ask ourselves this questionIs it not possible that we, although preachers of the Word, may yet be without faith? Are we seeking to teach others what we have not ourselves learned? Are we only like scaffolds, used in the building of Christs Church, yet not part of the spiritual structure, or like Noahs laborers who helped to build the ark, yet were drowned by the great deluge? Are we like Elijahs ravens which brought him bread and meat from Ahabs table, yet remained unclean birds of evil omen? Let us seriously question ourselves, for God has sometimes done good works by bad menyet this has not saved the meneven as it was with Judas who worked miracles as the other Apostles did, preached as they did, yet who, nevertheless, was a son of perdition who went to his own place among the lost!

Further, is it not possible that there are some in the other offices of the church who have not faith? Men and Brothers, let me speak to you who are the fathers in Israel. Though but young, myself, yet, as Gods servant delivering His message, I speak to you with authority. Is it not possible that you may serve tables, as deacons of the Church, and yet that you may be an intruder at Christs Table? You may be an elder and an overseer of others and yet have to say, They made me the keeper of the vineyards, but my own vineyard I have not kept. It is solemn work to be made a watcher over the souls of men! But what must be our position if, after watching over others, our own soul should still be in the gall of bitterness and the bonds of iniquity? I speak as unto wise men; judge you what I sayoffice-bearing and the choice of the Church cannot guarantee your salvation!

And as this is true of some ministers and of some Church officers, it may be true of others who are engaged in various works of piety. I thank God that we have here many Sabbath school teachers, tract distributors, street preachersin fact, I hope that there are very few persons in this Church who are not regularly engaged in doing good in one way or other. If there are among them any who do not believe, I am happy to say that I do not know them. Yet is it possible, dear Friend, that you are teaching a Sunday school class although you need to become as a little child before you can enter the Kingdom of Heaven? May you not be distributing messages of mercy to others, in the streets, or from door to door and yet be, yourself, in need of that mercy? If that is your sad case, you are like a man with a leprous hand dealing out medicine to the sick! Take care, Christian workers, that in this day of activity, when there is so much to do, you do not neglect the personal act of faith which unites your soul to Christ. See to this vital and all-important matter. Make the outside of the cup and platter clean, as far as you can, but see that the inside is not full of hypocrisy. However active you are in the Lords service, I pray that your exclusive self-examination may be as earnest as your expansive zeal! May you be as much concerned to be saved as to proclaim salvation to others!

Now I speak to the Church members in general. I thank God that He is adding to this Church every day. Sometimes I hear a whisper from one side that those of us whose business it is to examine candidates for Church fellowship are too severe in our judgment of them. And, on the other side, there are some who say that we are not searching enough! Brothers and Sisters, it is enough for me and my fellow laborers in Christ, when we can say with singleness of spiritand not with eye-service, as men-pleasersWe have sought to serve God in this matter. I do verily believe that for the most part, what we have bound on earth has been bound in Heavenand what we have loosed on earth has been loosed in Heaven. At any rate, if we have erred in any case it has been neither by favor nor by prejudice, but we have sought, after lifting up our hearts to Heaven, to give a righteous judgment in every instance. Yet, with all the care that may be exercised, there is not, beneath Heaven, a single church that is perfect!

Some of you are members of this Church and some are members of other churches, yet it is almost certain that there are some of you who believe not. I do not profess to be able to separate the tares from the wheat, but Jesus can do itHe knows those among you who have no faith! You may talk about faith and yet not really have it yourselves. You may have a great gift in prayer and yet not have faith. You may be an acceptable preacher and yet not have faith. You may walk uprightly before your fellow men and yet not have faith. You may be a generous subscriber to every holy work and yet not have faith. How nearly a man may be a Christian and yet be lost! The counterfeit may be made to look so like the genuine that men may look at it again, and again, and again and yet may pronounce the real to be counterfeit and the false to be genuine! The Lord grant that if there are, in this congregation, any who have a name to live and yet are dead, they may be awakened to a sense of their true condition before God before it is too lateand that Christ may give them life!

Brothers and Sisters, I do not know that at the present moment if I have any doubt of my own personal interest in Christ. Yet I do know that it is a very solemn thing to be so sure and that it is a damnable thing to be presumptuous concerning such a matter. There will be times, with all of us, when it will do us good to sit down and seriously ask, Are these things so, or are they not? Let us dig down to the very foundations of our faith and see what it is upon which we are building for eternity! There will be times when all our past experience will be blown to shreds, like the sail of the mariner in a great gale. There will be times when our strongest evidence will snap like a mast broken by the fury of the storm. There will be times when all our comforts and joys will go like hencoops washed overboard from a laboring ship. Oh, what a blessed thing it is, at such a time as that, to cast our great bower anchor into the sea and to calmly sing

*In every high and stormy gale   
My Anchor holds within the veil.*

When anyone can say   
*His oath, His covenant and His blood,   
Support me in the sinking flood*

he may feel that he is everlastingly secure and that Jesus is, indeed, his Savior! May the Holy Spirit enable you to judgefor we cannotwhether you have this saving faith or not!

II. Now, in the second place, I am to speak about THOSE WHO ARE KNOWN TO US AS UNBELIEVERS.   
First, there is a very pleasing class of persons here who say, We have no faith, but we are very anxious to have it. I bless God for you, dear Friends, and I wish that we had thousands like you! You feel your need of Christ, you long to be saved, you hate sin, you hate selfrighteousnessyet you have no faith. There are certain questions that each of you often puts to us. First, May I believe in Christ? I answer Of course you may, because Christ bids you do so and what He bids you do, you may do. But am I fit to believe in Him? No fitness is required. But am I the person who may believe in Jesus? There is no special person indicated, for the Gospel runs on this wise and it is to be preached to every creature under Heaven, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved. As to the question whether you may believe in Jesus, whoever you are, I sayYes, certainlycome and welcome, for Christ has said, Whoever will, let him take the water of life freely. Your next question probably is, Can I believe ? I do not know, but I should think that you can. I will put a few questions to youCan you believe that Christ is God? Yes. Can you believe anything that God says? Yes. You can believe, then, for Christ said it and Christ is Godthat He came to seek and to save that which is lost, and you know that you are lost. God says, through His servant, the Apostle Paul, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. And you know that you are a sinner, therefore He came into the world to save you! Surely you can believe that! I know many persons who say that they cannot believe, when in truth they can, yet they do not know that they can! How is it, then, that there are still so many who believe not?   
The chief reason is because they will not believethey are too proud they love their own righteousness too much, they think themselves too wise to submit to the righteousness of Christ. But you ask, Can I believe in Jesus? I say ratherCan you? I ask you the question! You who are as evil as Hellcan you believe that Christ can save you? Yes, Sir, you say, I can believe that. Can you believe that He is willing to save you good and gracious Christ that He ishanging on the Cross and bidding you trust Him? Oh, Sir! you say, I cannot help believing that. Well, then, you have proved that you can believe, for you have done it already! I used to think that believing in Christ was some mysterious thing and I could not make out what it wasbut when I heard that it was just this Look unto Me, and be you saved, I found that the only reason why it was so hard was that it was so easy! If it had been a more difficult matter, then my proud spirit would have tried to accomplish it! But being so easy, my proud spirit would not do it.   
You remember why Naaman could not wash in the Jordan as the Prophet bade him? It was because he would nothis proud spirit would not let him. I thought, he saidthat was where the mischief lay, for what right had he to think? I thought he will surely come out to me and stand, and call on the name of the Lord, his God, and strike his hand over the place and recover the leper. Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? May I not wash in them and be clean? That is why he could not wash in the Jordan, because he would not, but persisted in asking questions, needing to be wiser than God.   
O tried Heart, you may believe and I think I may say that you can believe! God is trueyou know thatand it cannot be hard to believe when you know that. Christ is able to saveyou know He isso it cannot be difficult to believe in Him. Christ is willing to saveyou know He is then is it hard for you to believe in Him? So I say that you can believe. May God bless you and make you willing to believe, for, if He makes you willing, He will be sure to show you that you are able to believe!   
The next class without faith is not one over which we can rejoice so much as over those who are anxious to have faithI mean the despairing ones. There are some souls that feel their sin to be very heavy. They have the Gospel faithfully preached to them, but they are so proud that they will have it that Christ is not willing to save them, so they will not go to Him. There is such a thing as proud humilitywhen a person feels a sort of self-conception of being base. No, he says, I cannot take the medicine. I am too sick. Now that man is as much a suicide, spiritually, as though he took poison, or stabbed himself to death! God says that He is able to save you, but you say that He is not. You are lying in the very teeth of His promise and charging Him to be a liar! The Apostle Paul, writing under the Inspiration of the Holy Spirit, says that Christ is able to save unto the uttermost all that come unto God by Himyet you, in effect, say, No, He is not. Why, you are imitating Satansetting up your wisdom in the place of Godsinstead of accepting Gods Word as true!   
I know that when I first heard that Christ could save such a sinner as I was, I thought the news was too good to be true, but the Holy Spirit led me to trust in Him and then I proved that it was true. If you are a poor miserable beggar and some good man here should say to you, Come home with me and I will give you a good situation. No, more, I will take you into my home and you shall be my son and heir. You would say, Well, I can hardly believe it, but I will go and see if it is true. I hope you will say to God, who has promised you far more than that, Lord, I am as evil a sinner as there is out of Hell, but if You will, You can make me clean. Lord, do it! I give myself to You. And if, poor despairing Soul, you can say, It is God with whom I have to deal and He can do anything. It is a dying Savior with whom I have to deal and He must be willing to forgive. It is the risen Redeemer of whom I have to thinkHe can speak peace to my soul and He will do it! If you can thus trust yourself with Him, you will honor God and you will be saved!   
But there is still a larger class in perhaps greater danger. I mean, the careless and thoughtless. How many of you have come in here out of a curiosity which may never bring you here again? For you, death is a dream, Heaven a fiction and Hell a bugbear. You know that the Word of God is true, yet you never trouble yourself about its warnings and threats. You say, Let us eat and drink, and enjoy ourselves, but as for your immortal soul, you have left that to take care of itself as the ostrich leaves its eggs in the wilderness. Permit me, for a minute or two, to show you that I care for your soul even if you do not care for it yourself. You who are indifferent to your spiritual welfare, remember that you belong to the most hopeless class under Heaven! The profane are frequently converted, but the indifferent not so often. I have noticed that those who get into the habit of going first to one place of worship, and then to another, are very rarely savedyet that is not because they oppose the Truth of God. No, if they would do that, there might be some hope concerning them! When you are at home, take up a flint and an India rubber ball of the same size. Then take a hammer and strike both of them with it. Every time you smite the ball, you make an impression upon it, but it quickly returns to its original shape. When you hit the flint with the hammer, you may produce no impression for a time, but, by-and-by, after one of your blows, it is shivered to atoms. Many of you are like that India rubber ball. Under the preaching of the Gospel, you are interested, moved, affectedbut the impression is never very deep and you soon return to your original formyou are shallow with regard to heavenly things. We cannot get at your conscience, we cannot reach your heart would God that we could!

I pray you to remember, however, that there is a time coming when Death will preach far more effectually to you than I can! I recollect a narrative of a young woman, a fair and lovely lady, whose mother was very proud of her. She had introduced her into all the fashionable circles of the city. Her dresses were always becoming, but also expensive and even extravagant. She lived only to go to one party and another, and to one amusement and another. Her mother had not observedfor mothers do not like to notice such thingsthat there had been a great paleness on her daughters cheeks. A rapid decline set in and, at last, to the mothers terror and the daughters dismay, the doctor thought it his duty to say that it was impossible that she could live many weeks. Neither mother nor daughter had ever cared for ministers. Religion would have stood in the way of their chosen pursuits, so they avoided itbut now the minister was sent for. He was an earnest, faithful servant of Christ, so, instead of striving to bolster her up with false hopes, he began to talk of death, judgment, eternity and the wrath of God. The young woman deeply felt the force and the truth of his wordsand said to her mother, I cannot think what you have been doing with me. You have led me to believe that these fine dresses and those parties and amusements were all I had to live for! Why did you not tell me I must die? Why did you not bid me prepare for eternity? O my Mother, would that you had told me that I must soon leave this world and enter the eternal state! She begged them to bring out her last fineries and she said, Mother, I feel it is too late now, for I shall die, but hang those things up and look at them, and never bring up another child as you have brought me up! And as for yourself, I charge you to think how soon you, too, must die.   
So I say to all careless ones hereThink of the grave to which you must go sooner or later. Think of your last hours and of the only true preparation for them. While it is true of you now that you have no faith, may it not be true very longbut may you even now seek and find faith in the Lord Jesus Christ! For, remember that not to believe in Christ is to be already exposed to the wrath of God! Not to believe in Christ is to be without salvation and already under condemnation! There are many who do not know what it is to have a present salvation, but I bless God that there are also many who do know what a present salvation is! Do you know what it is? Not long ago I was asked this question, Is it possible for a man to be saved now?Possible? Possible? If it is not possible for him to be saved now, it is not possible for him to he saved at all! But the Apostle Paul assures us that now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation. And no man should give sleep to his eyes, nor slumber to his eyelids until he feels and knows that this present salvation is really his!   
Oh, what peace it gives to know that you are now forgiven, now blessed, now saved! Oh, how sweet it is to be able to say that God is my Father, that I am His child and that He will keep me in perfect safety and bring me to be forever where He is! Oh, the delights of this present salvation! It is better than a kings throneit is better than a princes riches. Present salvationit is Heaven on earth! It is the antepast of the peace of immortality! Heaven on earth can only be known by those who are saved and who know that they are saved. May that be your case and mine, Beloved! Christs own words are, He that believes and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believes not shall be damned. May God bless us all with the true belief which is eternal life to all who possess it, for Jesus sake! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **LUKE 12:1-32.**

The teaching of our Lord in this chapter has very much to do with Christianity in connection with this present life, its cares and troubles. God has nowhere promised us exemption from affliction and trial. Indeed, it has been said, with much truth, that the Old Testament promise was one of prosperity, but that the New Testament promise is one of tribulation. You may rest assured that if it had been best for us to be taken directly to Heaven when we were converted, the Lord would have done it! But as He has not done so, there are wise reasons why He keeps His people here for a while. The gold must go through the fire before it has its place in the kings crownand the wheat must be exposed to the winnowing fan before it can be taken into the heavenly garner.

Verse 1. In the meantime, when there were gathered together an innumerable multitude of people, insomuch that they trampled one another, He began to say unto His disciples first of all, Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. Hypocrisy, however, of a kind that was calculated to spread like leaven. If you know that a man is a hypocrite, you do not feel inclined to imitate him. But the Pharisees were such wellmade hypocritessuch excellent counterfeitsthat many people were tempted to imitate them! Our Lord teaches us, however, that it is no use being a hypocrite.

2. For there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known. For many a day, the hypocrites true character may not be discovered but there is a day coming that will reveal all secretsand woe unto the man whose sin is laid bare in that day!

3. Therefore whatever you have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the light; and that which you have spoken in the ear in closets shall be proclaimed upon the housetops. It would be well if we all lived in such a fashion that we would not be ashamed to have everything we did placarded in the sky. I have heard of one who said that he would like to have a window in his heart so that everybody might see what was going on. I think that if I had such a window in my heart, I would like to have shuttersand I question whether any man would really wish to have his heart open to the gaze of all mankind! But at least let our lives be such that we should not be ashamed for the Universal Eye to be fixed upon them. If you are ashamed to have any one of your actions known, be ashamed to do it! If you would be ashamed to hear again what you were about to say, do not say it! Check your tongue. Be cautious and careful. Live always as one who realizes Gods Omniscience. While one of the ancient orators was speaking on one occasion, all his hearers went away with the exception of Platobut he continued to speak as eloquently as ever, for he said that Plato was a sufficient audience for any man. So, if there are none but the eyes of God looking upon you, be just as careful as if you were in the street surrounded by your fellow creatures. No, be more careful because you are in the Presence of your Creator!

4, 5. And I say unto you My Friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom you shall fear: Fear Him who after He has killed has power to cast into Hell; yes, I say unto you, Fear Him. And how wise and brave we shall be if we fear God! It is well put in that Psalm which we sometimes sing

*Fear Him, you saints, and you will then*

*Have nothing else to fear.*   
This great filial fear will chase out all the little, mean, cowardly fears, for he who, in the Scriptural sense, fears God, can never be a coward in dealing with men.

6, 7. Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God? But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: you are of more value than many sparrows. God does not forget the sparrows, but He regards you with far greater interest and care, for He counts the very hairs of your head. He not only knows that there is such a person, but He knows the minutest details of your life and being. It is always a great comfort to remember that our Heavenly Father knows us. A dying man who had been for many years a Believer had a minister at his bedside who asked him, Dont you know Jesus? Yes, Sir, he replied, I do, but the ground of my comfort is that He knows me. And surely there is a great force in that Truth of God! Your Heavenly Father knows you so completely that He has counted the hairs of your head! Fear not therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows.

8, 9. Also I say unto you, Whoever shall confess Me before men, him shall the Son of Man also confess before the angels of God: but he that denies Me before men shall be denied before the angels of God. What courage this ought to give us! In company where the very name of Christ is kicked about like a footballwhere everything is respected except true religionit is not always an easy thing to come forward and say, I, also, am His disciple. But if you will do this, you have Christs pledge that He will acknowledge you before the angels of God. If you do not do so, but practically deny Him by a shameful silence, you may reasonably expect that He, also, will deny you before the angels.

10. And whoever shall speak a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him: but unto him that blasphemes against the Holy Spirit it shall not be forgiven. This is one of the very difficult texts of Holy Scripture. We are told, in 1 John 5:16 that there is a sin unto death, and I would have you very cautious of ever daring to trifle with the Spirit of God since sin against Him is guarded with such special warnings! The flaming sword of Divine Vengeance seems to hang before the very name of the Holy Spirit, so, whatever you do, never trample upon His royal dignity, or blaspheme Him in heart or by lips.

11. And when they bring you unto the synagogues, and unto magistrates, and powers. That is to say, the persecutorswhen they bring you there, to be tried for your lives, as many have been in past ages and some still are.

11, 12. Take you no thought how or what thing you shall answer, or what you shall say: for the Holy Spirit shall teach you in the same hour what you ought to say. I have often been amazed and delighted with the remarkable answers which were given to bishops and priests by poor humble men and women who were on trial for their lives. Perhaps you remember that Anne Askew was asked, in order to entangle her in her speech, What would become of a mouse if it ate the bread of the holy sacrament? She said that was too deep a question for a poor woman like her to answer and she begged the learned bishop on the bench to tell her what would become of the mouseto which his lordship answered that it would be damned! Now, what reply could be given to that but the one Anne Askew gave, Alack, poor mouse!? I do not know that anything better could have been said! And on other occasions there have been answers which have been deeply theological. And there have been some which have been wisely evasive and also some full of weight. And others full of Grace and the Truth of God, for the Holy Spirit has helped His saints, in time of persecution, to answer well those who have accused them.

13-17. And one of the company said unto Him, Master, speak to my brother, that he divides the inheritance with me. And He said unto him, Man, who made Me a judge or a divider over you? And He said unto them, Take heed, beware of covetousness: for a mans life consists not in the abundance of things which he possesses. And He spoke a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: and he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? There were empty cupboards in the houses of the poor and there were hungry children to be fedso this man need not have lacked room where he could bestow his fruits!

18-20. And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, you have much goods laid up for many years; take your ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, You fool! Which was the last thing he thoughthe imagined that he was a very wise man! But God said unto him, You fool!

20, 21. This night your soul shall be required of you: then whose shall those things be, which you have provided? So is he that lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God. Here our Savior shows us the frail nature of the tenure upon which we hold all earthly goods and how it is not worthwhile to make these the chief things of our life, for, while they may leave us, we are quite sure, by-and-by, to have to leave them!

22. And He said unto His disciples, Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought. No undue, anxious thought, for such is the meaning of the word used here. Take no thought.

22-30. For your life, what you shall eat; neither for the body, what you shall put on. The life is more than food, and the body is more than raiment. Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have storehouse nor barn, and God feeds them: how much more are you better than the fowls? And which of you by worrying can add to his stature one cubit? If you then are not able to do that thing which is the least, why are you anxious for the rest? Consider the lilies, how they grow: they toil not, they spin not, and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. If then God so clothes the grass, which is today in the field, and tomorrow is cast into the oven; how much more will He clothe you, O you of little faith? And seek not what you shall eat, or what you shall drink, neither be you of a doubtful mind. For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: and your Father knows that you have need of these things. So that, with the knowledge of His guarantees to you that you shall always have enough, why do you need to be care-worn and anxious? I have often looked at birds in a cage and thought of the happiness and carelessness of heart which they seem to exhibit. And yet, if you were to forget to give them water, or if you were to fail to give them seed, how soon they would die! Perhaps the little creature has not enough to last it more than one day, but it goes on singing its tune and leaves all anxiety about tomorrow to those whose business it is to care for it. You would be ashamed to let your bird starveand will your Heavenly Father let you, who are not His birds, but His children, starve? Oh, no! Your Father knows that you have need of these things.

31, 32. But rather seek you the Kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you. Fear not, little flock; for it is your Fathers good pleasure to give you the Kingdom. He does not give you all that you would like to have, but He is going to give you the Kingdom. He gives the lesser gifts to others, but He is saving up the Kingdom for you! Luther once said, All the empires of the earth are only so much meal for Gods swinebut the treasure is for His children. They may have less meal, but they shall have the Eternal Kingdom. Oh, how blessed are we if, by faith, we know that this is true concerning us! It is your Fathers good pleasure to give you the Kingdom!

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A HOME QUESTION AND A RIGHT ANSWER   
NO. 1646

**DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, FEBRUARY 5, 1882, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**From that time many of His disciples went back and walked no more with Him. Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will you, also, go away? Then Simon Peter answered Him, Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.   
John 6:66-69.**

BROTHERS AND SISTERS, we believe that the righteous shall hold on his way and he that has clean hands shall wax stronger and stronger. We also believe that he that believes in Christ has everlasting life and, consequently, must live forever. The living water which Christ gives a man shall be in him a well of water springing up unto everlasting life. Our Lord has said of His sheep that they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of His hands. Yet we know that if any man draws back, the Lord will have no pleasure in him, and we are sure that, without holiness no man shall see the Lord. Therefore we very heartily sing the verse in one of our hymns

*We have no fear that You should lose   
One whom eternal love could choose;   
But we would never this Grace abuse,   
Let us not fall! Let us not fall!*

We consider that it would be an abusing of this Grace if we were to grow careless, presumptuous, high-minded and imagine that for ourselves, personally, it would not be possible to become apostates, or even to turn aside a little from the right way. We believe the Truth of God of the Final Perseverance of the Saints concerning the true people of God, but the question comes to our heart, Are we such? Is there in us the incorruptible Seed which lives and abides forever? And how are we to know that we are such but by this very perseverance which, while it is an effect of Grace, is also one of the most certain tokens of it, for there is not the true Grace of God in the heart where there is no perseverance in Grace even unto the end.

He that endures to the end shall be saved. But what if we should only have the transient gleams of temporary illumination and should relapse into a thick Egyptian night? Here is cause enough for holy fear! Come, then, Brothers and Sisters, trusting in the Immutable Grace and love and power of God, let each man, nevertheless, examine himself and let this be a time of heart-searching. Say not this is out of place when we are just gathering around the table of the Lord, for is it not written, Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread? Let us get ready to come to the festival of our Lords Supper by putting our Lords question, each one to His own heart, and trying to answer it by the help of Gods own Spirit.

First, the reason for the questionWhy did Christ ask of the twelve, Will you, also, go away? Then, secondly, the question itself. And, thirdly, the answer which Peter most fitly gave to it, which, I doubt not, he gave in the name and on the behalf of all his Brothers. The same reply we would also give tonight Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.

I. First, then, WHY DID THE SAVIOR ASK THE TWELVE THIS QUESTION? He would not have caused them needless pain. He had a wise reason for trying them with such an enquiry. It was, first, because it was a season of defection. From that time many went back and walked no more with Him. You will find, I think, that in all Churches there are times of flocking in, when many fly to the Church like doves to their windows. But happy is that Church which never has a time of flying out, when numbers who have been tested, fail, and are no more to be found. Churches have summers, like our gardens, and then all things are full. But then come their winters and, alas, what emptying is seen!

Have we not all seen the flood when the tide has come up far upon the beach? And have we not all marked the ebb when every wave has seemed to fall short of that which preceded it? Such ebbs and floods there are in the history of the Kingdom of Christ. One day, The kingdom of God suffers violence and every man presses into it. At another time men seem to be ashamed of the Christian faith and they wander off into a thousand delusionsand the Church is diminished and brought low by heresy, by worldliness, by lukewarmness and by all sorts of evils.

Often may the chronicle run thusThen all the disciples forsook Him and fled. It is right, then, at times when those that did run well are hindered, that the Master should say to those who, for a while, remain steadfast, Will you, also, go away? Ah, dear Friends, some of you are very steadfast now while this Church flourisheshow would you be if the pastor were dead, or his name in ill-repute? How would you be if the attendance on the means of Grace grew slack? How would you be if there was a decline in all the work of the Church? Have you backbone enough in you to be faithful if all others were faithless? Is there the real grit about you? Could you dare to be Daniels and, dare to stand alone? Can you fight a losing battle? Can you stand in the gap and be the last of a few heroic men who will defend the pass against all comers?

Alas, what numbers swim with the tide! How few can swim against the current! How readily are men seized with panic and run for it with might and main if they see others hastening from the battle. How few can hold the bridge like Horatius in the brave days of old! Well may the Savior ask the question of us tonight, for we are as frail and fickle as others! Well may He ask it now, for worse times than these may be drawing near Will you, also, go away? It was a time, too, of defection among disciples. I call your attention to the use of that word here. From that time many of His

disciples went back. Disciples? Yes, not merely camp-followers! Not the mob that hung upon His skirts for the sake of the loaves and fishes, but some of His disciples went backthose of nobler spirit, who had listened to His words and, for a while had professed to call Him, Master and Lord

Even some of these deserted the standard. Their name remainsthey are called disciples, still, though they have gone back! And this sets forth the grievous guilt of such men and women as enter into the Church and then, after a while, turn aside to false doctrine or to sin. They depart with their Princes uniform upon their backs and carry the livery of Christ into the service of Satan! The stamp of a disciple is upon each of them, still, though they are renegades and perverts! They will be judged as having been what they professed to beand heavy will be their sentence as apostates. We read of Simon, the leper. He is called, the leper after He had been healed. Here, on the other hand, are some who bear their good name even after their villainy has been discoveredand this helps to make their treachery the more glaring.

Just as the name, harlot, stuck to Rahab after she had become an honest woman and a Believer, so does a good name stick to one after it has ceased to be trueand it remains as a reminder of their fearful folly. Go and live down Turncoat Lane. Hide yourself away as much as you can, but whenever you come into the street, if they do not say it to your face, the neighbors will whisper behind your back, There goes one who was a disciple. There is one who professed to be a follower of Christ, but he has turned his back upon his Lord. The memory of your profession will stick to you through life! It will stick to you throughout eternity! If you are a wolf in sheeps clothing, some flecks of the wool will hang about you long after you have dragged the fleece over your head. Damnable apostate shall be your brand, even when you are cast away from the face of God forever! Oh, that none of us might ever earn such a title, by being reckoned among the disciples that went back and walked no more with Jesus! Yet, when disciples fall away, it is time to ask other disciples, Will you, also, go away?

The defection in this case was on account of doctrine. Our Savior had done nothing that could vex His followers; He had not even spoken sharply to His disciples. Far from it. He had simply preached the glorious Truth of God that He is the Food of the new-born life. But this they did not understand and so they would listen no further and would not stay to ask an explanation. They went back at once, as if horrified at what they heard. The Truth was too hard for them; it was not to be borne with. It is a hard saying. Who can bear it? A true disciple sits at the feet of his Master and believes what he is told even when he cannot quite comprehend the meaning, or see the reasons for what his Master utters. But these men had not the essential spirit of a disciple and, consequently, when their Instructor began to unfold the innermost parts of the roll of Truth, they would not listen to His reading of it.

They would believe as far as they could understand, but when they could not comprehend, they turned on their heels and left the school of the Great Teacher. Besides, the Lord Jesus Christ had taught the doctrine of the Sovereignty of God and of the need of the Spirit of God, that men should be led to Him, for Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray Him. And He said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto Me, except it were given unto Him of my Father. Here our Lord uttered a bit of the old-fashioned doctrine of Free Grace, such as people nowadays do not like. They call it, Calvinism, and put it aside among the old exploded tenets which this enlightened age knows nothing of!

What right they have to ascribe to the Genevan reformer a doctrine old as the hills I do not know! But our Lord Jesus never hesitated to fling that Truth of God into the face of His enemies! He told them, You believe not, because you are not of My sheep, as I said unto you. No man can come to Me, except the Father which has sent Me draw Him. Here He tells them plainly that they could not come unto Him unless the Father gave them the Grace to come! This humbling doctrine they could not receive and so they went aside. Now, when the Truth of God, itself, becomes a stumbling blockwhen the Gospel, itself, which ought to draw men to Heaven becomes the reason why they go backit is time for us to suspect ourselves and to

*Think we hear the Savior say,*

*Will you forsake Me too?*   
Will not you, also, be staggered? Will not some Truth stumble you? Will not some mystery of the Kingdom of Heaven make you, also, to be scandalized? Blessed is the man that is not offended in Christ! Happy is he who lays aside his own wisdom to be taught of the Lord!

Further, it is worthy of notice that this question was put because many were not only going away from Christ, but they were going back. Read the words. They, went back and walked no more with Him. They did not go off to the right or to the left, making some slight departure from the straight road, but they turned deliberately around and went back, reversing their course and retracing their steps. Of course, in consequence of this, they were very soon what they used to be! The reclaimed drunk went back to his cupsthe cups were soon full, again, and he was soon wallowing in drink, like a sow in the mire. The man who had lived a lascivious life and, for a time, had cast it off to put on the garb of morality, went back. And you saw him once again in the house of the strange woman. The dog has returned to his vomit.

The reformed liar was again false. The thief was again pilfering. The swearer was again profane. They went back, like Pliable, who quit the Pilgrim Road and returned to the City of Destruction. Now, it is really a dreadful thing, when men have seen the folly of their lives and have come out of it, for them to go back to their former habits. Well said the Prophet, Let them not turn, again, to folly. But, alas, these burned children ran to the fire, again! The silly moths made another dash at the candle! They were well-nigh escaped, but they plunged, again, into the flood of iniquity! What is to become of them? Is not this the fearthat their last end shall be terrible because of the violence done to conscience and to the Word of the Lord?

The evil spirit went out of them and took his walks abroad. But soon he went back, again, and found the house empty, swept and garnished! He, therefore, takes unto himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself and the last end of that man will be worse than the first! I should not have believed it, though a man had declared it to me, that such a one could go back, for he seemed so sick of sin, so wearied with its bondage! I could imagine that he might step aside under a strong temptation, but to go backhow can that be? Why, this is the man who was converted from drunkenness and delivered temperance lectures! Is he a drunk, again? This is the man that had clean escaped from his former filthiness and warned others! Is he wallowing in lust, again? What fools!

What a multitude of fools in one is such a man! If his course was wise, why did he leave it? And if it were wise to leave it, why has he gone back to it? If it is right to go back to it, why did he not always continue in it? For this unmitigated folly, his blood will be upon his own head! But when we see rational men act thus, even men of whom we hoped better things, we need not be surprised that we, also, are put to a stand with the personal question, Will you, also, go away? In the case before us, the defection from Christ was open defection, for we read, They went back, and walked no more with Him. They once walked with Jesus in the public streets, but now they will have no more to do with Christ.

When Jesus preachedthese constant hearerswhere were they? When He worked a miraclethese admiring lookers-onwhere were they? They had ministered to Him of their substanceno more supplies come from them. They had often asked Him to explain the Word when He had spoken in publicthey desire no more secret interviews. They had asked Him, also, to teach them how to pray. But they no longer care to be found upon their knees. They are not hypocrites enough to keep step with Him when their hearts are not with Him. They are, at least, decent enough to walk no more with Him, now that they have gone back to their sins!

Alas, we know some that used to walk with Christ who, at this time, walk no more with His people, for their hearts have gone away from Christ. The Sabbath is ignored. The House of God is forsaken. The Bible is put away; prayer is a thing neglected and, perhaps, despised! They walk no more with Christ, for they prefer a broader or a smoother road. If anybody mentions to them what they used to be, they slink away and seem to say, Never mention it again! We wish it to be ignored. I remember a household where the sons and daughters all professed to be converted to Christ, but some of the young people were fond of amusements that were not consistent with the profession of religion and, when they were found in such engagements, what did they do? Why, they blushed a little, but, by-and-by, they boldly declared that they had never been convertedthat they were forced into it by persuasion and hurried on by excitement to do that which their better sense led them to regret!

Their excuse was as false as their former profession! They knew that they acted of their own accord and that they willingly professed Christ. Alas, just as willingly, when they came in the way of temptation, they forsook Him! Ah, Apostate, it is all very well to say that you were persuaded and all thatbut you know that you did deliberately confess your faith, or you would never have been baptized by us! You did deliberately seek membership with the Church of God, or you would not have been received! And on yourself must be the responsibility of it! If you have gone back from Christ, you must bear the shame in time and eternity!

But when any do thus openly sever themselves from the companionship of the Crucified One, well may the question pass from heart to heart, Will you, also, go away? Thus have I introduced the question by giving the reason for it.

II. Now, THE QUESTION ITSELF. The Master pressed it upon the disciplesWill you, also, go away? He might well press the question, for one of them would certainly do so. He said, I have chosen you twelve! Not manyjust twelve. I have chosen you. A very prudent Choosermuch better able to judge than any of His ministers. I have chosen you twelve and one of you is a devil. Are our pastors and elders likely to make a better selection? Is it likely that the percentage of deceit is less among us than in the Apostolic college?

I would not like to sayit would be wrong to saythat one out of every 12 of Church members is a Judas. What right have I to say it? But if I were called upon to depose that I am certain that they are not, I dare not make so bold an assertion! I fear that the average of mankind in any place would, in all probability, be much the same as in our Lords dayand possibly there may be a worse state of things in London than in Judea and Galilee. Still, if we conceive our case to be improved, yet a measure of danger exists. Is it true in the case of only one member of this Church that he will betray Christ? If it is, then let the question begin at the pulpit and go round to the youngest member, Lord, is it I?a question suitable for this Table, for at this Table of fellowship it was asked by every one of the 12, Lord, is it I?

Certainly, some among ussome one among uswill deny or sell his Master. God grant it be not I! Let each one breathe that prayer! Besides, the Master knew that all of them might do so. All of them might go away from Himapart from His Grace, indeed, all of them would! There stood Peter, this very Peter who gave such a bold answer to the questionand the Master knew that there was enough in Peter to have made him as faithless as Judas if it had not been for His upholding Grace! Ah, Brothers and Sisters, when we see others fall, today, let us say, It may be my case tomorrow! Is there not the same heart, the same nature, the same tendency to sin? Have we not the same weakness? Are we not exposed to the same temptations?

Is there not the same devil craftily searching out our infirmities, that he may work upon them? Are we not all in danger? I fear that he is especially in jeopardy who will say, tonight, I am a man of experience. I am out of harms way. If there is a Brother among us who says, These warnings are not meant for me, he is probably the man who will disgrace that holy name by which he is named. If there is a deacon, an elder, a gray-headed Christian man, a venerable, believing woman, who shall be saying, I have nothing to fear from temptation. I have passed out of the realm of caution and watchfulness, I stand in doubt of such! Confident Friend, I fear that you are the man! This carnal confidence, this proud presumption as to yourself should be a caution to you, for these things are the smoke which denote a smoldering fire!

Let him that thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. The Master put the question because He knew that it ought to come home to every heart among the twelve. Moreover, He put the question to them because if they turned aside it would be especially sad. I do not read that Jesus said anything about those that had already gone back. He alludes to them by the use of the word, also, but He does not seem to have ran after them to beg them to return. He knew what they were and knew that they were best apart from Him. When the chaff was blown away, it was only the fulfillment of John the Baptists words, His fan is in His hand and He shall thoroughly purge His floor, so He suffered the chaff to go to its own place. But when the Master looked at the 12, then He said with holy care and anxiety, Will you? Will you, also, go away? As much as to say, If you go away, who have been with Me from the beginning, who have been chosen by me to be eyewitnesses of My life. If you that have been near My inmost heart and shared My trials and My joysif you go away it will be sin, indeed.

Friends, if any of us turn aside, what excuse shall be made for us? I say deliberately that if I go away from my Master I can expect nothing but the hottest wrath of God forever! Unhappy, unhappy wretch, to have preached to such multitudes, if I deny my Lord! Condemned out of my own mouth a thousand times over! I shall be a mark for all the arrows of vengeance. And what shall I say of my Brothers behind me, the deacons and elders of this Church? If they go away from Christ and forsake Him after their brave professions, who shall apologize for them? Many here are marked men and women! Your experience of Christ has been long, sweet, deep, remarkableand you have spoken of it to others with much confidence and delight. If you go away, you will deserve to be hung up like Haman, on the gallows, fifty cubits highan exhibition of direct treachery and a monument of the awful wrath of God against such as trample on the blood of Christ!

You will be sinners above all the sinners of yours time! Oh, may it never be, for if one of the 12 shall do it, it will be the greatest sin of all! It will grieve the heart of the Master! It will open the mouths of blasphemers. It will afflict the saints. It will disgrace the apostates and bring down upon them infinite condemnation! And yet, do you know, when others are turning aside, the question has to be asked, for apostasy is very contagious. We are called sheep and it is of the nature of sheep that if one goes right, the next will follow. But if they meet with a gap in the hedge and one leaps through it, they will all follow the same road! When backsliding and apostasy become fashionable, you may ask, even the 12, Will you, also, go away?

As I have seen, in my short experience, minister after minister turning aside to novelties of doctrine and especially into the deep pit of modern thoughtinto which the abhorred of the Lord fallI have thought of one and of another, Will you, also, go away? As men that I have spoken with, prayed with and trusted in have, one by one, apostatized from the faith of Gods elect, I have been staggered and astounded! Surely this fashionable sin has a fascinating influence over many minds and would delude, if it were possible, the very elect! How few stand to the landmarks in this age of wandering! How few are found approved in the day of trial! The question is one that must of necessity be pressed home, Will you, also, go away?

And, to conclude this part of our subject, our Savior, I think, asks the question because He wishes His following to be always perfectly voluntary. We sometimes speak of the sweet compulsions of Grace. But let it be always understood that this is by way of metaphor and figure, for none can truly walk with Jesus unwillingly. The lack of will would be fatal! There is an influence which the Grace of God exerts upon the will, by which the unrenewed will is led captive, and yet as soon as it is a renewed, will it becomes emphatically free. It ceases to be a will if it has no determining powerthe Grace of God gives it that power to a high degree.

Those who truly follow Christ do not follow Him because they are forced to do so. Grace has no slaves. It rules a Kingdom to which the Son has given true liberty! Christians are not dragged after Christ. They yield most sweetly to the charms of His love, to the force of the Truths of God which He teaches and the love which He manifests. They gladly serve their Lord and Master. Jesus seems to say, If you do not serve Me so, you may go. Will you go? Christ does not need anybody to profess to be a Christian who does not wish to be a Christian. He does not need one to come to this Table because he thinks it to be a Light of God or a custom, by which he is bound! He wants you to come because you delight to do so.

He does not desire any minister to preach the Gospel because he is paid for it, or because he would lose face among godly people if he did not. He needs no slaves to grace His Throne. The very charm of obedience is that it is rendered cheerfully. The very bliss of Christs service is that we voluntarily, with all our heart and soul, take up his Cross and follow Him. I am not denying the compulsions of Grace. I am only saying that they are perfectly consistent with the absolute freedom of the gracious will! God treats men as men and not as heaps of brick and mortar. His Grace displays itself in converting and changing them as men that have willsnot as logs of wood which Solomon may cut and plane in the mountains without their consent.

No, no! If you will to go, go! But if your will is to cling to Him, then will He give you Grace to follow Him, even to the end. I do not know whether I impress my congregation with a sense of the importance of the Truths of God I am trying to press home, but I feel them myself. Oh, Brothers and Sisters, it is a very easy thing to gather a crowd of peoplethe difficulty is to hold together, year after year, those that profess to be converted! There is a constant winnowing going on in all Churches and this drives away the light and chaffy ones. There is a fan at work upon this floor! Some stay, year after year, and yet turn out to be of no account. The Lord goes on sifting, but certain of the chaff do not blow off at first because, perhaps, the wheat is lying on top of itthere is a good wife or holy mother or a godly husband that keeps the doubtful ones right. When these are taken away, the next blast of the winnowing fan sweeps that bit of chaff away.

Oh, be not as the chaff, which is covered up and so hidden among the wheat! Turn not aside, I pray you! The Lord keep you. I shall reckon it to be a privilege to bury you rather than have to erase your name from our Church roll for conduct inconsistent with your profession! May you gather around my corpse, when God pleases to let me go Home, and may you say, He lived an honorable life and died faithful to His Lord. Yes, let that gathering be before another Sabbath dawns, if God so wills, rather than that I should live to dishonor the precious Truths of God which I have preached, and turn aside from the Master whom I profess to love!

What I say to myself I think I hear each one of you say to himself or herself, Better far that we die than that we deny our Lord.   
III. I shall close with my third head and consider THE ANSWER WHICH QUICK-VOICED PETER GAVEthe answer which I hope we are prepared to give to our Divine Leader, Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that you are the Christ, the Son of the living God. It is threefold. Lord, to whom shall we go? This is the first answer. Observe that Peter does not appear to think it possible, or think it less than abominable, for a man to go backfor the natural answer to Peters question, To whom shall we go? is, Go back? No, but Peter does not tolerate the idea of going back.   
I ask you, my beloved Brother in Christ, can you tolerate it? Can you? Can you? I might address myself to a Brother who was once among the profane and the drunken, who is now among the most earnest of us. And I might ask him Brother, would you go back? I am sure that the thought of the rack would be more pleasant than the idea of returning to his old haunts! I might address myself to another who was fond of every form of gaiety, spending his money for that which was not bread, and his labor for that which did not satisfy himhe will be found among us tonight, happiest among the happy in the service of his Master, and I enquire of him Brother, will you go back? Would you like to enjoy all your gay life again? It would be death to you.   
Suppose that any of us who know the joy of being Christs could have it proposed to us to go backsuppose we were not immoral, but were everything that could be desired in our outward conductwould we like to go back to that dead morality which had no life of faith nor light of hope about it? No! No! When Christian in the Pilgrims Progress thought about going back, he remembered that he had no armor for his back. He had a breastplate. He was covered from head to foot by his shieldbut there was nothing to protect his back and, therefore, if he retreated, the adversary could split him with a javelin in a moment! So he thought that, bad as it was to go forward, it would be worse to go backward and, therefore, he bravely cut a path for himself straight onward for Glory!   
Look at that fact whenever you are tempted! Do not endure the idea of turning tail in the day of battle! May retreat be impossible to you. God make it impossible by His Grace! But then to whom should we go? I was ruminating in my mind the other day

*Could I so false, so faithless prove   
To quit Your service and Your love,   
Where, Lord, could I, Your Presence shun, Or from Your dreadful Glory run?*

Where could I retire if I would avoid my lifework and cease witnessing for Jesus? If I were on board ship and a storm came, the sailors would say, He is the Jonah. I know they would! If I forsook my God and His cause, the lowest and meanest would point at me as a turncoat. If I were to cross the western continent and hide away in the back settlements, it is 10 to one that if I went into the most remote log cabin, somebody would spy me out, and say, Why, you are the man whose sermons I read in our newspapers. Why are you here?

In the loneliest spots on earth, where men speak the English tongue, my own sermons would serve as a hue and cry, if not as a writ of arrest. I should be sure to hear the question, What are you doing here, Elijah? and how could I answer? Where could I go? No hiding place remains for me! I must serve God forever. So is it with you in a degree, dear Friends. You cannot get away from Jesus. You that are disciples have committed yourselves to Christ. There is nowhere for you to go. Suppose you were to try infidelity. You know too much. You have felt too much. Unbelief would not ease you, whatever it may do with others. Be a free-thinker? Well, you are made of the wrong stuff for thatyour conscience would trouble you. Suppose you became a Romanist? Would forms and ceremonies content you? No! Of all the people in the world that cannot be Romanists, commend me to Baptists!

A few have joined the church of Romeso few that I never knew but one. You cannot convert these dreadful Anabaptists! They are too positive and too much accustomed to prefer their own judgment to the directions of a ghostly father in Rome! My Brothers and Sisters, I do not know where you could go if you leave Jesus and the Truth of God. You can go down to the bottomless pit, if you will, but you will have no rest there, for the lost ones will cry, Have you come here? Why, you were at the Lords Table, were you not? You are the people that used to give away tracts. Did we not hear you preach at the corner of the streets? It will be an uneasy thing for you to be lost, I tell you, Sirs, 10 times worse than for others, for the hiss of those who never professed religion will follow you throughout eternityand their words will burn like coals of juniper when they cry, Hypocrite! Apostate! You knew the Truth and did it not!

There is nowhere else for us to go. If we are weary of our Master, we cannot get anotherwhere can we find another so good as He is? Shall we go back, or shall we get right with Him? Let us go at once and tell Him how foolish we have been. Let us beg Him to keep us in His House. Dismiss me not from Your service, Lord. I am not worthy, even, to unloose the laces of Your shoes, but let me be Your servant, for whom else can I serve? How else can I live? What other joy remains for me but to do something for Your blessed name?

But then Peter gave a second answer. He said to our Lord, You have the words of eternal life, as much as to say, We cannot go away from You, good Master, when we think of eternity. Oh, eternity! Eternity! Those who, for a little wealth, or to escape a foolish laugh, shall turn aside from Christwhat will they do in eternity? Those who, to be thought respectable, or to be considered clever, shall renounce the simple Gospel of Christwhat will they do in eternity? Christ, alone, can give eternal life, or life for eternity! Apart from Him we are cast out as dead. The unbelievers shall be banished forever from the Presence of God and the Glory of His power, for, God is not the God of the dead, but of the living. Brothers and Sisters, we believe that there is salvation in Christ and nowhere else. How can we leave Him, then?

We know and are sure that His Word has already put the immortal life into us, for we feel it pulsing within our being! We sometimes see glimmerings of the eternal day into which the Light of God we have is sure to developand we are certain that the Lord has given us eternal life by His Word. How, then, can we forsake Him? Bind us, Saviorbind us to Yourself! Come, brand us with the Cross! Let us bear in our body Your mark! Some of us wear the watermark upon our whole body. Our seal of the Covenant is not on some one portion of our frame, but we have been immersed into Your name and from head to foot we are Yours. We cannot undo the fact that we were buried with You by Baptism unto death. Yours by that outward sign, but yet much more Yours by the inward Grace which You have given, by which You have made us dead to the world, dead to self and quickened us unto eternal life in Yourself.

There are two ties, then, to hold us. The one is that we have nowhere else to go. And the second is that we have no life apart from Christ. The third holdfast is thisWe believe and are sure that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God. Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood has not revealed it unto you. Have you learned, dear Brothers and Sisters, that Christ is truly the Messiah, the Son of the Father? Do you believe it? And, more than that, do you both believe and know that Christ is also the Son of the Highest? How can we leave Him? Has God sent Him and shall we forsake Him? Is He God and shall we desert Him? No, good Master, at Your feet we fall and to those feet we cling! We humbly resolve, by Your good Spirits power to abide in You. Savior, we will be Yours forever!

You may speak this very boldly if you speak it in the confidence of Grace, for, Brothers and Sisters, Who shall separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord? What torments the saints have endured from their persecutors and how ineffectual have been the assaults of their foes to separate them from Christ! If we are really one with Christ, Satan can no more tear us away from Jesus than he could tear away Paul or John! These saints had no more power of their own than we havethey derived everything from Christand we do the same. Think of how the martyrs have been scourged and even flayed aliveand yet have cried outNone but Christ! They have been tied to the tails of horses and dragged to death, but never a thought of apostatizing has occurred to them.

In those early days men, women and children crowded the tribunals till the judges grew weary of their bloody task. The persecutors devised all kinds of tortures, such as I scarcely dare mention, but the saints of God triumphed over all their torments! Fierce was the duel between the infernal cruelty of Roman paganism and the splendor of God within the souls of faithful men and women! Look even later down at our own Marian persecutionswhen Smithfield was all aglow with the death of the saints how gloriously Believers defeated their adversaries!

We read of a holy woman, bearing a child in prison, crying out in labor and her tormentors exultingly demanded, If you cannot bear these pangs, how will you bear to be burnt alive in a few days time? She replied, You see in me, who am a woman, the feebleness of nature. But wait till the day comes and you shall see in me, who am a member of the body of Christ, the strength of Grace, for I shall never start or cry when I am burning for Christ! And they took note that she never flinched, or winced, or cried, or stirred, but quick to the death she burned in her confession of her Lord! Oh, it was amazing! It was amazing! Christ laughed at His mightiest enemies, but His Spirit rested upon His poor, feeble saints and strengthened them so that they were more than conquerors!

Think of Ann Askew, whom I often quoteour own Ann Askewsitting up after they had racked her till every bone was dragged from its fellow and still defending the faith against the Romish shavelings! O that we had the same Grace! We shall have it when the trial comes, for the Lord of Hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. If Jesus is, indeed, the Anointed of the Lord, He will anoint us in the hour of need! And because we believe and are sure that it is even so, we are bold to say in His strength, No, Lord, we will never leave You! Though all men shall forsake You, yet we will not. By Your faithfulness, O Lord, keep us faithful! Amen.

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A MOURNFUL DEFECTION   
NO. 2914

A SERMON   
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, DECEMBER 15, 1904.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON A LORDS-DAY EVENING, IN THE YEAR 1877.

**Will you also go away?   
John 6:67.**

No mischief that ever befalls our Christian communities is more lamentable than that which comes from the defection of the members. The heaviest sorrow that can wring a pastors heart is such as comes from the betrayal of his most familiar friend. The direst calamity the Church can dread is not such as will arise from the assault of enemies outside, but from false brethren and traitors within the camp. My eminent predecessor, Benjamin Keach, though arrested, brought before the magistrates, imprisoned, pilloried and otherwise made to suffer by the Government of the times for the Gospel doctrines that he preached and published, found it easier to brook the rough usage of open foes than to bear the griefs of wounded love, or sustain the shock of outraged confidence. I should not think his experience was very exceptional. Other saints would have preferred the rotten eggs of the villagers to the rooted animosities of slanderers. Troy could never be taken by the assaults of the Greeks outside her walls. Only when, by trickery, the enemy had been admitted within the citadel was that brave city compelled to yield. The devil himself was not such a subtle foe to Christ as was Judas, when, after the Supper, Satan entered into him. Judas was a friend of Jesus. Jesus addressed him as such. And Judas said, Hail, Master, and kissed Him. But Judas it was who betrayed Him! That is a picture which may well appall youthat is a peril which may well admonish you.

In all our churches, among the many who enlist, there are some who desert. They continue awhile and then they go back to the world. The radical reason why they retire is an obvious incongruity. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us. The unconverted adherents in our fellowship are no loss to the church when they depart. They are not a real deficit, any more than the scattering of the chaff from the threshing floor is a detriment to the wheat. Christ keeps the winnowing fan always going. His own preaching constantly sifted His hearers. Some were blown away because they were but chaff. They did not really believe. By the ministry of the Gospel, by the order of Providence, by all the arrangements of Divine Government, the precious are separated from the vile, the dross is purged away from the silver so that the Good Seed and the pure metal may remain and be preserved. The process is always painful. It causes great searching of heart among those who abide faithfuland occasions deep anxiety to gentle spirits of tender, sympathetic mold.

I trust, dear Friends, that you will not think I harbor any ungenerous suspicions of your fidelity because my text contains as pointed and so personal an appeal to your conscience. There is more of pathos than of passion in the question as our Lord puts itYou will not go away, will you? He addressed the favored twelve. I put it to myself. I put it to those who are the officers of the Church. I put it to every member without exceptionWill you also go away? But should there be one to whom it is peculiarly applicable, I do not desire to flinch from putting the question most personally to that oneWhat? Are you going? Do you mean to turn back? Do you mean to go away?

I. Let us approach the enquiry sideways. Will you also go away? Also means as well as other people. WHY DO OTHERS GO? If they have any good reason, perhaps we may see cause to follow their example. Look narrowly, then, at the various causes or excuses for defection. Why do they renounce the religious profession they once espoused? The fundamental reason is lack of Grace, a lack of true faith, an absence of vital godliness. It is, however, the outward reasons which expose the inward apostasy of the heart from Christ of which I am anxious to treat.

Some there are in these days, as there were in our Lords own day, who depart from Christ because they cannot bear His Doctrine. Our Lord had more explicitly than on any former occasion declared the necessity of the souls feeding upon Himself. They probably misunderstood His language, but they certainly took offense at His statements. Hence there were those who said, This is an hard saying; who can bear it? So they walked no more with Him.

There are many points and particulars in which the Gospel is offensive to human nature and revolting to the pride of the creature. It was not intended to please man. How can we attribute such a purpose to God? Why should He devise a goal to suit the whims of our poor fallen human nature? He intended to save men, but He never intended to gratify their depraved tastes. Rather does He lay the axe to the root of the tree and cut down human pride. When Gods servants are led to set forth some humbling Doctrine, there are those who say, We will never assent to that. They kick against any Truth of God which clashes with their prejudices. What do you say, Brothers and Sisters, to the claims of the Gospel on your allegiance? Should you discover that Gods Word rebukes your favorite pleasure, or contradicts your cherished convictions, will you forthwith take the huff and go away? No, but if your hearts are right with Christ, you will be prepared to welcome all His teaching and yield obedience to all His precepts. Only prove it to be Christs teaching and the rightminded professor is ready to receive it. That which is transparent on the face of Scripture he will cordially accept, as he says, To the Law and to the Testimony: if they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no light in them. As far that which is merely inferred and argued from the general drift of Scripture, the true heart will not be hasty to reject, but patient to investigate, like the Bereans who were more noble than the Jews of Thessalonica, in that they searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so.

Oh, that the Word of Christ may dwell in us richly! God forbid that any of us should ever turn aside, being offended because of Him, His blessed Son, His holy example, or His sacred teaching! May we be always ready to believe what He says and prompt to do what He commands! Remember, Brothers, that the Gospel commission has three parts to which the minister has to attend. We are to first go and preach the Gospel. Go you, and disciple all nations. The second part is, baptizing them. And the third part is, teaching them to observe all things whatever I have commanded you. As willing disciples of Jesus, let us press forward, paying attention to His voice, following in His footsteps, and counting His revealed will as our supreme law. Far be it from us to go back from Him because we are offended at His Doctrine!

Others there are who desert for the sake of gain. Many have been entangled in that snare. Mr. By-Ends originally went on pilgrimage because he thought it would pay. There was a silver mine on the road and he purposed to survey it and see whether silver might not be obtained there as well as at the golden city beyond. He came, if I remember rightly, of a family that got its living by the watermans business, looking one way and pulling another. He was apparently striving for religion, though all the while he had his eye on the world. He was for holding with the hare and running with the hounds! So, when he came to a point where he must part with one or the other, he considered which would, upon the whole, be the more profitable and gave up that which appeared to involve loss and self-sacrificeand kept to that which would, as he called it, help him in the main chance, and assist him to get on in the present life. Sincerely do I trust there is no one among us but who despises Mr. By-Ends and all of his class! If you would make moneyand there need be nothing sinful in thatdo let it be made honestly. Never let riches be pursued under the pretense of religion! Sell your wares and find a market for your merchandise, but do not sell Christ, nor barter a heavenly birthright for a worthless bribe! Put what goods you please into your shop window, but do not put a canting, hypocritical expression on your face, or wear a holy look, with a view of turning godliness into gain.

Some leave Christ, and go away, terrified by persecution. Nowadays, it is supposed that there is no such thing, but that is a mistake, for though martyrs are not burned at Smithfield and the Lollards Tower is a place for show (a memorial of times long ago), yet the harassment, the cruelty and the oppression are far enough from being obsolete! Godless husbands play the part of petty tyrants and will not permit their wives the enjoyment of religion, but make their lives bitter with a galling bondage! Employers full often wreak malice on servants whose piety towards God is their sole cause of offense. Worse still, there are working men who consider themselves intelligent who cannot allow their fellow workman liberty to go to a place of worship without sneers and jeers and cruel mocking! In many cases the mirth of the workshop is never louder than when it is turned against a believer in Christ! They count it rare fun to hunt a man who cares for the salvation of his soul. They call themselves, Englishmen, but certainly they are no credit to their country! Look at the base-born, ill-bred cowardsyonder is an atheisthe is raving about his rights because the magistrate will not believe him on his oath! He claims liberty of conscience to be a heathen, but denies his comrades right to be a Christian! Look at that little party of British workmenthey belong to the Sabbath Desecration Society. They are petitioning Parliament to open museums and theatres on Sundays and at the same time they are hounding to death a poor fellow who prefers going to Chapel! They air their own self-respect by the words they utter, while they betray their self-abasement by the scorn they vent on those who presume to sing a hymn. They hail the drunkard as a chum and rout the sober man as a fiend! I wonder that there is not more honorable feeling, more good faith and true fellowship among our skilled workmen than to permit one man being made the butt of a whole community!

God give you Grace to bear such persecutions as these! If they cut you to the quick, may you learn to bear them with equanimity and even to rejoice that you are counted worthy to suffer for the Saviors sake! Some of us have had to run the gauntlet for many years. What we have said has been constantly misrepresented. What we have endeavored to do has been misjudged and our motives have been misunderstood. Yet here we are, as happy as anybody out of Heaven! We have not been injured by any or all the calumnies that have been heaped upon us. Our foes would have crushed us, but, blessed be God, He cheered us often when we were cast down. The Lord give you, in like manner, strength of mind and courage of heart to bear the trial manfully! Then you will care no more for the laughter and the sneers of men than you do for the noise of those migratory birds high overhead which you hear on an autumn evening as they are making their weary journey to a distant clime. Take heart, Brothers and Sisters! Fear God and face your accusers. True courage grows strong on opposition. Never think of deserting the army of Christ! Least of all should you play the coward because of the insolence of some ill-mannered bully. Let not your faith be vanquished by such scoffing. Alas, that so many a cowardly spirit has gone away for the sake of carnal easeand deserted Christwhen he has become the drunkards jest and the derision of fools!

There are some people who forsake true religion out of sheer lightheartedness. I know not how to account for some mens defections. If you take up the list of shipwrecks, you will notice some that have gone down through collisions and others through striking upon rocks, but sometimes you read of a vessel, Foundered at sea. How it happened, no, one knowsthe owner himself cannot explain it! There are some professors who, concerning faith, have made shipwreck under such apparently easy circumstancesso free from trial, so exempt from temptation, that we have not seen anything to awaken anxiety on their behalfyet all of a sudden they have foundered. We are startled and amazed. I remember one who fell into a gross sin, of whom a Brother unwisely said, If that man is not a Christian, I am not. His prayers had certainly been sweet. Many a time they had melted me down before the Throne of Grace and yet the life of God could not have been in his soul, for he lived and died in flagrant vice and was impenitent to the last! Such cases I can only attribute to a sort of lightheartedness which can be charmed with a sermon or a playtake a pew at the Chapel or a box at the opera with equal nonchalance and eagerly follow the excitement of the hour, everything by turns and nothing long. Unstable as water, they shall not excel.

On the spur of the moment, they profess Christianity, though they do not espouse it. And then, without troubling themselves to renounce it, they drop off into infidelity. They are soft and malleable enough to be hammered into any shape. Made of wax, they can be molded by any hand that is strong enough to grip them. The Lord have mercy upon any of you who may happen to be of that type! You spring up soon and suddenly you wither. Hardly is the seed sown before the sprout appears! What a wonderful harvest you promise! But, ah, no sooner has the sun risen with a burning heat than, because there is no depth of soil, the green shoot withers away. Pray God that you may be plowed deep, that the iron pan of rock underneath may be broken right up, that you may have plenty of subsoil and root-hold, that the verdure you produce may be permanent. Lack of principles is deadly, but the lack is far too common. Never cease to pray that you may be rooted and grounded, established and built up in Christ so that when the floods come and the winds blow, you may not fall with a great destructionas that house fell which was built upon the sand!

But, oh, what multitudes are tempted aside from following Christ and His Church by evil companions! They do not avoid the society of the wicked and as a man is known by the company he keeps, we soon discover the direction in which they are drawn. The more intimately we know them, the more readily we perceive their propensities. Have a care, then, with whom you associate. Never confide in those persons of whose principles you have good cause to stand in doubt. Above all, let me admonish you young people not to be unequally yoked together. Marriage without the fear of God is a fearful mistake. Those ill-assorted unions between Believers and unbelievers rob our churches of more members than any other popular delinquency that I know of! SeldomI might almost say neverdo I meet with a woman professing godliness who becomes joined in wedlock to a man of the world but what she goes away. She ceases to follow Jesus and we hear no more of her. Absorbed in the pursuits, the pains and the pleasures of the life that now is, she is sucked under the stream and drawn into the vortex. In the romance of her courtship, she glibly said, I shall win him, but, in the reality of their conjugal bonds, he could coolly say, I have won you. Probably the stronger nature wins the day. In this case, however, a precept of the Gospel is violated and the penalty of disobedience is incurred. It is much easier for the one who professes religion to give up the faith, after laying down the Cross, than for another who has no religion to take up the Cross and follow the Savior in whom he has never yet believed! I counsel you, young man or woman, who contemplate a marriage on the basis of capricious attraction, without reference to the sanctity of the relationship before God, to communicate your intention to your minister and renounce your membership in the Church before you say your vows! Voluntarily give up all profession of religion! Do not wait to be excommunicated! Do not sneak away without giving an account of yourself. You had better count the cost and pay the price of your own presumption. Should your unwarranted but sanguine hopes succeed and your earnest endeavors to gain the conversion of your helpmeet be successful, that would be an uncovenanted mercy! If God chose to give it to you, it would not even then excuse you for tempting Him by your waywardness, or provoking Him to jealousy by your willfulness! There is an express command, Be you not unequally yoked together with unbelievers. I appeal to every Christian man or woman who has been converted since marriageDo you not find it exceedingly difficult to keep up your courage when one pulls one way and one another? And does it not cut you to the quick to think that your union is but temporarythat however dear you may be to each other now, you will be parted at the Judgment Seat of Christ parted to meet no more? The Lord make us careful about our associates, about those among whom we stand, by whom we sit, with whom we walk!

And oh, how many leave Christ for the sake of sensual enjoyments! I will not enlarge upon this. Certain, however, is it that the pleasures of sin for a season fascinate their minds till they sacrifice their souls at the shrine of sordid vanity. For a merry dance, a wanton amusement, or a transient joy that would not bear reflection, they have renounced the pleasures that never pall, the immortal hopes that never fail and turned their backs upon that blessed Savior who gives and feeds the taste for unspeakable joy, for joy full of glory!

In our pastoral oversight of such a huge Church as this, we have painful evidence that considerable numbers gradually grow cold. The elders reports on the absentees reiterate the vain excuses for non-attendance. One has so many children. The distance is too great for another. When they joined the Church, their family was just as large and the distance was just the same! But the household cares become more irksome when the concern for religion begins to flagand the fatigue of travelling increases when their zeal for the House of God falters. The elders fear they are growing cold. No actual transgression can we detect, but there is a gradual declension over which we grieve. I dread that cold-heartedness it steals so insensibly yet so surely over the entire frame. I do not say that it is worse than open sin. It cannot be. Yet it is more insidious. A flagrant delinquency would startle one as a fit does a patient, but a slow process of backsliding may steal like paralysis over a person without awakening suspicion. Like the sleep which comes over men in the frozen regionsif they yield to it they will never wake again. You must be awakened or else this inactivity will surely end in death! Gray hairs are here and there upon him, yet he knows not. Is it so with any of you, dear Friends? Are you going aside by slow degrees? He that loses his substance little by little presently becomes a bankruptand painful is the discovery when the end is precipitated! How miserable must a spiritual bankruptcy be to him who wastes by degrees his heavenly estate, if he ever had any! No words can describe it. God preserve us from such a catastrophe!

Some have turned aside who allege so through change of circumstances. They were with us when their means of livelihood were competent, if not affluent. From reverses in business they have sunk in their social position. Hence they do not like to come into fellowship with us as they were known to do. Now, from my inmost soul I can say if any of our members become poor, I, for one, do not think one atom the less of them, or hold them in less esteem, however impoverished they may become! Do not tell me that you have no fit clothes to come in, for any clothes that you have paid for are creditable. If you have not paid for them, I cannot make excuses for you. Be honest. Silk or fustian need not shame you, but for fineness or fashion I should certainly blame you! I am always glad to see Brothers and Sisters sitting here, as I sometimes do, in their smock-frocks. One good friend is rather conspicuous in that line. The wholesome whiteness of his rural garb is rather attractive. If he has paid for it, he is a far more respectable man than anyone that has run into debt for a suit of broadcloth that he cannot pay for! And I rejoice to think that I am not merely expressing my own feeling, but that which is shared by the whole community! We all delight to see our poor Brothers and Sisters. If there are any of you suffering from a sensitiveness of your own, or a suspicion of our reflections, the sooner you get rid of such foolish pride the happier you will be! You want to be thought respectable? Dont you know that a man is respectable for his

character, not for the money he has in his pocket?

Others forsake Christ when they become rich and increased in goods. They did not scorn the little conventicle when they were plain plodding people, but since fortune has smiled on them and they have moved their residence from a terrace to a mansionand they have taken to keep a carriagethey feel bound to move in another circle. To their parish church, or to some Ritualistic church in their neighborhood, they go once on the Sunday. They patronize the place by their presence. They show themselves among the elite of that locality! They bow, and bend, and face about to the East as though they had been born to the manner! They are too respectable to go into the little Baptist Chapel. They receive visitors in the afternoon, dine late and dissipate Sabbatic hours in the frivolous pretence of showing off their gentility. Well, I think their departure is not to be lamented. When gone, they are certainly no loss to anybody. We sigh for them as we would for Judas or Demas. They have fallen foul of what they thought their good fortune, but of what has proved to be their ruin! Those who have true principles, when they rise in the world, see more reason why they should use their wealth and their influence in aiding a good cause. Principle would prevail over policy to the end of their lives if in their hearts they believed the Truth of God as it is in Jesus. It were no dishonor to a prince to go and sit down side by side with a pauper, were they both true followers of Jesus Christ!

In old times, when our grandfathers sought refuge in caves and dens of the earth, they met the high and the low, the bond and the free. Or when, in earlier ages, the Christians gathered in the catacombs, men out of Caesars householdnow a chief, then a senator, then a prince of the bloodcame and sat down in those caverns, lighted with the dim candle, to listen while some unshod but Heaven-taught man declared the Gospel of Jesus with the power of the Holy Spirit! That they were illiterate, I am quite sure, for, on looking over the monuments that are found in the catacombs, it is rare to find one inscription that is thoroughly well spelt. Though it is evident enough that the early Christians were an uneducated company of men, yet those that were great and noble, learned and polished, did not disdain to join with themnor will they in any age if the Light of Heaven shines and the love of God burns in their hearts!

Unsound doctrine induces many to apostatize. There is always plenty of that about. Deceivers will beguile the weak. Some have been turned aside by modern doubtand positive infidelity has its partisans. They begin cautiously by reading works with a view to answer scientific or intellectual skepticism. They read a little more and dive a little deeper into the turbid stream because they feel well able to stand against the insidious influence! They go on till at last they are staggered. They do not repair to them who could help them out, but they continue to flounder on till, at last, they have lost their footing and he that said he was a Believer has ended in stark atheismdiscrediting even the evidence of the existence of God! Oh, that those who are well taught would be content with Gospel teaching! Why should you be so unwise as to go through pools of foul teaching merely because you think it easy to cleanse yourself of its pollution? Such trifling is dangerous! When you begin to read a book and find it pernicious, put it aside. Someone may upbraid you for not reading it all through, but why should you?

If I have a roast on my table of which the smell and the taste at once convince me that it is putrid and unwholesome, should I show discretion by eating the whole of it before giving my judgment that it is not fit for food? One mouthful is quite enoughand one sentence of some books ought to suffice for a sensible man to reject the whole mass! Let those who can relish such meat feed on it, but I have a taste for better food. Keep to the study of the Word of God. If it is your duty to expose those evils, encounter them bravely with prayer to God to help you. But if not, as a humble Believer in Jesus, what business have you to taste and test such noxious fare when it is exposed in the market?

Can you doubt that there are some who turn aside from Christ and His people through sheer laziness. They have nothing whatever to do and what must a Christian be who has no part in the service of Christ? Nothing to do for Jesus? A drone in the hive! I do not wonder that you go away. My wonder is that the bees do not drive you out. On the other hand, I fear others have gone aside through having been too busythey have been so occupied that they have neglected to feed their own souls. I am always pleased to see our dear Brothers and Sisters diligent in the service of Christ. I am glad to miss many of you on the Lords-Day evening when I know how well you are engaged. I could spare a few more of you if you were intent upon teaching the young, or exhorting those who are out of the way. But I earnestly admonish you never to be negligent of your own souls while you are vigilant for the souls of others! If you do not get nourished with the Bread of Life yourselves, you cannot grow in Grace! This caution, I am fully persuaded, is not uncalled for. There are some who get so absorbed in Christian work that they never listen to the Word. They hardly ever read. They only talk. This is sorry work. If you do not take in, you cannot give out. If your own soul is starved, you cannot be strong for the Lords service. Get at least one good spiritual meal in the day. Then spend all the strength you have for God and rely on Him for frequent renewals. Keep up the fire within and add fresh fuel to give a more fervent heat. See to it that you are not losing communion with Christ while you think you are getting conversions to Christ. That is a peril you good people must not play with! It is far too serious. But I will not continue in this strain. It is painful to me, if not to you.

II. Now I want briefly to answer a second enquiryWHAT BECOMES OF THOSE WHO TURN ASIDE?   
Well, if they are Gods children, I will tell you what becomes of them, for I have seen it scores of times. Though they go aside, they are not happy. They cannot rest, for they are miserable even when they try to be cheerful. After a while they begin to remember their first Husband, for it was better with them, then, than now. They return, but there are scores and scores who, to say nothing of the shame they have to carry with them to their grave, are never afterwards the men they were before. They have to take a second place among their comrades. And even should Sovereign Grace so wonderfully bless their painful experience that they are fully restored, they can never mention the past without bitter regret. Their by-path is serving others as a beaconthey will say to young people, Never do as we have done! Nothing but mischief comes of it.   
In the vast majority of cases, however, they are not the Lords people. So this is what comes of it. Those who prove traitors to a profession they once made are the hardest people in the world to impress. Doubtless some of you, when you lived in the country, used to always be punctual at your usual place of worship. But since you have come to London, where your absence from any sanctuary is unnoticed, you rarely enter the courts of the Lords House, nor would you have been here tonight but for some special inducementsome country cousin or some particular friend having brought you. Though unknown to me, God scans your path. Well, here you are, and yet it may be too little profit. You have had counsels and cautions in such profusion that it is like pouring oil down a slab of marble to admonish you. May God of His Omnipotent Mercy break your stone heart or there will be no hope for you! Such people frequently lose all conscience. They can go a great deal further in talking against religion than anybody else! They will sometimes venture to say they know so much about it that they could expose it. Their boasts and their threats are alike useless, but as boys whistle while they walk through the churchyard to keep their courage up, so do their vain talk and their senseless stories betray their stifled fear! They speak contemptuously of God while they justify themselves in a course for which their own conscience upbraids them. They go backalas, some of them, to prove themselves the most abandoned sinners in the world! There could not have been a Judas to betray Christ had he not been first distinguished as a disciple who ventured to kiss his Master. You must pick from among the Apostles to find an apostate! As the ringleaders in riotous transgression, when converted, often make the best revivalist preachers, so those that seem to be the most loyal subjects of Christ, when they become renegades, prove to be the bitterest foes and the blackest sinners!   
Painful reminiscences rush over ones mind. Standing here, now, in the midst of a great Church, I call to mind things that have harrowed up my soul. God grant I may not see the likes of them again! They go away! Ah, me! Full many of them go away to die in blank despair. Did you ever read the life of Francis Spira? If you want to sleep tonight, do not take up that memoir. Did you ever read the life of John Child, a Baptist minister of about 200 years ago? Mr. Keach gives it in one of his works. He was a man who knew the Truth of God and, to a great extent, had felt its power, but he went aside from it and before he came to die, his expressions were too terrible to listen to. The remorse and despair of his spirit chafed everyone away. At last he laid violent hands upon himself.   
For any man to eat bread at the Lords Table, to drink of the cup of blessing, to mingle with the saints, join in their prayers and their hymns, professing to be a disciple of Christand then to go back and walk no more with Himis to venture on a course of no ordinary danger! When his conscience is again awakened, how he wishes that he had never been born! Could he annihilate his anguish-smitten soul to terminate his existence might be accounted wise. But that is impossible. The relief he seeks he cannot find when he takes the dreadful leap from suffering here, to an aggravated form of misery hereafterten thousand times worse to endure! He seals his doom and makes his own damnation sure as he raises against himself a murdering hand!

Do I address anyone here who is bereft of every ray of hope and shivering on the brink of despair? To him I sayWhile there is life, there is hope! Jesus Christ can forgive you! Return to Him! He can wash you in His blood. He can make you clean, though your sin is as scarlet. But, oh, do not trifle, make no delay! Tarry no longer in your present condition else maybe you will fill up the measure of your iniquities before you are aware and you may taste, even in this world, some beginning of the wrath to come! If not rescued as a trophy of Grace right speedily, you may become a monument of Gods wratha beacon to deter others from daring to turn aside! I speak solemnly. I cannot help it. So intensely do I feel the terror of that woe and so confident am I that some of you are making light of it, that I would go down on my knees and entreat you with tears to repent of what you are doing. You have got on the inclined place and you are going down, down, down! Your feet are even now on the slippery places from which multitudes have been cast down into destruction! How they are brought into desolation as in a moment! The Lord make haste to deliver you! May He stretch out His hand and rescue you! I can only call out to you. You seem to have got where I cannot reach you. Do not venture a footstep further on that dangerous road! Look to Jesus, look to Jesus! He can redeem your life from the Pit by His Sovereign Gracebut He alone can do it! Then, as a wandering sheep brought back to the fold, you shall adore His name.   
III. My third enquiry isWHY SHOULD WE NOT GO AWAY AS THEY HAVE?   
Were we left to ourselves, I cannot tell you any reason why we should not go as they have. Nor, indeed, could I tell you why the best man here should not be the worst before tomorrow morning if the Grace of God left him. John Bradford, you know, as he saw the poor criminals taken away to Tyburn to be executed, used to say, There goes John Bradford but for the Grace of God. And everyone of us might say the same. To abide with Christ, however, is our only security and we trust we shall never depart from Him. But how can we make sure of this? The great thing is to have a real foundation on Christ to begin withgenuine faith, vital godliness. The foundation is the first matter to be attended to in building a house. With a bad foundation, there cannot be a substantial house. You require a firm bottom, a sound groundwork before you proceed to the superstructure. Do pray God that if your religion is a sham, you may find it out now. Unless your hearts are deeply plowed with genuine repentance and unless you are thoroughly rooted and grounded in the faith, you may have some cause to suspect the reality of your conversion and the verity of the Holy Spirits operation in you. May the Lord work in you a good beginning and then you may rely upon it, He will carry it on to the day of Jesus Christ!   
Then remember, dear Brothers and Sisters, if you would be preserved from falling, you must be schooled in humility and keep very low before the Lord. When you are half-an-inch above the ground, you are that halfinch too high! Your safety is to be nothing. Trust Christ, but do not trust yourself. Rely on the Spirit of God, but do not rely on anything that is in yourselfno, not on a Grace you have received, or on a gift you possess. Those do not slide who walk humbly with God. They are always safe whose entire dependence is upon the dear Redeemer. Be jealous of your obedience. Be circumspect. Be careful. Take heed to yourselvesyour walk and conversation cannot be too cautious. Many are lost through being too remiss, but none through being too scrupulous. The statutes of the Lord are so right that you cannot neglect them without diverging from the path of rectitude. Watch and pray. God help you to watch, or else you will get drowsy. Never neglect prayer. That is at the root of every defection. Retrogression commonly begins at the closet. To restrain prayer is to deaden the very pulse of life. Watch unto prayer.   
And, dear Friends, shun the company which has led other people astray. Parley not with those whose jokes are profane. Stay right away from them. It is not for you to be seen standing, much less to be found sitting down with men of loose manners and lewd talk. They can do you no good, but the evil they can bring upon you would not be easy to estimate! You may have heard the storybut it is so good it bears repeatingof the lady who advertised for a coachman and was waited upon by three candidates for the situation. She put to the first one this questionI want a really good coachman to drive my pair of horses and, therefore, I ask you how near you can drive to danger and yet be safe? Well, he said, I could drive very near, indeed! I could go within a foot of a precipice without fear of any accident so long as I held the reins. She dismissed him with the remark that he would not do. To the next one who came she put the same question. How near could you drive to danger? Being determined to get the job, he said, I could drive within a hairs breadth and yet skillfully avoid any mishap. You will not do, she said. When the third one came in, his mind was cast in another mold, so on the question being put to him, How near could you drive to danger? he said, Madam, I never tried. It has always been a rule with me to drive as far from danger as I possibly can. The lady hired him at once! In like manner I believe that the man who is careful to run no risks and to refrain from all equivocal conduct, having the fear of God in his heart, is most to be relied upon! If you are really built upon the Rock of Ages, you may meet the question without dismay, Will you also go away? and you can reply without presumption, No, Lord, I cannot and I will not leave You, for to whom should I go? You have the words of eternal life. So be it. And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly. And I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is He that calls you, who also will do it. Amen.

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ABSCONDING AND APOSTASY   
NO. 3556

A SERMON   
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Will you also go away?   
John 6:67.

No mischief that ever befalls our Christian communities is more lamentable than that which comes from the defection of the members. The heaviest sorrow that can wring a pastors heart is such as comes from the treachery of his most familiar friend. The direst calamity the Church can dread is not such as will arise from the assault of enemies outside, but from false Brothers and Sisters within the camp. My eminent predecessor, Benjamin Keach, though arrested, brought before the magistrates, imprisoned, pilloried and otherwise made to suffer by the Government of the times for the Gospel Doctrines that he preached and published, found it easier to brook the rough usage of open foes than to bear the griefs of wounded love, or sustain the shock of outraged confidence. I should not think his experience was very exceptional. Other saints would have preferred the rotten eggs of the villagers to the rooted animosities of slanderers! Troy could never be taken by the assaults of the Greeks outside her walls. Only when, by stratagem, the enemy had been admitted within the citadel, was that brave city compelled to yield. The devil, himself, is not such a subtle foe to the Church as Judas, when, after the supper, Satan entered into him. Judas was a friend of Jesus. Jesus addressed him as such. And Judas said, Hail, Master, and kissed Him. And it was Judas who betrayed Him! That is a picture which may well appall youthat is a peril which may well admonish you! In all our churches, among the many who enlist, there are some who desert. They continue awhile, and then they go back to the world. The radical reason why they retract is an obvious disagreement. They went out from us because they were not of us, for if they had been of us, doubtless they would have continued with us. The unconverted adherents to our fellowship are no loss to the Church when they depart. They are not a real loss, any more than the scattering of the chaff from the threshing floor is a detriment to the wheat. Christ keeps the winnowing fan always going. His own preaching constantly sifted His hearers. Some were blown away because they were chaff. They did not really believe. By the ministry of the Gospel, by the order of Providence, by all the arrangements of Divine Government, the precious are separated from the vile, the dross is purged away from the silver that the good seed and the pure metal may remain and be preserved! The process is always painful. It causes great searching of heart among those who abide faithfuland occasions deep anxiety to gentle spirits of tender, sympathetic mold.

I trust, dear Friends, that you will not think I harbor any ungenerous suspicions of your fidelity because my text contains so pointed and so personal an appeal to your conscience. There is more of pathos than of pardon in the question as our Lord put it, Will you also go away? He addressed the favored twelve. I put it to myself. I put it to those who are the officers of the Church. I put it to every member without exception Will you also go away? But should there be one to whom it is peculiarly applicable, I do not desire to flinch from putting the question most personally to that one, What? Are you going? Do you mean to turn back? Do you mean to go away?

Let us approach the enquiry sideways. Will you also go away? Also means as well as other people. Why do others go? If they have any good reason, perhaps we may see cause to follow their example. Look narrowly, then, at the various causes or excuses for defection. Why do they renounce the religious profession they once espoused? The fundamental reason is lack of Grace, a lack of true faith, an absence of vital godliness. It is, however, the outward reasons which expose the inward apostasy of the heart from Christ of which I am anxious to treat.

I. WHY SOME LEAVE CHRIST  
Some there are in these days, as there were in our Lords own day, who depart from Christ because they cannot bear His Doctrine. Our Lord had more explicitly than on any former occasion declared the necessity of the souls feeding upon Himself. They probably misunderstood His language, but they certainly took offense at His statement. Hence there were those who said, This is a hard saying; who can hear it? So they walked no more with Him.   
There are many points and particulars in which the Gospel is offensive to human nature and revolting to the pride of the creature. It was not intended to please man. How can we attribute such a purpose to God? Why should He devise a Gospel to suit the whims of our poor fallen human nature? He intended to save men, but He never intended to gratify their depraved tastes. Rather does He lay the axe to the root of the tree and cut down human pride. When Gods servants are led to set forth some humbling Doctrine, there are those who say, Ah, I will not assent to that! They kick against any Truth of God which wounds their prejudices! What say you, Brothers and Sisters, to the claims of the Gospel on your allegiance? Should you discover that Gods Word rebukes your favorite pleasure, or contradicts your cherished convictions, will you forthwith take offense and go away? No, but if your hearts are right with Christ, you will be prepared to welcome all His teaching and yield obedience to all His precepts. Only prove it to be Christs teaching and the rightminded professor is ready to receive it. That which is transparent on the face of Scripture, he will cordially accept, as he says, To the Law and to the testimony! If they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them. As for that which is merely inferred and argued from the general drift of Scripture, the true heart will not be hasty to reject, but patient to investigate, like the Bereans, who, were more noble than the Jews of Thessalonica, because they searched the Scriptures to see whether these things were so. Oh, that the word of Christ may dwell in us richly! God forbid that any of us should ever turn aside offended because of HimHis blessed Person, His holy example, or His sacred teaching! May we be always ready to believe what He says and prompt to do what He commands!   
Remember, Brothers and Sisters, that the Gospel commission has three parts to which the minister has to attend. We are first, to go and preach the Gospel. Go you, and disciple all nations. The second thing is baptizing them. And the third thing is teaching them to observe all things whatever I have commanded you. As willing disciples of Jesus, let us press forward, listening to His voice, following in His footsteps and accounting His revealed will as our supreme law! Far be it from us to go back, to repine, or to desert Him, then, because we are offended at His Doctrines!   
Others there are who desert the Savior for the sake of gain. Many have been entangled in that snare. Mr. By-Ends originally went on pilgrimage because he thought it would pay. There was a silver mine on the road and he purposed to survey that and see whether silver might not be obtained, as well as the Golden City beyond! He came, if I remember rightly, of a family that got its living by the watermans businesslooking one way and pulling another. He was apparently striving for religion, though he had his eyes all the while on the world! He was for holding with the hare, and running with the hounds. So when he came to a point where he must part with one or the other, he considered upon which the whole would be most profitableand he gave up that which appeared to involve loss and self-sacrificeand kept to that which would, as he called it, help him in the main chance, and assist him to get on in the present life. Sincerely do I trust there is no one among us but what despises Mr. By-Ends and all of his class! If you would make moneyand there need be nothing sinful in thatdo let it be made honestly! Never let riches be pursued under the pretence of religion! Sell your wares and find a market for your merchandise, but do not sell Christ, nor barter a heavenly birthright for a worthless bribe. Put what goods you please into your shop window, but do not put a canting, hypocritical expression on your face, or wear a holy look, with a view of turning godliness into gain! God save us from that arrant villainy! May it never have a footing in our midst!   
*Neither man nor angel can discern   
Hypocrisy, the only evil that walks   
Invisible, except to God alone.*   
Does any man join a church for the sake of the respectability it implies, or for the standing it may give him, or for the credit he may get? He will soon find that it does not answer his purpose. Then away he will go! But the graver probability is that he will be thrust out with shame!   
Some leave Christ and go away terrified by persecution. Nowadays it is supposed that there is no such thing. But that is a mistake, for though martyrs are not burned at Smithfield, and the Lollards Tower is now a place for show (a memorial of times long ago), the harass, the cruelty and the oppression are far enough from being obsolete! Godless husbands play the part of petty tyrants and will not permit their wives the enjoyment of religion, but make their lives bitter with a galling bondage. Employers full often wreak malice on servants whose piety towards God is their sole cause of offense. Worse still, there are working men who consider themselves intelligent who cannot allow their fellow workman liberty to go to a place of worship without sneers, jeers, and cruel mocking! In many cases the mirth of the workshop is never louder than when it is turned against a Believer in Christ. They count it rare fun to hunt a man who cares for the salvation of His soul. They call themselves, Englishmen, but certainly they are no credit to their country! Look at the baseborn, ill-bred cowards! Yonder is an atheist! He is raving about his rights because the magistrate will not believe him on his oathhe claims liberty of conscience to be a heathen, but denies his comrades right to be a Christian! Look at that little party of British workmenthey belong to the Sabbath Desecration Society. They are petitioning Parliament to open museums and theaters on Sundays, and at the same time they are hounding to death a poor fellow who prefers going to Chapel. They air their own self-respect by the oaths they utter, while they betray their self-abasement by the scorn they vent on those who presume to sing a hymn! They hail the drunk as a chum and scorn the sober man as a fiend! I wonder that there is not more honorable feeling, more good faith and true fellowship among our skilled workmen than to allow of one man being made the butt of a whole community! God give you Grace to bear such persecutions as these! If they cut us to the quick, may we learn to bear them with equanimity, and even to rejoice that we are counted worthy to suffer for the Saviors sake!   
Some of us have had to run the gauntlet for many years. What we have said has been constantly misrepresented. What we have endeavored to do has been misjudged and our motives have been misunderstood. Yet here we are, as happy as anybody out of Heaven! We have not been injured by any or all the calumnies that have been heaped upon us. Our foes would have crushed us but, blessed be God, He cheered us often when we were cast down. The Lord give you, in like manner, strength of mind and courage of heart to bear the trial manfully! Then you will care no more for the laughter and the sneers of men than you do for the noise of those migratory birds high overhead which you hear on an autumn evening as they are making their weary journey to a distant clime! Take heart, Brothers and Sisters! Fear God and face your accusers. True courage grows strong on opposition. Never think of deserting the army of Christ! Least of all should you play the coward because the insolence of some ill-mannered bully. Let not your faith be vanquished by such scoffing. Alas, that so many a cowardly spirit has gone away for the sake of carnal easeand deserted Christ when His dear name had become the drunks jest and the derision of fools!   
And there are people who forsake true religion out of sheer levity. I know not how to account for some mens defections. If you take up the list of wrecks, you will notice some that have gone down through collisions, and others through striking rocksbut sometimes you meet with a vessel foundered at sea. How it happened, no one knows. The owner, himself, cannot understand it. It was a calm day and there was a cloudless sky when the vessel sank. There are some professors who, concerning faith, have made shipwreck under such apparently easy circumstances, so free from trial, so exempt from temptation, that we have not seen anything to awaken anxiety on their behalf, yet all of a sudden they have foundered! We are startled and amazed. I remember one that fell into a gross sin, of whom a Brother unwisely said, If that man is not a Christian, I am not. His prayers had certainly been sweet. Many a time they have melted me down before the Throne of Grace and yet the life of God could not have been in his soul, for he lived and died in flagrant viceand was impenitent to the last! Such cases I can only attribute to a sort of levity which can be charmed with a sermon or a play. They can take a pew at the Chapel or a box at the opera with equal nonchalance and eagerly follow the excitement of the hour, everything by turns, and nothing long. Unstable as water, they shall not excel. At the spur of a moment they profess Christianity, they do not espouse itand then, without troubling themselves to renounce itthey drop off into infidelity. They are soft and malleable enough to be hammered into any shape. Made of wax, they can be molded by any hand that is strong enough to grip them! The Lord have mercy upon any of you who may happen to be of that species! You spring up soon, and suddenly you wither! Hardly is the seed sown before the sprout appears. What a wonderful harvest you promise! But ah, no sooner has the sun risen with a burning heat than, because there is no earth, the good seed withers away! Pray God that you may be plowed deep, that the iron pan of rock underneath may be broken right up, that you may have plenty of subsoil and rootthat the verdure you produce may be permanent! Want of principle is deadly, but the lack is far too common. Never cease to pray that you may be rooted and grounded, established and built up in Christ, so that when the floods come and the winds blow, you may not fall with a great destruction, as that house fell which was built upon the sand!

And, oh, how many leave Christ for the sake of sensual enjoyments! I will not enlarge upon this. Certain, however, it is that the pleasures of sin for a season fascinate their minds till they sacrifice their souls at the shrine of sordid vanity! For a merry dance, a wanton amusement, or a transient joy that would not bear reflection, they have renounced the pleasures that never pall, the immortal hopes that never failand turned their backs upon that blessed Savior who gives and feeds the tastes for unspeakable joys, for joys full of glory! In our pastoral oversight of a Church like this, we have painful evidence that a considerable number gradually grow cold. The Elders reports of the absentees reiterate the vain excuses for nonattendance. One has so many children. The distance is too great for another. When they joined the Church their family was just as large, and the distance was just the same! But the household cares become more irksome when the concern for religion begins to flag and the fatigue of travelling increases when their zeal for the House of God falters. The Elders fear they are growing cold. No actual transgression can we detect, but there is a gradual declension over which we grieve. I dread that cold-heartedness! It steals so insensibly, yet so surely over the entire frame. I do not say that it is worse than open sin. It cannot be. Yet it is more insidious. A flagrant delinquency would startle one as a fit does a patient, but a slow process of backsliding may steal like paralysis over a person without awakening suspicion. Like the sleep which comes over men in the frozen regions, if they yield to it, they will never wake again! You must be awakened, or else this supineness will surely end in death! Gray hairs were upon him here and there, and he knew it not. Is it so with any of you, dear Friends? Are you going aside by slow degrees? He who loses his substance little by little presently becomes a bankrupt, and painful is the discovery when the end comes! How miserable must a spiritual bankruptcy be to him who wastes by degrees his heavenly estate, if he ever had any! No words can describe it. God preserve us from such a catastrophe!   
Some have turned aside, who allege that they did so through change of circumstances. They were with us when their means of livelihood were competent, if not affluent. From reverses in business, they have sunk in their social position. Hence they do not like to come into fellowship with us as they were known to do. Now from my inmost soul I can say if there are any persons that grew poor, I, for one, do not think one atom the less of them, or hold them in less esteem, however impoverished they may have become! Do not tell me that you have no clothes fit to come in, for any clothes that you have paid for are creditable. If you have not paid for them, I cannot make excuses for you. Be honest. Wool or fustian need not shame you, but for fineness or fashion I should certainly blame you! I am always glad to see Brothers and Sisters sitting here, as I sometimes do, in their smock frocks. One good friend is rather conspicuous in that line. The wholesome whiteness of his rural garb is rather attractive. If he has paid for it, he is a far more respectable man than anyone that has run into debt for a suit of broadcloth that he cannot pay for! And I rejoice to think that I am not merely expressing my own feeling, but that which is shared by the whole community! We all delight to see our poor Brothers and Sisters. If there are any of you suffering from a sensitiveness of your own, or a suspicion of our reflections, the sooner you get rid of such foolish pride, the happier you will be! You are jealous of being thought respectable? Dont you know that a man is respectable for his characternot for the money he has got in his pocket?   
Others forsake Christ because they have become rich and increased in goods. They did not scorn the little conventicle when they were plain, plodding peoplebut since fortune has smiled on them and they have moved their residence from a terrace to a mansion, and they have taken to keep a carriagethey feel bound to move in another circle! To the parish church, or to some ritualistic church in their neighborhood, they go once on the Sunday. They patronize the place by their presencethey show themselves among the elite of that locality. They bow and bend, and face about to the east, as though they had been to the manner born. They are too respectable to go into the little Baptist Chapel. They receive visitors in the afternoon, dine late, and dissipate Sabbath hours in the frivolous presence of showing off their gentility! Well, I think their departure is not to be lamented. When gone they are certainly no loss to anybody. We sigh for them as we would for Judas or Demas! They have fallen foul of what they thought their good fortune but of what has proved to be their ruin! Those who have true principles, when they rise in the world, see more reason why they should spend their wealth and their influence in aiding a good cause. Principle would prevail over policy to the end, if in their hearts they believed the Truth of God as it is in Jesus! It were no dishonor to a prince to go and sit down side by side with a pauper, were they both true followers of Jesus Christ! In old times, when our sires met in caves and dens of the earth, they met the liege and the lowly, the bond and free. Or when, in even earlier ages, the Christians gathered in the catacombs, men out of Caesars household, now a chief, then a senator, soon a prince of the blood, came and sat down in those caves, lighted up with the dim candle, to listen while some unshod but Heaventaught man declared the Gospel of Jesus with the power of the Holy Spirit! That they were illiterate, I am quite sure, for on looking over the monuments that are found in the catacombs, it is rare to find one inscription that is thoroughly well spelt. Though it is evident enough that the early Christians were an illiterate company of men, yet those that were great and noble did not disdain to join with them, nor will they if the light of Heaven shines and the love of God burns in their hearts!   
Unsound Doctrine occasions many to apostatize. There is always plenty of that about. Deceivers will beguile the weak and some have been led aside by modern doubtand modest infidelity has its partisans. They begin cautiously by reading works with a view to answer scientific or intellectual skepticism. They read a little more and dive a little deeper into the turbid stream, because they feel well able to stand against the insidious influence. They go on till, at last, they are staggered. They do not go to those who could help their scruples, but they continue to flounder on till at last they have lost their footingand he that said he was a Believer has ended in stark atheism, doubting even the existence of a God! Oh, that those who are well taught would be content with their teaching! Why meddle with heresies? What can they do but pollute your minds? Were I to get black, I imagine that I could wash away all the soils, but I would be sorry to black myself for the sake of washing! Why should you be so unwise as to go through pools of foul teaching merely because you think it easy to cleanse yourself of its pollution? Such trifling is dangerous! When you begin to read a book and find it pernicious, put it aside. Someone may upbraid you for not reading it all through, but why should you? If I have a roast on my table of which the smell and the taste at once convince me that it is putrid and unwholesome, should I show my discretion by fairly eating it all before giving my judgment that it is not fit for food? One mouthful is quite enough! And one sentence of some books ought to be quite enough for a sensible man to reject the whole mass! Let those who can relish such meat have it, but I have a taste for better food. If it is your duty to expose these evils, encounter them bravely, with prayer to God to help you. But if not, as a humble Believer in Jesus, what business have you to taste and test such noxious fare when it is exposed in the market? Keep to the study of the Word of God!  
I will not continue in this strain. It is painful to me, if not to you. I will condense into a few sentences my answer to the second enquiry   
II. WHAT BECOMES OF THEM?   
Those who go asidewhat becomes of them? Well, if they are Gods children, I will tell you what becomes of them, for I have seen it scores of times. Though they go aside, they are not happy. They cannot rest, for they are miserable even when they try to be cheerful. After a while they begin to remember their first Husband, for then it was better with them than now. They return, but there are scores and scores, to say nothing of the shame which they have to carry with them to their grave, who are never the men they were before! They have to take a second place among their comrades. And even should Sovereign Grace so wonderfully bless their painful experience that they are fully restored, they can never mention the past without bitter regret. Their by-path serving for others beacon, they will say to young people, Never do as I have done. Nothing good, all mischief, comes of it. In the vast majority of cases, however, they are not the Lords people. So this is what comes of it. Those who prove traitors to a profession they once made are the hardest people in the world to impress. Doubtless some of you, when you lived in the country, used always to be punctual at your usual places of worship, but since you have come to London, where your absence from any sanctuary is unnoticed, you rarely enter the courts of the Lords Housenor would you have been here tonight but for some special inducementsome country cousin or some particular friend having brought you. Though unknown to me, God scans your path. Well, here you are, and yet it may be to little profit. You have had counsels and cautions in such profusion that it is like pouring oil down a slab of marble to admonish you. May God in His Omnipotent Mercy break your stubborn heart, or there will be no hope for you! Such people frequently lose all conscience. They can go a deal further in talking against religion than anybody else. They will sometimes venture to say they know so much about it that they could expose it. Their boasts and their threats are alike unmeaningbut as boys whistle while they walk through the churchyard to keep their courage up, so do their vain talk and their senseless stories betray their stifled fear. They speak contemptuously of God while they justify themselves in a course of which their own conscience upbraids them! They go backalas, some of them to prove themselves the most abandoned sinners in the world! The raw material out of which the devil constructs the deadliest fabric is that which was presumed to be the most saintly substance.

There could not have been a Judas to betray Christ had he not first been distinguished as an Apostle, who ventured to kiss his Master. You must pick him from among the Apostles to make an apostate. As the ringleaders of riotous transgression, when converted, often make the best revivalist preachers, so those who seem to be the most loyal subjects of Christ, when they become renegades, prove to be the bitterest foes and the blackest sinners! Painful reminiscences rush over ones mind. Standing here now in the midst of a great Church, I call to mind things that have harrowed up my soul. God grant I may not see the likes of them again! They go away! Ah, me, full many of them go away to die in blank despair. Did you ever read the life of Francis Spira? If you want to sleep tonight, do not take up that memoir! Did you ever read the life of John Child, a Baptist minister of about 200 years ago? Mr. Keach gives it in one of his works. He was a man who knew the Truth of God and, to a great extent, had felt its power. But he went aside from it and before he came to die, his expressions were too terrible to listen to. The remorse and despair of his spirit chased everyone away. At last he laid violent hands upon himself. For a man, after having once looked Christ in the face and kissed Him, to betray Him and crucify Him afresh, to hang himself is not to be wondered at! To eat at the Lords Table, to drink of that cup of blessing, to mingle with the saints, join in their prayers and their hymns, professing to be a disciple of Christ and then to go back and walk no more with Him, is to venture on a course of no ordinary danger! The swing of the pendulum, if it has been lifted high and let go, is so much the greater on the other side. I marvel not that any man should be precipitated into flagrant sin who willfully renounces his vows of consecration to Jesus!   
And oh, when his eyes are opened and his conscience is awakened, how he wishes that he had never been born! Could he terminate his existence and annihilate his anguish-smitten soul, then the direst act of desperation by which he could end a life he could not mend, might be accounted wise. But no, that is impossible! The relief he seeks, he cannot find when he takes the dreadful leap from suffering here to an aggravated form of misery hereafter, ten thousand times worse to endure! He seals his doom and makes his own damnation sure, as he raises against himself a murdering hand. Do I address anyone here bereft of every ray of hope and shivering on the brink of cold despair? Hold now, I would cry in your ears do yourself no harm! You can do yourself no good! Think not to cure your woes by committing another crime   
*It were madness thus to shun the living light, And plunge your guilty soul in endless night.*   
While there is life there is hope! Jesus Christ can forgive you. Return to Him. He can wash you in His blood. He can make you clean, though your sin is as scarlet. But, oh, do not trifle, make no delay! Tarry no longer in your present condition, otherwise maybe you will fill up the measure of your iniquities before you are aware, and you may taste, even in this world, some beginning of the wrath to come! If not rescued as a trophy of Grace right speedily, you may become a monument of Gods wratha beacon to deter others from daring to turn aside! I speak solemnly, but I cannot help it. So intensely do I feel the terror of that woe, and so confident am I that some of you are making light of it, that I would go down on my knees and entreat you with tears to remind you what you are doing. You are on a steep plane and you are going down, down, down! Your feet are even now on the slippery places from which multitudes have been cast down into destruction! How are they brought into desolation as in a moment! The Lord make haste to deliver you! May He stretch out His hand and receive you! I can only call out to you. You seem to have got where I cannot reach you. Do not venture a footstep further on that dangerous road. Look to Jesus, look to Jesus! He can redeem your life from the pit of Hell by His Sovereign Grace, but He alone! Then as a wandering sheep, brought back to the fold, you shall adore His name!   
Our third point is this   
III. WHY SHOULD WE NOT GO AWAY AS THEY HAVE GONE?   
Were we left to ourselves, I cannot tell you any reason why we should not go as they have gone. Nor, indeed, could I tell you why the best man here would not be the worst before tomorrow morning, if the Grace of God left him. John Bradford, you know, as he saw the poor criminals taken away to Tyburn to be executed, used to say, There goes John Bradford, but for the Grace of God. Verily each one of us might say the same! To abide with Christ, however, is our only securityand we trust we shall never depart from Him. But how can we make sure of this? The great thing is to have a real foundation in Christ to begin withgenuine faith, vital godliness. The foundation is the first matter to be attended to in building a house. With a bad foundation there cannot be a substantial house. You require a firm bottom, a sound groundwork, before you proceed to the superstructure. Do pray God that if your religion is a sham, you may find it out now! Unless your hearts are deeply plowed with genuine repentance, and unless you are thoroughly rooted and grounded in the faith, you may have some cause to suspect the reality of your conversion and the verity of the Holy Spirits operation in you. May the Lord work in you a good beginning, and then you may rely upon it, He will carry it on to the day of Jesus Christ!   
Then remember, dear Brothers and Sisters, if you would be preserved from falling, you must be schooled in humility and keep very low before the Lord. When you are half an inch above the ground, you are that halfinch too high. Your place is to be nothing! Trust Christ, but do not trust yourself. Rely on the Spirit of God, but do not rely on anything that is in yourselfno, not on a Grace you have received, or on a gift you possess! Those do not slide who walk humbly with God. They are always safe whose entire dependence is upon God. Be jealous of your obedience! Be circumspect! Be careful! Take heed to yourselvesyour walk and conversation cannot be too cautious. Many are lost through being too remiss, but none through being too scrupulous. The statutes of the Lord are so right that you cannot neglect them without diverging from the path of rectitude. Watch and pray! God help you to watch, or else you will get drowsy. Never neglect prayer. That is at the root of every defection. Retrogression commonly begins at the closet. To restrain prayer is to deaden the very pulse of life! Watch unto prayer.   
And I beseech you, dear Friends, do shun that company which has led other people astray. Parley not with those whose jokes are profane. Keep right away from them. It is not for you to be seen standing, much less to be found sitting down with men of loose manners and lewd converse! They can do you no good, but the evil they can bring upon you, it would not be easy to estimate. You may have heard the storybut it is so good it will bear repeatingof the lady who advertised for a coachman, and was waited upon by three candidates for the situation. She put to the first one, this question, I want a really good coachman to drive my pair of horses and, therefore, I ask you how near you can drive to danger and yet be safe? Well, he said, I could drive very near, indeed! I could go within a foot of a precipice without fear of any accident so long as I had the reins. She dismissed him with the remark that he would not do. To the next one who came, she put the same question. How near could you drive to danger? Being determined to get the position, he said, I could drive within a hairs breadth, and yet skillfully avoid any mishap. You will not do, she said. When the third one came in, his mind was cast in another mold, so when the question was put to him, How near could you drive to danger? he said, Madam, I never tried. It has always been a rule with me to drive as far off from danger as I possibly can. The lady engaged him at once!   
In like manner, I believe that the man who is careful to run no risks and to refrain from all equivocal conduct, having the fear of God in his heart, is most to be relied upon. If you are really built upon the Rock of Ages, you may meet the question without dismay, Will you also go away? and you can reply without presumption, No, Lord, I cannot, and I will not go, for to whom should I go? You have the words of eternal life. And may the very God of Peace wholly sanctify you! And I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is He that calls you, who also will do it! Amen.

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PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #3210 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

CLINGING TO CHRIST   
NO. 3210

A SERMON   
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, AUGUST 11, 1910.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, JULY 12, 1863.

*Then Jesus said unto the twelve, Will you also go away? Then Simon Peter answered Him, Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. John 6:67, 68.*

[See Sermons #2914, Volume 50A MOURNFUL DEFECTION and #1646, Volume 28 A HOME QUESTION AND A RIGHT ANSWER  
Read/download both sermons, free of charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.]

I. WITHOUT any preface, we will proceed at once to consider the first division of our subject, which is that THE PREACHING OF THE DOCTRINES OF TRUTH IS OFTEN THE MEANS OF SEPARATING THE PRECIOUS FROM THE VILE.

In the case before us, we see that the preaching of the Lord Jesus Christ acted like a great winnowing machine. His nominal disciples were like a heap of wheat and chaff all mingled together on the threshing floor. His words were like a mighty wind passing through the whole mass, separating the chaff from the wheat and driving it awayleaving only the good corn lying all around Him. This leads me to say that apart from afflictions, temptations and persecutions, the preaching of the Gospel is, in itself, a means of dividing the true followers of Christ from those who are only His disciples in name and, wherever there is a faithful, Christ-like ministry, you will find many going away from it for the very same reasons that those nominal disciples went away from Christ. From that time many of His disciples went back and walked no more with Him.

Some went away from Christ because His doctrine was too mysterious. They heard His wondrous words only with their outward ears and, judging them in the letter and not comprehending the spirit of them, they said, This is a hard saying; who can hear it? They misunderstood and misrepresented what intelligent Sunday school children nowadays easily comprehend! And as they did not know what the Savior really meant, they argued that this was a reason why they should not listen to Him any longer. We must, therefore, not be surprised if when we are speaking to our congregations upon the deep things of God, there are some who do not comprehend the spiritual meaning of what we are saying, and who, instead of patiently waiting until they can understand it, or coming to us for an explanation of their difficulties, turn away from us, crying, We will hear no more of these mysteries! We cannot at once understand them and, therefore, we will not take the trouble to learn what the preacher intends to teach us by them.

Others went away from Christ because His teaching was too spiritual for them. He said to them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except you eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, you have no life in you. They gave only a carnal interpretation to Christs words and altogether missed their spiritual meaning. If He had talked to them as the Pharisees did, they would have understood Him and enjoyed His message. If Christ had spoken to them about phylacteries, making broad the borders of their garments, the tithing of mint and anise and cummin, fasting two or three days in a week and washing their hands before they ate bread, they would have comprehended such talk as that and would have exceedingly liked it! And there are still many, even in England, who would listen gladly to the praise of mere outward rites and ceremonies and who would find intense satisfaction in millinery, wax candles, crosses and anything that is externally ornamental or attractivebut they have no love for that which is spiritual! Our Lords teaching was too spiritual for those nominal followers of His. He did not give them husks such as swine might relish, but He gave them the very kernels of the Truth of God and, therefore, they turned away from Him. He gave them not chaff, but the very finest of the wheatbut they, being unrenewed by Divine Grace and, therefore, having no appetite for such food, went back, and walked no more with Him. And every ministry that is truly spiritual will drive away some who come for a while under its influence, for there are still many to be found who will say, If the preacher would confine himself to moral duties, or even to Scripture histories, we would not mind listening to him. But when he talks about feeding upon Christ, and about communion with Jesus, and about the spiritual separated life, these are things of which we know nothing and of which we do not wish to know anything. And so they go their way.

Others there were, no doubt, who were offended with Christ because what He said glorified Himself. He contrasted Himself with the manna that their fathers ate in the wilderness and of which they naturally thought very highly, for man then ate angels food. But Jesus said, Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead...I am the Living Bread which came down from Heaven: if any man eat of this Bread, he shall live forever. He proclaimed Himself the Son of Man who came down from Heaven and who would go back to Heavenand this offended themand there are still many to whom the glorifying of Christ is obnoxious. If the Doctrine that is preached glorifies the Creator and abases the creature, there are some of our hearers who at once get angry! They cannot endure the extolling of our glorious Lord and Master. Our praise of Him makes discord in their ears. If we would prate about the dignity of human nature. If we would extol that poor foolish creature, the son of Adam, they would be pleased enough! But to put all crowns upon Jesus Christs head, to ascribe all honor and glory to Him and to Him aloneto preach up nothing but a full Christ for empty sinnersthere are many who will be annoyed by such preaching as this and straightway they will turn back and walk no more with us.

Chiefly, however, Christs nominal disciples left Him because His preaching was too personal for them. He proclaimed what was in their hearts and, therefore, He spoke to them with the utmost directness. And this plainness of speech offended them, so they turned away from Him. How many sermons have been preached before people and how few have been preached at them! Yet the sermons that are preached before us are good for nothing, but the sermons that are preached at us are the only ones that are likely to be blessed to us! We have known some hearers who have winced considerably when the preaching has been plain and personal. The description of their case has been so graphic and the cap fitted them so well that, rather than wear it, they have taken themselves to a preacher with a smoother tongue, who

*To soothe the unholy throng*   
has laid aside the boldness of speech which it is both his privilege and his duty to exercise! There are some of our hearers who suspect that somebody has told the minister all about thembut what has happened is that God has guided the preacher unconsciously to picture them so accurately that they cannot help recognizing their own portrait! One says, I do not like the preacher because he tells me so much about my sins. Another, who is a drunk, says, I do not like him because, after listening to him, I cannot enjoy my cups as I did before. Another, who is the slave of some other form of sin, says, I do not like him because he lays the axe to the very root of the tree of my sin. His blows come too closely home to please me. There are others who are not honest enough to confess that it is so with them, also, but though they may not admit it, this is really the factthey do not like the Truth of God because the Truth of God does not like them!

We have in all our congregations a certain number of hearers who make great professions for a time, but afterwards go back and leave us. The reason very often being that the preaching has sifted them out from the wheat and proved that they are only chaff. I know that some of you feel very uncomfortable when I am preaching the Doctrine of Election or any of the other great Doctrines of Sovereign Grace. I am very sorry for any of you who cannot appreciate those glorious Truths of God in which my soul delights itself to the fullestand I would earnestly and solemnly urge you to examine yourselves to see whether you have ever had Divine Grace in your hearts at all if you do not love to hear the Doctrines of Grace preached! There are others, though not many in this congregation, who are not pleased when I begin preaching concerning human responsibility and the duty of sinners to repent and believe the Gospel. They do not like to hear me proclaim that part of the Truth of God, though they revel in Divine Sovereignty, Predestination, Election and such great Truths! So it comes to pass that there is, occasionally, a small stream of hearers trickling away towards Antinomianism, and another stream flowing in the opposite direction towards legalism! I hope that at least in the case of some of them, though they leave us, they do not, at the same time, leave Christ! A man may turn away from sound Doctrine and yet may not have left a personal Savior. Though he may have rejected some part of the Truth of God, he may still have his finger upon the hem of Christs garment, and so may remain in contact with Him. But I am greatly afraid that there are some who leave us, who go away to Hell! Some who, when they forsake the Lords House, also forsake the Lord of the house. Some who, when they leave the congregation of the saints, also leave the King of saints and turn aside unto crooked ways.

II. Well now, suppose that they do leave Christ when they leave us? That suggests a second topic of consideration in our text, which is that WHEN SOME PEOPLE GO AWAY, WE MUST NOT BE SURPRISED, NOR UNDULY ALARMED.

You notice that in the narrative there is no mention of any remark by Christ concerning those who had turned back, nor any expression of a desire for their return. He could read their hearts and knew the motives that had caused them to reject His teaching and cease to be even nominally His followers, so He turned to His 12 Apostles and put to them the pathetic question which we will presently examineWill you also go away? This silence of our Savior concerning those who were driven away from Him by His preaching of the Truth of God suggests that they were not plants of His Fathers right-hand planting, but only weeds that had to be pulled up by the roots and thrown away!

Among Christs nominal disciples, there were some who followed Him for the loaves and fishes. They enjoyed His discourses, especially those that finished up with the feeding of the multitude! They were greatly gratified by being in His society, especially when they shared in the distribution that was made to the poor out of the bag that Judas carried as treasurer to the company. They always profited under Christs ministry, but if they did not profit in spirituals, they took good care to profit in temporals! These were the people who went away from Christ when He set before them the spiritual meat and drink which had no attraction for them. No, they said, we did not bargain for that kind of fare. Let those have it who like it. As for us, we need something more substantial than that and, therefore, from that time they went back, and walked no more with Him. There are a few people of this sort in most congregations even now. They always have an eye to anything material that can be gained by mingling with the disciples of Christ. But as soon as there are no more loaves and fishes to be had, no more doles or grants or giftsaway they go and we see them no more in our midst! Now, when such people as these take offense at the Truth of God and leave us, we really need not regret their going except for their own sakes. While they remain with us, there is always a faint hope that some higher motive may cause them to stay and that the nominal follower of Christ may become one of His true disciples. But, apart from that view of the case, we cannot greatly mourn when He, whose fan is in His hand, drives away the chaff which has been all too long reckoned as wheat!

Then, among the apparent disciples of Christ, were some who followed Him because they were charmed by His oratory. Even the officers who were sent by the chief priests and Pharisees to arrest Christ returned without Him and gave as their excuse for not taking Him, Never man spoke like this Man. He was, indeed, unrivalled in His eloquence. His parables were so interesting that they won the attention of the multitudethe common people heard Him gladly. There is a great power of attraction in real natural oratoryand in our Lords case there was a Divine Power far beyond anything to which the loftiest human eloquence has ever attained. So there were many who said, We never heard such a preacher as this before. Wherever He preaches, there is sure to be a crowd. The multitudes throng around Him and press upon Him! Let us also go and hear Him. As they listened to Him, their ears were charmed, but their hearts were not changed and, by-and-by, they went back, and walked no more with Him. We also have had nominal adherents of this sort. We are always glad to see all who come to hear the Word, but if they unite with the disciples of Christ simply because of some excellence of speech which they admire in the preacher and are not, themselves, truly converted, the sooner such dross is scrummed from the surface of the molten gold, the better will it be for the gold!

Others, no doubt, followed Christ for a time because they liked anything new, curious and singular. Here was a strange preacher who had not even a house to live in. The foxes had holes and the birds of the air had nests, but He had nowhere to lay His head. He was also a preacher who said and did unusual things. He saw some lilies growing and He said, Consider the lilies how they grow: they toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. He pointed to some ravens flying overhead, and said, Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have storehouse nor barn; and God feeds them: how much more are you better than the fowls? He was a preacher who used simple language, so that even children could comprehend it! Yet, at the same time, He talked so wondrously that the people were astonished at His Doctrine, for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. Yet, when the novelty of His teaching had worn off, they went back, and walked no more with Him. There are some people of this sort still livingthey go to hear every fresh preacher who attracts a crowd and they may be sufficiently fascinated to gain admission to the church. But they vanish as soon as there is a new attraction! And any church that has had them on its roll need not sorrow greatly when the chaff is winnowed from the wheat.

So I might go on describing those who go away from us even as Christs nominal followers went away from Him, but I will just say to any minister here who has lost any of his hearers through his faithful preaching of the Truth, Do not fret, my dear Brother, on their account, and do not abate a single jot or tittle of anything that you believe to be the Truth of God. I would not alter my preaching in order to retain any individual, however eminent or influential he might be. Others may fish for him if they like, but I shall not. My business is to declare my Masters message exactly as He has revealed it to me in His Word and by His Spirit! I am responsible to Him for the faithful discharge of the duties to which He has called meand when I have, in His name, fully and fearlessly proclaimed all the Truth that He has taught me, I am not to be blamed if some refuse to receive the Word, and so it becomes a savor of death unto death to them. It was so with the preaching of our Lord Himself, for there were many who went back, and walked no more with Him, when He uttered Truths of God which were unpalatable to them.

III. Now I come to the very important matter upon which I want to especially speak to you, as it particularly concerns you who are now present. Some have gone out from us because they were not of us, for if they had really been of us they would doubtless have continued with us. And this fact suggests the need of putting to you THE SOLEMN QUESTION WHICH OUR LORD PUT TO HIS DISCIPLESWill you also go away?

Every word in this question is important. Let us first consider the little pronoun, you. Will you also go away? You, the 12 who have been with Me from the beginning. You who have been with Me in my tribulation and have shared My reproach. You who were, some of you with Me on the Mount of Transfiguration and in the room where the little maid was bid to risewill you go away from Me? To you, Christ seemed to say, I have expounded the parables as I never explained them to the mixed multitude. To you I have unlocked the mysteries of the Kingdom of God. To you My heart has been opened as it has been to no one elseI have not kept back from you anything that was good for you to know you are My chosen ones, My favorites, My much-loved ones. To deliver you from peril, I walked upon the stormy waves. To preserve you in the time of temptation, I spent whole nights in prayer. Upon you I have poured a plenitude of blessingswill you go away from Me after all this? Now Christ seems to me to put this solemn, personal question to you, my dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ! Will you go away from Him after all that He has done for you? You believe that you have been called by His Grace, for you have enjoyed the sweetness of His love and you have been admitted into close personal fellowship with Him. The secret of the Lord is with you who fear Him. He has delivered you in six troubles, and in seven no evil has touched you. You bear your willing witness that He is a gracious Lord and Master, and that He has been a precious Christ to you! Indeed, you say that He is your All-in-All and that words fail you to tell all that you think of Him! Then can you, will you go away from Him after all this? I think I know what your answer must be, but I will not speak of that just now.

Now put the emphasis upon the first word in the question Will you also go away? Matthew Henry says that our Lord left the disciples to make the choice whether they would go or stayand then he observes that, Christ will detain none with Him against their wills. His soldiers are volunteers, not pressed men. Christ also says to us who profess to be His disciples, Will you go away from Me? Remember this, beloved Friends, although the Spirit of God keeps us following Christ, yet He never does this against our wills. He makes us willing in the day of His power, but still, it is quite true that Christ has no unwilling followers. If you are willing to leave Him. If your will would permit you to be a deserter from the army of Christ, you have already deserted! So I put the question to you as though the whole matter rested with you, Will you go away from your Lord and Master? Do you really wish to leave your Savior? Do you, in your heart, say, I will never again endure suffering and reproach for His names sake. I will never again put my trust in Him who died upon the Cross. I will go back to the world and be content with the worlds joys and pleasures? Will you thus go away from Christ and walk no more with Him?

Then take the next word in the question: Will you also go away? There is often a disposition in us to do what others do. Young man, you know that your father, who once professed to be a follower of Christ, afterwards apostatized. Will you, also, go back because he turned traitor to Christ? When some great monarch among the trees of the forest feels the woodmans axe and quivers and, at last, falls with a tremendous crash, many a shrub and plant that grew securely near it are crushed to death by its fall. And so, sometimes, when some great professor falls and goes down to destruction, there are many young Believers, growing, as it were, under his shadow, who are in imminent peril of being dragged down with him! Now, my young Friends, you have heard that So-and-So and Soand-So have turned back, like Pliable, to the City of Destructionwill you also go away? Will the tide also sweep you away, or will you, by the Grace of God, swim against it? There it goes, broad and deep! Upon its surface is the foam of pleasure, but in its depths is the damnation of Hellwill you also float adown it as multitudes of others are doing, or will you stem the current

*Strong in the strength which God supplies Through His eternal Son?*

We must, all of us know some of these reprobates who once were numbered among the people of God. There is one who used to partake of the Communion Cup at the Lords Table, but now he is drinking of the cup of devils at the bar of the gin palacewill you also go away as he has gone? There is another who used to go up to the House of Prayer and his voice was often heard at the Prayer Meetings. But the greed of gold sized him and now he is a sordid money-grabber and he would grind an orphans bones if they would make him bread! Will you also go away as he has gone? Saddest of all, there is one who used to preach the Gospel and many were charmed by his brilliant oratory. But now he is blaspheming God with his fellow infidels! Will you also go away as he has gone? Young men and women, and old ones, too, you see what the apostates have become! You see what has happened to some who apparently did run well, but who never really started in the right courseor they would have continued in it till they reached the goal. You see how some who left the harbor with a fair wind and all sails set have made shipwreck of faith because they never knew the Grace of God in truthare you willing to be like they? Will you also go away? I know I shall not be alone in giving the answer that John Newton puts into his well-known hymn

*When any turn from Zions way   
(Alas, what numbers do)!   
I think I hear my Savior say,   
Will you forsake Me too?   
Ah, Lord, with such a heart as mine,   
Unless You hold me fast   
I feel I will! I shall decline,   
And prove like they at last.   
What anguish has that question stirred, If I will also go?   
Yet, Lord, relying on Your Word,   
I humbly answer, No.*

IV. Now, as briefly as we can, let us consider PETERS REPLY TO OUR LORDS QUESTION, and I hope that many a heart here will make that reply its own. It was a grand answer! There is a magnificence about it which I cannot expect to bring out to the fullestLord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.

Lord, to whom shall we go? When I was meditating upon this subject yesterday, I turned that question over and over again in my mind and I asked myself, Where could I go if I were to forsake my Lord? Earth has no place where I could hide my guilty head if I, after preaching the Gospel to others, should desert the Cross of Christ! Not even across the ocean could I find a harbor of refuge or a hermits cave where I could secure seclusion if I tried to run away from my Lord. I would be hounded and denounced everywhere by those who know my name, even if they do not know me, as one who has preached the Gospel to tens of thousands. And I should be pointed at by the finger of scorn and all who have desired my fall would gloat over itand think me only fit to be a football for Satan and his hosts to kick. I can indeed adopt John Newtons lines and say with him to my dear Lord and Savior

*To whom or where could I go   
If I should turn from You?*

That is how I personally feel with regard to Peters reply to our Lords question. Will each one of you put the matter before yourself from your own standpoint as I have put it from mine? Let me take the case of any avowed follower of Christ here. Where could you go to find comfort if you should forsake your Lord? Suppose you turn from Christperhaps you might try to find peace and comfort in ceremonies. Can you imagine yourself sitting or kneeling in a Popish place of worship? Can you think of yourself as trying to get comfort by watching those boys in white swinging the smoking censers, or those men in blue and purple and scarlet and fine linen bowing before their images and chanting in a language that you probably do not understand? Can you imagine yourself deriving comfort from those wax candles, those crucifixes or that little wafer-god of which the idolaters think so much? Could you get comfort out of the gorgeous architecture, the dim religious light, the pealing organ and all the paraphernalia inseparably associated with the Romish ritual? If you should ever spend a few minutes in one of those places, I think you would say, Well, whatever becomes of me, I could not come here! I know too much to ever put any trust in such childish ceremonies and superstitious observances. I cannot imagine my soul ever being satisfied with such husks as these.

Next, let us suppose that you go to Moses and try to be saved by the Law. As you have given up Christ, you try whether you cannot find comfort in your own good works. You become eminently religious, devout, charitable, moral and upright. You try, from morning till night, to live a perfect life. You are wanting to see if you can, by any means, build a road to Heaven for yourself, or construct a ladder out of your own good works by which you can reach Gods Presence in Glory. Now, my Brothers and Sisters in Christ, what do you think of such a scheme as this? Oh, Sir! says one friend, I once tried to go round by Mount Sinai, but there were such lightning and thunderand the mountain was so full of terror to me that I dare not go that way again! Whatever else I might do, I could not go back again to the beggarly elements of the old Law! I did once think that I could be saved by my own good works, but I found that I had launched my boat upon such a stormy sea that I was glad to get back to land againand I shall never again venture out upon those perilous waters. I expect this friend says just what many more of you feelthat you could no more go back to Moses, and seek to be saved by the Lawthan you could hope to be saved by Popish rites and ceremonies!

We will suppose, next, that you try to live an utterly careless life. Let us imagine, if we can, that you give up all thoughts of religion, that you do not attend any place of worship, that you abandon your present habit of prayer, Bible reading and so on, and that you just settle down to attend to your earthly business and have no care about the business of the world to come! Can you manage to do that? There are many, all around us, who are constantly acting thusand some of them are quite used to it by this time, for they have never cared for anything but the things of time and sense. But I am quite sure there is no true child of God who could live such a life as that! If some of you were to stay away from the House of God for a month, you know that you would be utterly miserable! You could not help thinking about Divine thingsthey would force themselves upon you, for you have a conscience which is neither dead nor seared. It is like that Mr. Conscience, of whom John Bunyan says in his Holy WarThe old gentleman, too, the Recorder, who was so before Diabolus took Mansoulhe also began to talk aloud. And his words were now to the town of Mansoul as if they were great claps of thunder. It is so with you, and that enlightened and awakened conscience of yours would make you, of all men, most miserable if you tried to live a careless, godless life! Why, you know that even when you are dull and heavy with regard to spiritual things, you are most unhappy, and you cry out in your agony

*Dear Lord, and shall we always live*

*At this poor dying rate?*   
Well, if you cannot endure that state of things even in a small degree, it is quite certain that you could not endure it altogether! So, if you think of leaving your Lord, it is evident that you could not live in utter carelessness.

Suppose that you turn aside to the pleasures of the world . Suppose you take a ticket tomorrow evening for the theater and go there? The moment you had taken your seat, you would say to yourself, I wish I had never come in this place. And as soon as the performance began, you would be so nervous and unhappy that at every creaking noise, or the slamming of a door, you would fear that the building was about to tumble down upon you! Such amusements as these are not for us who profess to be followers of the Crucified! Let others do as they pleasewe do not interfere with their liberty. We believe that husks are the proper food for swine, but we have no desire to share the feast with them! And we leave the worlds pleasures to the men of the world who have their portion in this life. If we have really received a new life, and been made partakers of the Divine Nature, it would be no use for us to seek satisfaction in the worlds pleasureswe would be obliged to cry out, Vanity of vanities! All is vanity!

Now just once more, suppose we leave Christ and turn to the lower and grosser forms of vice. Why, the mere suggestion seems to make our blood run cold and then to make us blush with shame at the very thought of such degradation! Some of us tremble every time we hear a profane oath or a blasphemous or obscene expressionand we would rather be tied up and whipped with a cat-onine-tails, than live among those who are continually cursing God! And as for doing it, ourselves, we would rather that our tongue should cleave to the roof of our mouth, or that we should be dumb for the rest of our lives! If one has ever known the woe, sorrow and redness of eyes of the drunkand been saved from such sin and wretchedness by Sovereign Gracehow can he or she ever go back to their cups again? If one has been the companion of a harlot and has tasted the bitterness of life (or rather, death) in the house of the strange womanand yet has been delivered by Almighty Gracehow can you ever again wallow in such filth? The very thought of such a thing makes us shudder and it is well that it does! God has made all sin to be full of vinegar and gall to a Christian! And there is nothing sweet to him, the wide world over, but that which appertains to Christ! No, my Brothers and Sisters, we cannot go back to the world and to sin! We must cling to Christ, for there is nowhere else for us to go if we should ever leave Him. Respectable carelessness refuses us and disreputable sin rejects us after we are once united to Christ! Even the world could not endure us when once we have lost our taste for its follies and its sins. We cannot go back, we have burnt our boats and destroyed our bridgesthe only course left to us is to follow our glorious Leader wherever He goes before us here and then to follow Him forever in that blest state where it shall be impossible for us to go away from Him!

My time has almost gone, but I must remind you of the last words of Peters reply to his LordYou have the words of eternal life. I hope that you, also, dear Brothers and Sisters, feel that you cannot turn back from Christ because He has saved you by His Grace. What He has done for us must bind us forever to Him! He has loved us with an everlasting love. He has given Himself for us on Calvarys Cross. He has given us His Spirit and Worda new heart and a right spirit has He put within uswe cannot and we will not desert Him after all this! Besides, He is our hope for the eternity of bliss that we expect to share with Him. All our hopes of life beyond the grave center in Him. Apart from Him, there would be nothing for us but the blackness of darkness forever! So it is impossible for us to turn away from Him. No, we must cling to Him whatever happens, for there is nothing or no one that can ever take His place

*None among the sons of men,   
None among the heavenly train,   
Can with Jesus Christ compare,   
None so sweet, and none so fair!*

I wish that some who have never yet been followers of the Lord Jesus Christ would become His disciples right now. But remember that if you enlist beneath His banner, it is for life. The Captain of our salvation has not six-months soldiersHe grants no discharge from His army till the fight is fought, the victory won and the crown is bestowed upon those who have been faithful even unto death! Those are the conditions of His service. Will you accept them and enlist in His army tonight? There is nothing for you to pay, but everything for you to receive! Open your empty hand, bring your empty heart and receive Christand so shall you be enlisted into His service! And more than that, you shall become members of the great family of the redeemed, for as many as received Him, to them He gave power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name. Believe on Him now and you, too, shall become the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus! And then if He says to you, when others turn back and walk no more with Him, Will

you also go away? you will answer, as Peter did, Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. The Lord bless you, for Jesus Christs sake! Amen.

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I WILL, YET, NOT AS I WILL   
NO. 2376

**A SERMON INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS DAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 1894.   
DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, JULY 1, 1883.

**Father, I will. Not as I will.   
John 7:24. Matthew 16:39.**

We have, here, two prayers uttered by the same Person, yet there is the greatest possible contrast between them. How different men are at different times! Yet Jesus was always essentially the samethe same yesterday, and today, and forever. Still, His mood and state of mind varied from time to time. He seemed calmly happy when He prayed with His disciples and said, Father, I will that they, also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am; that they may behold My Glory, which You have given Me. But He was in an agony when, in Gethsemane, having withdrawn from His disciples and fallen on His face, He prayed, saying, O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me: nevertheless not as I will, but as You will. It is the same Man and an unchangeable Man, too, as to His essence, who uttered both prayers, yet see how different were His frames of mind and how different the prayers He offered! Brother, you may be the same man and quite as good a man when you are groaning before God as when you are singing before Him. There may be more Grace, even, in the submissive, Not as I will, than in the triumphant, Father, I will. Do not judge yourselves to have changed in your standing before God because you have undergone an alteration as to your feelings. If your Master prayed so differently at different times, you, who have not the fullness of Grace that He had, must not wonder if you have a great variety of inward experiences.

Notice, also, that it was not only the same Person, but that He used these two expressions almost at the same time. I do not know how many minutesI had better say minutes rather than hoursintervened between the Last Supper, the wonderful high-priestly prayer and the agonizing cries of Gethsemane. I suppose that it was only a short walk from Jerusalem to the olive garden and that it would not occupy long to traverse the distance. At one end of the walk Jesus prays, Father, I will, and at the other end of it, He says, Not as I will. In like manner, we may undergo great changes and have to alter the tone of our prayers in just a few minutes. You prayed, just now, with holy confidence. You took firm hold of the Covenant Angel and, with wrestling Jacob, you said, I will not let You go, except You bless me. And yet it may be equally becoming on your part, within an hour, to lie in the very dust and, in agony, cry unto the Lord, Pardon my prayers, forgive me that I was too bold, and hear me, now, as I cry to You and say, Not as I will, but as You will.

*If but my fainting heart is blessed   
With Your sweet Spirit for its guest,   
My God, to You I leave the rest   
Your will be done!*

Never be ashamed because you have to mend your prayers! Be careful not to make a mistake if you can help it, but, if you make one, do not be ashamed to confess it and to correct it as far as you can. One of our frequent mistakes is that we wonder that we make mistakes. Whenever a man says, I should never have thought that I could have done such a foolish thing as that, it shows that he does not really know himself, for had he known himself, he would rather have wondered that he did not do worse, and he would have marveled that he acted as wisely as he did. Only the Grace of God can teach us how to run our prayers down the scale from the high note of, Father, hear me, for You have said, Ask what you will, right down to the deep, deep bass of, Father, not as I will, but as You will.

I must further remark that these two prayers were equally characteristic of Christ. I think that I should know my Lord by His voice in either of them. Who but the eternal Son of God may dare to say, Father, I will? There speaks Incarnate Deity! That is the sublime utterance of the wellbeloved Son. And yet, who could say as He said it, If it is possible, let this cup pass from Me: nevertheless not as I will, but as You will. Perhaps you have uttered those words, dear Friend, but in your case they were not concerning such a cup of woe as Christ emptied! There were but a few drops of gall in your cup. His was all bitterness, from the froth to the dregsall bitternessand such bitterness as, thank God, you and I can never taste! That cup He has drained to the dregs and we shall not have to drink one drop from it. And it was of that cup that He saidand I detect the voice of the Son of God, the Son of Man, in that brief utteranceNot as I will, but as You will.

My two texts make up a strange piece of music. Blessed are the lips that know how to express the confidence that rises to the height as far as we can go with Christand descends, even, to the deeps as far as we can go with Him in full submission to the will of God! Does anybody say that he cannot understand the contrast between these two prayers? Dear Friend, it is to be explained thus. There was a difference of position in the Suppliant on these two occasions. The first prayer, Father, I will, is the prayer of our great High Priest with all His heavenly garments onthe blue, and purple, and fine twined linen, and the pomegranates, and the golden bells, and the breastplate with the 12 precious stones bearing the names of His chosen people. It is our great High Priest, in the Glory of His majestic office and power, who says to God, Father, I will.

The second Suppliant is not so much the Priest as the Victim. Our Lord is there seen bound to the altar, about to feel the sacrificial knife, about to be consumed with the sacrificial fire, and you hear Him as though it were a lamb bleating, and the utterance is, Not as I will, but as You will. The first petition is the language of Christ in power pleading for us. The second is the utterance of Christ made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. That is the difference of position that explains the contrast in the prayers.

Let me tell you, also, that there is a difference in the subject of His supplication which is full of instruction. In the first prayer, where our Lord says so majestically, Father, I will, He is pleading for His people. He is praying for what He knows to be the Fathers will. He is officiating, there, before God as the very mouthpiece of God, and speaking of something about which He is perfectly clear and certain. When you are praying for Gods people, you may pray very boldly. When you are pleading for Gods cause, you may speak very positively. When you know you are asking what is definitely promised in the Scriptures as part of the Covenant ordered in all things and sure, you may ask without hesitation, as our Lord did.

But, in the second case, Jesus was praying for HimselfIf it is possible, let this cup pass from Me. He was praying about a matter, concerning which He did not, as Man, know the Fathers will, for He says, If it is possible. There is an, if, in itIf it is possible, let this cup pass from Me. Whenever you go upstairs in an agony of distress and begin to pray about yourself, and about a possible escape from suffering, always say, under such circumstances, Nevertheless not as I will, but as You will. It may be given you, sometimes, to pray very boldly even in such a case as that, but, if it is not given you, take care that you do not presume. I may pray for healing for my body, but not with such confidence as I pray for the prosperity of Zion and the Glory of God. That which has to do with myself I may ask as a child of God asks of his Father, but I must ask submissively, leaving the decision wholly in His hands, feeling that, because it is for myself, rather than for Him, I must say, Nevertheless not as I will, but as You will.

I think that there is a plain lesson, here, for Christians to take heed that, while they are very confident on one subject for which they pray, they are equally submissive on another, for there is a heavenly blending in the Christian character, as there was in Christs Character, a firm confidence and yet an absolute yielding to the will of Godlet that will be what it may

*Lord, my times are in Your hands.   
All my sanguine hopes have planned   
To Your wisdom I resign,   
And would make Your purpose mine.*

Now all this while, you may say that I have only been going round the text. Very well. But, sometimes, there is a good deal of instruction to be picked up around a text. The manna fell round about the camp of Israel. Perhaps there is some manna round about this text. May the Lord help every one of us to gather his portion!

I want you now, for a few minutes, to view this great Suppliant in the two moods in which He prayed, Father, I will and, Not as I will, and then to combine the two. We will, first, view Jesus in the power of His intercession. Next, we will talk of Jesus in the power of His submission. And in the third place, we will try to combine the two prayers, I will, yet, Not as I will.

I. First, let us view Jesus IN THE POWER OF HIS INTERCESSION, saying, Father, I will.   
Where did He derive that power? Who enabled Him thus to speak with God and say, Father, I will? First, Jesus prayed in the power of His Sonship. Sons may say to a father what strangers may not dare to say and such a Son as Jesus was so near to His Fathers heart, He was One who could say, The Father has not left Me alone; for I always do those things that please Him. He was One of whom the Father had said, This is My Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Well might He have power with God so as to be able to say, Father, I will.

Next, He derived this power from the Fathers eternal love to Him. Did you notice how, in the very verse from which our text is taken, Jesus says to His Father, You loved Me before the foundation of the world? We cannot conceive what the love of the Father is to Christ Jesus His Son! Remember, they are one in Essence. God is oneFather, Son and Holy Spirit and, as the Incarnate God, Christ is unspeakably dear to the Fathers heart. There is nothing about Him of which the Father disapproves. There is nothing lacking in Him which the Father would desire to see there. He is Gods ideal of HimselfIn Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. Well may One who is the subject of His Fathers eternal love be able to say, Father, I will.   
But our Lord Jesus also based this prayer upon His finished work. I grant you that He had not yet actually died, but in the certain prospect of His doing so, He had said to His Father, I have glorified You on the earth: I have finished the work which You gave Me to do. Now, He has actually finished it, He has been able, in the fullest sense, to say, It is finished, and He has gone up to take His place in Glory at His Fathers side. You remember the argument with which Paul begins his Epistle to the HebrewsGod, who at sundry times and in divers manners spoke in times past unto the fathers by the Prophets, has in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds; who being the brightness of His Glory, and the express image of His Person and, upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had, by Himself, purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; being made so much better than the angels, as He has, by inheritance, obtained a more excellent name than they. For unto which of the angels said He at any time, You are My Son, this day have I begotten You? And again, I will be to Him a Father, and He shall be to Me a Son?   
When the Father looks at Christ, He sees in Him Atonement accomplished, satisfaction presented, sin annihilated, the elect redeemed, the Covenant ratified, the everlasting purpose settled on eternal foundations! O Beloved, since Christ has magnified Gods Law and made it honorableand since He has poured out His soul unto deathHe may well possess the power to say, Father, I will.   
Remember, too, that Jesus still possesses this power and possesses it for you and for me. O my dear Hearers, you may well go to Christ and accept Him as your Mediator and Intercessor, since all this power to say, Father, I will, is laid up in Him on purpose for poor believing sinners who come and take Him to be their Savior! You say that you cannot pray. Well, He canask Him to plead for you! And I thank God that, sometimes, when we do not ask Him to plead for us, He does it all the same, as He did for Peter, when Satan had desired to have him, but Christ had prayed for him. Peter did not know his danger, but the Savior did, and He pleaded for him at once. What a blessing it is to think of Christ, clothed with Divine authority and power, using it all for us! Well does Toplady sing   
*With cries and tears He offered up   
His humble suit below!   
But with authority He asks,   
Enthroned in Glory now   
For all that come to God by Him.   
Salvation He demands,   
Points to their names upon His breast   
And spreads His wounded hands.   
His Covenant and Sacrifice   
Give sanction to His claim   
Father, I will that all My saints   
Be with Me where I am.*   
Further, that power of Christ will land every Believer in Heaven. Notice how Christ turns all His pleading with God that way. He says, Father, I will that they, also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am; that they may behold My Glory. The devil says that we shall never get to Heaven, but we remember that declaration of Moses, Your enemies shall be found liars unto you, and the arch-enemy will be found to be the arch-liar, for the Lords Prayer will be heard and, as He pleads that those whom the Father gave Him should be brought up to be with Him where He is, you may depend upon it that they will all arrive safely in Heaven! And you, if you are among those who are given to Christand you may know that by your faith in Himshall be among that blessed company!   
I shall have finished with this first point when I have said thisthat power which Christ had, may, in a measure, be gained by all His people. I dare not say and I would not say that any of us will ever be able to utter our Saviors words, Father, I will. But I do say thisif you abide in Christ and His words abide in youyou may attain to such power in prayer that you shall ask what you will and it shall be done unto you. This is not a promise to all of youno, not even to all of you who are Gods peoplebut only to those of you who live wholly unto God and serve Him with all your heart. You can, by habitual communion with God, attain to such power with the Most High that men shall say of you what they used to say of Luther, There goes a man who can ask what he likes of God and have it. You may attain to that glorious altitude! Oh, I would that every one of us would seek to reach this height of power and blessing! It is not the feeble Christian. It is not the worldly Christian who has just enough Grace to make him miserablethe man who has only about enough Grace to keep him from being absolutely immoral! That is not the man or woman who will prevail with God. You paddlers in Christianity who scarcely wet your toesyou who never go in beyond your ankles, or your kneesGod will never give you this privilege unless you go in for it! Get where the waters are deep enough to swim and plunge in! Be perfectly consecrated to God! Yield your whole lives to His Glory without reserve! Then may you obtain something of your Masters power in prayer when He said, Father, I will.   
II. Now I ask you kindly to accompany me, in the second place, to notice JESUS IN THE POWER OF HIS SUBMISSION. Our second text is all submissionNot as I will.   
This utterance, Not as I will, proved that the shrinking of Christs Nature from that dreadful cup were all overcome. I do not believe that Christ was afraid to die. Do you believe that? Oh, nomany of His servants have laughed at death! I am sure that He was not afraid to die. What was it, then, that made that cup so awfully terrible? Jesus was to be made sin for us. He was to come under the curse for us! He was to feel the Fathers wrath on account of human guilt and His whole Nature, not only His flesh, but His whole Being shrank from that fearful ordeal! It was not actual defilement that was to come upon Him, but it looked like it and, as Man, He could not tell what that cup of wrath must contain *Immanuel, sunk with dreadful woe,   
Unfelt, unknown to all below   
Except the Son of God   
In agonizing pangs of soul   
Drinks deep of wormwoods bitterest bowl, And sweats great drops of blood.*   
After dwelling in the love of God from all eternity, He was, in a few hours, to bear the punishment of mans sin, yet He must bear it and, therefore, He said, Not as I will, but as You will. Do you wonder that He prayed, If it is possible, let this cup pass from Me? Is Christ to be blamed for this shrinking of Nature? My dear Friends, if it had been a pleasure to Him and He had had no shrinking, where would have been His holy courage? If it had not been a horrible and dreadful thing to Him, where would have been His submission, where would have been the virtue that made Atonement of it? If it had been a thing that He could not, or must not, shrink from, where would have been the pain, the wormwood, and the gall of it? The cup must be, in the nature of things, something from which He that bears it must shrink, or else it could not have been sufficient for the redemption of His people and the vindication of the broken Law of God! It was necessary, then, that Christ should, by such a prayer as this, prove that He had overcome all the shrinking of His Nature.   
Not as I will, is also an evidence of Christs complete submission to the will of His Father. He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter and, as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He opens not His mouth. There is no resistance, no struggling. He gives Himself up completely. There, He seems to say to the Lord, do what You will with Me; I yield Myself absolutely to Your will. There was on Christs part no reserve, no wish, even, to make any reserve. I go further, and say that Jesus willed as God willedand even prayed that the will of God, from which His Human Nature, at first, shrank, might be fulfilled. Nevertheless not as I will, but as You will.   
O Brothers and Sistersfor you both need this Gracepray God to help you to learn how to copy your Lord in total submission! Have you submitted to the Lords will? Are you submitting now? Are not some of you like bullocks unaccustomed to the yoke? There is a text, you know, in the 131st Psalm, My soul is even as a weaned child. I have sometimes thought that, for some of the Lords children, the passage would have to be read, My soul is even as a weaning child, and there are many of Gods people who are very long in the weaning! You cannot get satisfaction, quiet and content, can you? Can you give yourself up entirely to God, that He may do whatever He likes with you?   
Have you some fear of a tumor, or a cancer? Is there before you the prospect of a painful and dangerous operation? Is business going badly with you, so that you will probably lose everything? Is a dear child sickening? Is the mother likely to be taken away? Will you have to lose your position and reputation if you are faithful to the Lord? Will you be exposed to cruel slanders? Will you probably be cast out of your employment if you do what is right? Come now, whatever you dread or expect, can you give yourself up wholly to God and say, It is the Lord, let Him do what seem good to Him? Your Lord and Master didHe said, Not as I will. Oh, that He might teach you this Divine art of absolute resignation to the purpose and ordinance of God till you, also, would be able to say, Not as I will! Thus you will sing

**I bow to Your will,   
O God, and all Your ways adore!   
And every day I live Ill seek   
To please You more and more!**   
III. I have finished my discourse when I have just twisted these two sayings together a little. So, thirdly, let us COMBINE THE TWO PRAYERS I will, yet, Not as I will.   
First, let me say, Number One will help you very much to Number Two. If you learn to pray with Christ, with the holy boldness that almost says, Father, I will, you are the man who will know how to say, Not as I will. Is it not strange that it should be so? It looks like a contradiction, but I am sure that it is not so. The man who can have his will with God is the very man who does not want his own way with God. He who may have what he likes is the man who wishes to have what God likes!   
You remember the good old woman who lay near to death, and one said to her, Do you not expect to die soon? She answered, I do not know whether I shall live or die and, what is more, I have no concern which way it is. Then the friend asked, But if you had your choice whether you should live or die, which would you choose? She replied, I would rather that the Lords will should be done. But suppose the Lords will were to leave it entirely to you to choose whichever you liked? Then, she said, I would kneel down and pray the Lord to choose for me. And I think that is the best way to livenot to have any choice at all, but to ask the Lord to choose for you! You can always have your way, you know, when your way is Gods way. The sure way to carry out selfwill is when self-will is nothing else but Gods will! Oh, that the Lord would teach us this mighty power with Him in prayer! It will not be given without much close fellowship with Him. Then, when we know that we can have what we will of Him, we shall be in the right state to say, Not as I will.   
The next remark that I would make is, that Number Two is necessary for Number One. That is to say, until you can say, Not as I will, you never will be able to say, Father, I will. I believe that one reason why people cannot prevail in prayer is because they will not yield to God. And they cannot expect God to yield to them. God does this and that with you, and you quarrel with Him. And then you go upstairs and begin to prayget down on your knees and make your peace with Him, firstfor if you must not come to the altar till you have become reconciled unto your brother, how can you come to the Throne of Grace till you have given up your quarrel with God?   
But some people are never at peace with God. I have heard of a good friend who lost a child and he was wearing mourning clothes several years afterwards. And he was always fretting about the dear child, till a Quaker said to him, What? Have you not forgiven God yet? And there are some people who have not yet forgiven God for taking their loved ones. They ought always to have blessed Him, for He never takes away any but those whom He lent to us, and we should bless His name as much for taking them, again, as for lending them to us. Dear Friends, you must submit to the will of God or else you cannot have power with Him in prayer.  
Well, you say, you will not let me have my own way at all. Certainly, I will not let you have your own way! But when you say, There, Lord, I have no quarrel with You. Do what You will with me, then He will say, Rise, My child, ask what you will, and I will give it to you; open your mouth wide and I will fill it.   
Notice, also, dear Friends, that Jesus will help us to have Number One and Number Two. He gives Himself over to us to teach us the power of prevailing prayer, but He also gives Himself over to teach us the art of blessed submission in prayerand it is His will that these two should not be separated. Father, I will, is Christs word on our behalf. And, Not as I will, is equally Christs word on our behalf. When you cannot pray either of these prayers as you would, fall back upon Christs prayer and claim it as your own.   
Lastly, I think that true sonship will embody both Number One and Number Two. It is the true child of God who knows that he is his Fathers child, who says, Father, I will. He is often very bold where another would be presumptuous. Oh, I have heard full often of somebodys prayersI will not say who the somebody ishe seems so familiar with God in his prayer. Oh, yes, I know! You love those very stately prayers in which the bounds are set about the mountaintop and no man may dare to come near! You make the Throne of Grace to be like Sinai was of old, of which the Lord said, Whoever touches the mount shall be surely put to death: there shall not an hand touch it, but he shall surely be stoned, or shot through; whether it is beast or man, it shall not live.   
Oh, but, you say, so-and-so is so familiar at the Mercy Seat! Yes, I know, and you think that is a pity, do you not? Perhaps you are acquainted with a judge. Look at him on the bench wearing his wig and robe of office! But you will not dare to speak to him, there, unless you address him as, My Lord, and behave very respectfully to him. By-andby he goes homeand he has a little boy there, Master Johnny. Why, the child has seized hold of his fathers whiskers! There he is, up on his fathers back! Why, Johnny, you are disrespectful! Oh, but he is my father! says the boy, and his father says, Yes, Johnny, that I am; and I do not want you to say, My Lord, and talk to me as they do in the court. So, there are certain liberties which Gods children may take with Him which He counts no liberties at all, but He loves to be treated so by them. He will let each one of them say, Father, I will, because they are His children!   
Then, mark you, you are not Gods child unless you can also say, Father, not as I will. The true child bends before His fathers will. Yes, he says, I would like so-and-so. His father forbids it. Then I do not want it and I will not touch it. Or he says, I do not like to take that medicine, but my Father says I am to take it, and he takes the cup and he drinks the whole of its contents. The true child says, Not as I will, although, after his measure, he also says, Father, I will.   
I have only been talking to you who are the Lords people. I hope you have learned something from this subject. I know you have if the Lord has taught you to pray after the fashion of these two prayers, as you humbly, yet believingly may, copying your Lord.   
But oh, what shall I say to those of you who are not the Lords people? If you do not know how to pray at all, may the Lord teach you! If you do not yet know your needs, may the Lord instruct you! And let me tell you that if ever there shall come a time when you feel your need of a Savior, the Lord Jesus will be willing to receive you! If ever you should yearn after Him, you can be sure that He is also yearning after you. Even now *Kindled His relentings are,*   
and if you will but breathe the penitents prayer, God be merciful to me, a sinner, and turn your eye Christ-ward, and Cross-ward, there is salvation for you even now! God grant that you may have it, for Jesus sake! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON:   
**John 17:15-26; Matthew 26:36-46.**

We will read, this evening, a portion of two prayers offered by our Divine Lord and Master on that night in which He was betrayed. The first is that memorable intercessory prayer of His recorded in the 17th Chapter of the Gospel according to John.

John 17:15. I pray not that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the Evil One. Christ did not pray that His disciples should be taken out of the world. It is very seldom that we ought to present such a petition. If that had been a proper prayer for us to offer, it would have been authorized by the Master. There are times when, in great pain of body, or in deep depression of spirit, the Believer, like Elijah under the juniper tree, requests for himself that he may die. If you ever do pray such a prayer, utter it very softly, for the Master does not authorize it and that is a matter that must be left to the Lord of Life and Death. Jesus says here, I pray not that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the Evil One. Sin is the real evil of the worldthe danger of our being entangled in worldly customs, or dropping into the evil ways of an ungodly generation. Christ prays that we may be kept from the evil that is in the world and we, also, may and must pray that the Lord will keep us from the evil by which we are surroundedand especially from the Evil One who seeks our destruction.

16. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. They are of another racethey are swayed by other motives, they have another lifethey have another destiny, They are not of the world. Is that true of you, dear Hearer? We are reading out of Gods Book, remember. This is the description of Christs peopledoes it describe you? They are not of the world. They are not worldly, they are other-worldly. Their thoughts and hearts are set upon the world to come.

17. Sanctify them through Your Truth: Your Word is Truth. What? Do they need to be sanctified? They are not of the world and are kept from the evil in the worlddo they need to be sanctified? Yes, we shall always need sanctifying until we reach our heavenly Home where sin cannot enter. Every day we need the sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit to lead us unto holiness! Sanctify them through Your Truth: Your Word is Truth. It is only the Truth of God that can beget holiness. False doctrine is never the medium of sanctification. You can tell which are false doctrines and which are the true by our Lords own testBy their fruits you shall know them. The same men who reject the old-fashioned doctrines also rebel against the old-fashioned style of living! Loose living generally goes with loose doctrine. There never was an age in which the Doctrines of Grace were despised, but, sooner or later, licentiousness prevailed. On the other hand, when we had Puritan teaching, we had also pure and holy living. This prayer is still needed for all Christs disciplesSanctify them through Your Truth: Your Word is Truth.

18. As you have sent Me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. This is the original Missionary Society and the model for all others. Christ sent, commissioned, of the Father, and every saint commissioned of Christ. Are you carrying out your mission, O you people of God? How dare you call yourselves by that name if you have no mission to anybody! If you are living here only for yourself, how can you belong to Christ who never lived a moment for Himself, but always lived wholly for others?

19. And for their sakes I sanctify Myself. I set Myself apart, as One who is consecrated, dedicated, devoted to a grand design.   
19. That they, also, might be sanctified through the Truth. This is our Lords prayer for His disciples. In the ninth verse we read, I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which You have given Me; for they are Yours. Now our Lord Jesus prays for those who are to be His people. I wonder whether there are any of them here tonight?   
20. Neither pray I for these, alone, but for them, also, which shall believe in Me through their word. There is a great company of people who are not, at present, Believers, but who shall yet believe on Christ through the testimony of those who are already Believers on Him. O God, call out many such through our word!   
21. That they all may be one. This is Christs prayer for all those who shall believe on Him, that they may be converted and brought into the one Church, together, with those who are already therethat they all may be one.   
21. As You, Father, are in Me, and I in You, that they, also, may be one in Us: that the world may believe that You have sent Me. Christ would have all His people joined in communion with Himself and with His Father. And when that is the case, then will men know that Christ came into the world for a definite purposethat the world may believe that You have sent Me.   
22-23. And the glory which you gave Me, I have given them; that they may be one, even as We are One: I in them, and You in Me, that they may be made perfect in one. Christ is the Incarnation of God, and the Church should be the incarnation of Christ. Oh, when shall this great prayer be answered?   
23-26. And that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them, as You have loved Me. Father, I will that they, also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am, that they may behold My Glory, which You have given Me: for You loved Me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father, the world has not known You: but I have known You, and these have known that You have sent Me. And I have declared unto them Your name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith You have loved Me may be in them, and I in them. A very short time after our Divine Lord offered this intercessory supplication, He prayed a very different prayer, in a strangely-altered style. You will find it in the Gospel according to Matthew, chapter twenty-six. Remember that there was a very short interval between the utterance of the majestic prayer I have been reading and the presentation of the cries and tears of which we are now to read.   
Matthew 26:36-40. Then came Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and said unto the disciples, Sit you here, while I go and pray yonder. And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy. Then said He unto them, My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death: tarry you here, and watch with Me. And He went a little farther, and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me: nevertheless not as I will, but as You will. And He came unto the disciples and found them asleep, and said unto Peter, What, could you not watch with Me one hour? He felt the need of human sympathy in that awful hour. Yet He trod the winepress alone.   
41. Watch and pray, that you enter not into temptation: the spirit, indeed, is willing, but the flesh is weak. Admire the tenderness of Jesus in making this apology for His disciples. What He said about them was true, but it is not everybody who would have uttered that gentle truth at such a trying time. Dear Friends, make excuses for one another whenever you can! Never make them for yourselves, but often make them for others, and especially when some treat you as you think very untenderly, be the more tender towards them.   
42-44. He went away, again, the second time, and prayed, saying, O My Father, if this cup may not pass away from Me, except I drink it, Your will be done. And He came and found them asleep again: for their eyes were heavy. And He left them, and went away, again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words. You cannot use much variety of language when your heart is very heavy. You will usually dwell upon just a few words at such a time. Do not blame yourself for doing soit is natural, and it is right. Even your Lord, the Master of language, prayed the third time, saying the same words.   
45, 46. Then came He to His disciples, and said unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest: behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us be going: behold, he is at hand that does betray Me. May the Master never have to say this concerning any of us, for His dear names sake! Amen.

HYMNS FROM OUR OWN HYMN BOOK262, 701.  
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THE PREACHERS LAST SERMON FOR THE SEASON

NO. 1875

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, NOVEMBER 29, 1885, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirsts, let him come unto Me and drink. John 7:37.**

THE officers were after our Lord and He knew it. He could spy them out in the crowd, but He was not, therefore, in the least bit afraid, or disconcerted. He reminds me of that minister who, when he was about to preach, was stopped by a soldier, who held a pistol to his head and threatened that if he spoke, he would kill him. Soldier, he said, do your duty and I shall do mine. And he went on with his preaching. The Savior, without saying as much in words, said so by His actions. If they were sent to take Him, let them take Himas for Himself, the time was come to speak boldly and, therefore, He stood and cried, saying, If any man thirsts, let him come unto Me, and drink.

You see, it was the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles. From the middle of that festival the Lord had been present and had openly taught the people. They had seen Him in the midst of the throng, lifting up His hands and proclaiming holy doctrine. But the feast was over, the boughs were cleared away and the tents in which they had dwelt, for a time, were taken down. It was the eighth day, which was spent as a Sabbath, but the Savior did not cease to preach because the festival was almost over. Till the last day He continued to instruct, invite and entreat. How this reminds us of His constant patience! It is but one instance, out of very many, of the Saviors tenacity of loving kindness. Though the Jews had often refused Him, He is still pleading with them. He has come to His own and they have not received Him, but He waits to be gracious! He tarries in unwearied mercy. He endures even to this last and so, on that great day of the feast, He has still a note of admonition and a word of invitation for them.

Oh, the patience of God to some here present! You have long heard the Gospel and although you have never given it due attention, still does the good Savior strive with you and press you to be considerate of your own best interests. Jesus urges you to live, persuades you to be saved! There are times when it would not be becoming to the honor of a king to press his favors upon those who have distinctly despised and refused them, but it is always the amazing Glory of our Lord Jesus Christ that He continues to entreat even when we continue to resist! Even to our own last hour does the Lord of Mercy sweetly cry, If any man thirsts, let him come unto Me and drink. Repent, dear Hearer, of all your long delays, and come to Jesus this day, for He still invites you, saying evermore, Whoever will, let Him take the water of life freely.

Furthermore, our Lord did not only preach the Gospel till the last day of the feast, but because it was the last day, He manifested an increased ardor in so doing and, whereas His custom was to sit and teach the people who gathered in a ring around Him, on this closing day He now sought a prominent place, probably just outside the Temple, or in one of its outer courts, and there He stood, conspicuous before them all, in the attitude of one who has risen from his ease and has come to meet those whom he invites. He assumed a position more active, more pleading, more earnest than that of a seated teacher. Behold, He stands and pleads! That pleading is in tones both pathetic and loudHe cries, If any man thirsts, let Him come unto Me and drink!

It is the last time that He will look into some of their faces. They are leaving Jerusalem where they have kept the feast. They will get back to their farms and to their merchandise and if He does not strike the iron while He has it on the anvil, He may never have another stroke at it. If at this time an invitation is not pressed upon them, they will forget the teaching they have heardthey will probably never hear any moreand they will die in their sins. I think I see the Masters face beaming with holy affection and His eyes streaming with tears as He pleads as for His life with the throng which is so soon to melt away! It is now or never with Him and with them! He must once more free Himself of the blood of them all and, therefore, on that last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, If any man thirsts, let him come unto Me and drink.

I think it is noteworthy that when the Master had gathered up all the forces of His soul and His whole spirit was moved with intense anxiety for the good of men,

then He especially preached the Gospel of salvation. I do not know that He had, before, so publicly declared Himself as the great Fountain and Source of salvation. He had taught this Truth of God to the woman at the well of Samaria with special plainness. And He had spoken of it to different little companies with great distinctness, but now, almost for the first time, on this last day He brings it all out before the multitude and cries, If any man thirsts, let him come unto Me and drink. Now is the invitation given most freely! Now is the cry sounded forth most loudly! O you that are perishing, O you that are lost, O you that need salvation, here is the place where you can find itCome unto Me and drink! It seems to me that the Lord Jesus was driving only at this one thingthe getting of men to come to Himself. At another time He would teach them deeper doctrine, or Truth of a wider range, for His ministry dealt with many things for edification and holiness. But now, on this last day, He seems to put other matters to the side and His one objective is to win thirsty souls to come to Him and drink.

I have deep fellowship in that spirit this morning. I remember that I shall not have another mornings discourse with you for some time and, perhaps, I may never have another. I go from you for a season and my voice will be silent among you. Therefore I said within my heart that I would preach this morning upon the one subject of coming to Christand upon nothing else. If you make mistakes about a thousand things, it will be very sad that you should do sobut not near as sad as if you fell into an error upon this matter. If, perhaps, you should not know this or that, it may be greatly to your detriment, but nothing compared with not knowing the Lord Jesus! My Brothers and Sisters, if you really come to Jesus and relieve the thirst of your souls by drinking of that Living Water which He so freely gives, the main thing will be right, the chief thing will be secured! We will hope that all the rest will come right, by-and-by, but just now we will only look to that vital point. O you that thirst, come unto Christ and drink! And if you do so, our mornings work will be fraught with untold blessedness to you! In my absence this shall be my solace, that my last words won your souls for Jesus!

I would further call your attention to this fact, that while the Lord, on that last day, displayed an extraordinary ardor for mens souls and preached the Gospel more fully then than ever, He especially drove at this point, that they should come to Him. He spoke more pointedly, clearly and exclusively of Himself than ever for, just in proportion as He preached the Gospel, it was of necessity that He became a witness to Himself, since there is no other Gospel than that which is wrapped up in His own proper Person and work! The more Gospel, the more Christ, and the more Christ, the more Gospel! So, when our Lord says, If any man thirsts, there is water to be had. He can do no other than say, Let him come unto Me and drink. If that word must come forth from our Lords own lips, how abundantly it ought to come from ours! Jesus stands up to be, Himself, a center, not alone for a congregation of people who hear Him, but for a crowd of thirsty folk who are to drink of Him! Jesus is the central Sun of salvation and from Him the true Light of God radiates on all sides. All who will turn their eyes to look unto Him shall behold the Light of Life.

Beloved Hearers, I have not shunned to declare unto you the whole counsel of God as God has made it known to me, yet I feel, this morning, that I would gladly let all other Truths sink for the while if I might but so preach my Lord Jesus that every unconverted person here might see Him and look to Him with the glance of faith! I desire, also, that every converted person may again look to Jesus and continue steadily to look until the glance of faith on earth shall melt into the vision of happiness in Heaven. What a morning this would be if we all hastened to Jesus and drank from Him as from the sparkling fountain of Grace! Why should we not? Jesus stood and cried, and His most ardent passion led Him to cry concerning Himself that men should come to Him and find in Him the supply for all their spiritual need! The more we love our fellow men, the more we, too, shall tell them of Jesus and of Jesus, only!

This text I shall try to handle on this last Sabbath among you. May the Spirit of God handle it so as to make it useful to you, one and all!   
I. Notice, in the text, THE ENQUIRY FOR THE THIRSTY. Jesus stands amidst that mass of people from every landthe mingled tribes, scattered far and widewho came up to Jerusalem to keep the feast, and He cries among them, If any man thirsts. Evidently, He is seeking out needy, restless, longing hearts.   
Observe that He starts with a very wide enquiryHe seeks for any man and, consequently, for every man that thirsts. So does the Gospel at this hour come with a generous and wide appeal. Have you any desire after God? Have you any will to be rid of your sin? Have you any anxiety to escape from the wrath to come? Have you any weariness after Jesus and the rest which only He can give? Do you desire to be made pure? Is there a heart in you which sighs after better things? Do you long after a higher, holier and more heavenly life? Well, whoever you may be, Jesus says, Come unto me and drink. There gathered that day about the Temple, not only men of Judea and Galilee, but Parthians, Medes, Elamites and the dwellers in Mesopotamia. In fact, all sorts of people, even as on the day of Pentecost, came up to keep the feast and, without making any exception, whatever, in His generous invitation, our good Master stood and cried, If any man thirsts, let him come unto Me and drink. Beneath the arch of Heaven that same call sounds out to every thirsty soul of every clime! Wherever the sound of my voice is heard, this morning, and wherever the printed sermon will be read, a sincere invitation comes, without exception, to every soul that longs and thirsts after God, pardon, mercy, eternal life and HeavenIf any man thirsts, let him come unto Me and drink. Do not turn away from this honest invitation to eternal life!   
Yet there wails through our text an undertone of grief by which it is anxiously narrowed down. Wide as the invitation is, yet that, If, spoken in tenderly solemn tones of apprehension reminds us that many are called, but few are chosen. If any man thirstsas if He had said, The mass of you do not thirstdo any of you thirst? The multitudes do not thirstonly one here and there is doing so. Our Lords glance sweeps over the throng. He reads their indifference and spiritual death and, in plaintive accents, expresses His fear that none, at least very few, are thirsting! Alas, the truly thirsty are as few as flowers in winter! Selfcontentment possesses the minds of many and world-contentment steals over others. They are in a desert! No drop of dew falls about them and the water bottle that they carry has long since been dry! They are mocked by a mirage and they put aside their thirst with the fond idea that when they want to, they can drink to the full!  
An evil spirit has made them mad and they acknowledge not the thirst which devours them. You may tell them of sin and its danger, but they do not desire to confess ittheir conscience is asleep. You talk of Hell and all its terrors, but either they do not believe you or else they are so callous that they will risk an eternity of woe for the sake of a poor transient pleasure! You speak of Christ and pardon bought with blood, but what is that to them? They go their way after the trifles of time and sensethe great realities of eternity do not trouble them. If any man thirsts. Alas, a spiritually thirsty soul is a choice rarity! Where shall I find him? With what joy will I salute him! He is the man who will gladly receive the tidings of Jesus and His love!   
The mass of the people are bereft of spiritual feelingthey neither hunger nor thirst after righteousnessthey have given themselves up to enjoy the brutish lives of oxen, or of dogs. They live as if the whole of their existence were to be spent amid the shadows of this poor, benighted world and as if there would never dawn upon our immortal natures an everlasting day! Such brutish men have no expectation of a Resurrection, no fear of a Judgement to come, no hope of Heaven and no dread of Hell. Well does the weeping Savior put it, If any man thirsts.   
The invitation is, in itself, wide, and is only focused by the deep sorrow of the Preacher. If any man thirsts, he is bid to come to Jesus. If you, O man, have stolen in here this morning, discontented with the pleasures of the world, you are bid to come to Jesus for rest and satisfaction! If you are rich and increased in goods and yet are quite unable to enjoy your riches because your heart cannot be satisfied with the world, you are he to whom this invitation comes! If you are heavy with the burden of sinif you would give your eyes to be rid of it. If you are despairing and ready to die because your struggles after better things have all been failuresyou are he whom the Lord Jesus invites! With loving tenderness He puts it to all of you who need everything, but have no joy of anything, If any man thirsts, let him come unto Me and drink. O man, if you have any sort of spiritual desire, any kind of longing after that which is good and gracious, come at once to Jesus, and Jesus will joyfully receive you!   
The call is painfully clear. If any man thirsts. The thirsty know what thirst isit is a self-explaining pain. A man knows whether he thirsts or not. Nobody need take a minute to answer the question, Do I thirst? because, as to natural thirst, it is a pain or need which is readily discerned. If, my Hearer, you are really thirsty, you know you are thirsty. Are you dissatisfied with yourself? Are you grieved on account of sin? Are you anxious to be right with God? Are you pining to find your Savior? You are the man and there is no question about it! Hear His voice while He graciously says, Come unto Me and drink.

Be it remembered that this call is being continually repeated. At this moment, though I speak it, my Master is with me and is using me as His mouth. Jesus Himself says it, and not IIf any man thirsts, let him come unto Me and drink. Jesus is not standing outside the Temple at Jerusalem, for He is gone from us as to His bodily Presence, but from yonder lofty place at the right hand of God He still speaks and He cries, If any man thirsts, let him come unto Me and drink. Jesus is still accessible. You may come to Him at this hour! A prayer will bring you to Him! A sigh will find and reach Him and if, beneath the arch of Heaven, in hall or cottage, in palace or prison, in the forest or on the sea, there is a man that thirsts, let him but come unto Jesus by faith and he shall have all his needs supplied. It is a blessed invitation, standing good at this hour to you, O Friend! Yes, it will hold good even to a mans dying day and this may be to you that very day! Jesus has not ceased to invite, nor will He cease to receive all that come to Him.   
Do you ask me again, What is this thirst? Thirst is nothing actual, or substantiveit is a lack, a need crying out of its emptiness. It is the absence of a necessity. Sinner, you need not look for any good thing in yourselfthe thirst which is sought for is the absence of all good things. Thirst is a painful need. Have you not needs? Thirst is an emptiness, a vacuumit is the miss of that which is essential to life. Have you not such a void? Thirst is conscious need, conscious to a painful degreehave you not this? This sense of need is your thirst. The need naturally begets a pain. When our system needs drink, a merciful Providence creates a pang so that we are driven to take notice that a requisite of life must be immediately supplied. Thirst rings the alarm and the mind and body set to work to supply the urgent demand. It were a dreadful thing if the system needed water and yet did not thirst, for we might be fatally injured before we knew that any harm was happening to us. The pain of thirst is a salutary warning that something very important is needed.   
Now, Soul, if you are suffering from fear or despondencyif your heart is heavy and you have disquietude of spiritif you have a longing, a sighing, a pining after something better and holier, then you are thirsty. If you have this thirst in any measure or degree, you are bid to come to Christ and drink. If you have not as yet a burning thirst, nor a fever, but if you have any sort of thirst, you may come and drink. If you do, in any measure, long for mercy and renewal, you are included in this invitation, If any man thirsts, let him come unto Me and drink. Do not look within yourself to find any good thing. Is thirst a good thing? No, thirst is an evil thing to be removed! And if you see in yourself only evil things to be removed, you have all that Jesus sets forth in this text as the description of those whom He permits to come to Himself. He says so much and no moreIf any man thirsts, let him come unto Me and drink.  
I wonder whether I have found out the thirsty person this morning? Are you sitting upstairs in the top gallery? Or are you among the thicker company below? Where are you? Find yourself out now! Turn your eyes inwardlook not to your neighbor, but say within your own soul, Yes, I thirst. Perhaps not as I should, but still I do desire. I am uneasy, I have an unrest, there is an absence of good in me. Oh, that my thirst were satisfied this morning! Friend, you are my man! Before we go further, let me salute you and say, Man, my Brother, or, Woman, my Sister, the Lord Jesus says unto you, Come unto Me and drink. Thus much upon the enquiry after the thirsty ones.   
II. Here is, secondly, THE ONE DIRECTION FOR THE RELIEF OF ALL SUCH THIRSTY ONESLet him come unto Me and drink. There is one direction and that one direction points solely to one Source. All who would have their thirst relieved must come to one Fountain, to one Jesus. Observe, that Christ, who gives the water which quenches spiritual thirst, directs us to come to Himself. Do notice this. Let him come unto Me and drink. Do you ask, What creed am I to believe, what doctrines am I to receive? We will tell you of this, by-and-by, but just now He that is set before you this morning is a Personthe Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ. At the time when He spoke this text, He had not been crucified, nor dead, nor buried, nor raised from the dead, but the text was spoken with a foresight of all this, as you will see by reading two verses further on, where we are told that what Christ said took for granted His death and Resurrection. The Holy Spirit was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.   
In this verse our Lord speaks as if He had been dead, had risen and had been glorified. So then, O Soul, if your thirst is to be relieved, you must come to Jesus, the Son of God, who became the Son of Man! You must come to the One who lived, who took human sin upon Himself and died for it, the Just for the unjust, to bring us to God! You must come to the One who, being dead, was taken down from the Cross and laid in the grave where He slept a little while and then arose from among the dead into newness of life! You must come to the One, who, after 40 days, ascended on high, leading captivity captive!   
At this hour He sits at the right hand of God, all power being given unto Him in Heaven and in earth. In His Glory He is, this day, able to save to the uttermost them that come unto God by Him. You must come to Him who has finished His redeeming work and lives always to make intercession for us. And if you will come to Him, He will give you the full supply of all the great needs of your nature. O, my Hearer, whatever your spiritual desire is, Jesus will grant it! Whatever, in fact, your soul requires between this place and Glory, He will give it to you. But you must come to Him for it and to Him, alone! You must come distinctly to Him and not to ceremonies, or sacraments, or priests, or churches, or assemblies, or creeds, or services, or doings, or feelings! You are not to eat or drink of the house, or of the servantsbut the Master Himself gives you Himself to be your Bread from Heaven. Your salvation lies in that Divine Person whom, by faith, I see at this moment, clothed in the splendor of Heaven, yet still wearing the marks of His passion! He looks like a lamb that has been slain! He presents a perpetually complete Atonement and continually reconciles sinners to God. There lies your hope, and there alone! In that Person, I say, and in that Person, only, is there salvation!   
All that a sinner needs is to be found in abundance in Jesus. The Lord Jesus invites all who feel their thirst, to come to Him and partake, feeling no diffidence as to His ability to meet all their cases. If any man thirsts, let him come unto Me and drink. Though your thirst is like that of a panting ox upon a sultry summers day who puts down his mouth to the brook and drinks as though he would leave it dryyou may come and feel no trembling as to the sufficiency of the Living Waters. Yes, you may come in your dozens, your scores, your hundreds, your thousands, your millions and your hundreds of millions! There shall never be a time when the Lord Jesus shall bid the thirsty stay away because the current of His Grace is exhausted! He said, If any man thirsts, let him come unto Me and drink, without stint or measurethere is nothing to limit the draught or question the supply! In Jesus there is such a fullness that it never will be exhausted. Sin may be exhausted, the race may be numbered, time may be finished and need may be ended, but mercy endures forever!   
There is, in Christ Jesus, a varied supply. The thirst of the soul is not like the thirst of the body, which is readily quenched by any one liquid, for the thirst of the soul is for many things. Whatever many things the soul thirsts for, Jesus will supply them all! Our wonderful variety of needs is met by His wonderful variety of excellences. Here is a soul that needs peacethis Man shall be the peace. I am unhinged. I am almost driven to distraction. I am sorely troubled so that I cannot sleep. You shall have rest by coming to JesusHe gives His beloved sleep. But I am so guilty! I have sinned past all pardon. I blush to think how grievously I have trespassed. You can have pardon for all your sins, though they are as glaring as scarlet and though for number they are as many as the sands of the sea. In Jesus the penitent finds perfect pardon for all his offenses. Do you believe this? It is certainly so. God will cast all your transgressions into the depths of the sea if you believe in the Lord Jesus!   
How happy is the man who, by faith in Jesus, knows that the Lord has fully and freely forgiven Him! But I need purity, cries a third. I am troubled with horrible thoughts. I have a strong passionate nature which draws me into wrong desires. I have been a drunk. I have been unchaste. I have been given to the use of foul language and these things are a source of continued defilement. Oh, my Friend, you can get rid of all this if you desire to do so, by coming to Jesus! He will give you a new heart and a right spirit! He will totally change your nature, so that this evil shall never more have dominion over you! But where sin abounded, Grace shall much more abound. Do you hear this? All purity is in Christ for you. But I, says one, desire to make progress. I hope I am right and I want to be more right. I want to make advances in the Divine life so as to honor God and bless my fellow men. Come, then, to the Lord Jesus, and drink, for He gives life and gives it more abundantly!   
But I need, says a Christian, power in prayer and power to convince and convert my fellow men. Come, then, to Jesus, for it is concerning this, also, He says, If any man thirsts, let him come unto Me and drink. He will make you strong upon your knees and mighty in holy service if you will but surrender your will to Him. But I need perseverance, cries another, I can scarcely hold on my way; I am hard put to it; I faint even though I resolve to pursue. Come to Him, then, for persevering Grace. He will keep the feet of His saints. Find your strength to stand and your ability to endure in Him alone! If any man thirsts for anything that is really desirable, let Him come to Jesus, in whom all right desires are provided for. All for sinners and all for saints will be found in Jesus our Lord, who is All in All!

Still remember that it is to Jesus, only, that you must comeand you must bring nothing of your own with you. All you are bid to do lies in these two thingscome and drink. Christ is accessible and you may come to Him. He does not stand with a gulf between Him and you, mockingly crying, Come. No, He comes where you are today, in all your misery and sin, and He sweetly whispers, Come. Arise, then, for He calls you! He shortens the way for you, no, He is Himself the Way. He comes to you and He says, Come to me, not because there is now a vast distance to traverse, but because there is only a step and He would have you take it at once. Do but trust Him and you have come to Him! This coming is not so much an exercise of power, as the resignation of power. Submit yourself to Jesus. Yield to Him. Be willing that He should be everything to you and you have truly come to Him!   
Then you are told to drink. That is not a difficult action. Any fool can drink! In fact, many are great fools because they drink too much of poisonous liquors. Drinking is peculiarly the commonplace act of sinners. Drink! Surely you can do that! You have only to be as a sponge that sucks up all that comes near it. To drink is the act of a baby, a sick man, a wounded deer, or even a little chick. Put your mouth down and suck up that which flows to you in the river of Christs Love. See how a newborn babe drinks from its mothers breastbe you as that weak babe and take in Christ according to your capacity. He bids you receive Himwhy hesitate? You are not to bring anything to Jesus, but to take everything from Him, as the thirsty ground opens its mouth and drinks in the showers, many as they may be. Open wide your soul and drink in Christ, as the great northern whirlpool sucks in the sea! Pull up the sluices and let streams of Mercy flow through you in glorious torrents! It is all He bids you do. It is, in fact, to do nothing but to receive your God. If any man thirsts, let Him receive Christ! This, then, is the one direction for the relief of the burning thirst of all sin-sick souls.   
III. Consider, in the third place, THE PERMISSION HERE GIVEN FOR THEIR PARTICIPATION. I have told you where the water is, but the question comes, May I drink of it? If you are thirsty, drink. No limit is placed in our text. Whoever will, let him take the Water of Life freely. There is no limit as to what you have formerly done. Oh, but I have been so guilty, so hardened! I have uttered bitter words. I have even spoken against God and His Christ. I have denied the Deity of our Lord! I have gone aside into all manner of crooked ways! Whatever you have done, if you have, now, any longing after God and your Savior, come freely, just as you are, for He bids you come and drink. But I dare not say what I have done, Sir. You need not say it to meit were better you did not. Confess it to God, alone, and though you are black as seven midnights and foul as seven Hells, you may come to Jesus, just as you are, and receive from Him complete absolution. If any man thirsts, let him come unto Me and drink.  
Neither is there any limit put as to where you have gone before. I remember one who wanted to purchase a certain article and he called upon one of the chief merchants and asked his price. When this was given him, he went his way to half-a-dozen other traders and tried to buy at a cheaper rate. He did not succeed, but, on the contrary, he found that the first had quoted the lowest price. When he walked a second time into that shop, his advances were not welcomed. No, said the merchant, I shall not serve youyou have been all round the town and if you could have got it a farthing cheaper, you would not have been here. I dont care for such customers. It is not thus with our Lord Jesus! He makes and keeps a free trade in Grace. If you have gone to Moses, if you have gone to Rome, if you have gone to a priest or father confessoryes, if you have gone to the devilyet still you may come to Christ! Do not fear a refusal! He still says, If any man thirsts though he has been to all the wells on earth and found them dry, still, this Well is full and he is permitted to drink at it. Let him come unto Me and drink.   
There is no limit because of any kind of need. Oh, says one, I am deficient in tenderness. I am deficient in patience! Whatever you are deficient in, so much the greater is your thirst, and the Lord meets that thirst in all respects. If any man lacks anything, the Lord will supply that lack. If any man is conscious that he has a great and grievous lack of that which is most essential, as when one has need of water which is essential to life, let him come to Christ and drink! Surely, says one, I cannot be intended, for I am in peculiar circumstances. I am very old. Come and drink, if you have any thirst though you are as old as Methuselah! But I am so poor. The poorer you are, the more welcome you are! Come you, in your smock frock, and drink! But I cannot read. Never mind! The text does not say, Read, but Drink. At the polling booths many are met who cannot read, but none who cannot drink! I have known some that could not read a letter who could drink a churnfuldrinking is an ability which is very widely distributed! The power to receive is scarcely a power and yet it is the only power needed for salvation! Come along and take what Christ freely gives you. Alas, I am so different from others! Does the text say that any are shut out because they are different from others? No! Jesus stood and cried, If any man thirsts, let him come unto Me and drink   
Sorrowfully I notice that some are ingeniously trying to lock the door against themselves with the very key that was meant to open it. Alas, one cries, I am afraid I do not thirst! Tell me, then, what is the matter with you? Sir, I have not such a sense of need as I ought to have. That is to say, you are sensible that you are more needy than you think you are! If you are conscious that you are not fully aware of all your needs, then I urge you to come to Jesus, just as you are, for if ever there was a thirsty soul, you are one! You even need a sense of needand this proves that you are horribly in need! You are the most needy among the needy and should be among the first to come!   
I am afraid I do not thirst. Tell me, would you come if you did thirst? That I would. Then come at once and none will cast you out because when you come, it will be clear that you must have thirsted, for no one ever comes to Jesus who does not thirst. I am reasoning with you in a roundabout way, as you do with me. But I want to thirst more. Then come and drink and you shall thirst morethat is to say, you shall know more of your need of Christ than you do now, for they that find Christ, value Christ more than those who, as yet, have never found Him! Come if you thirst and come if you think you do not thirst, but wish you did thirst, for that wish to thirst is the very thirst you wish for! The sense that you have no proper sense of need is the very best sense that can be! Your need of a power to feel your need is your greatest need! Consciousness of your own unconsciousness is the truest consciousness! Your groaning because you cannot groan is the deepest groaning that ever is groaned!   
Therefore, come along with you! Keep not back through shame or fear, for Jesus will give you a hearty welcome and supply everything you can possibly require. The more unfit you feel yourself to be, the more are you invited to comeyour very unfitness is your fitness for coming to Jesus! It is not what you have that God asks for, but He invites you to bring before Him what you have not, that He may meet your pressing needs and give you all things to enjoy. He takes advantage of your poverty in a blessed manner. You know how men do with one anotherif they find a man utterly reduced, they grind him down still more. Now, the Lord takes advantage of your poverty to lift you up! The less there is in you that is good, the more you need a Savior and the more readily does that Savior present Himself to you! If you are starved to the last extremity and if there is not a drop of oil in the cruse, nor a handful of meal in the barrel, only look to Christ and He will spread your table with food convenient for you! Only confess your emptiness and all His fullness is at your disposal.   
There is one thing I should like you to think of, and that is, when Christ says, Come unto Me and drink, nobody else can say you cannot, for surely, the Lord Jesus is master of Himself and His guarantees run in His own Kingdom! If He says come unto Me, who is to keep you away? If you were master of a large estate and said to a poor man, Walk round it, go where you pleaseand if your bailiff should meet this person and warn him off as a trespasser, would you not expect the poor man to say, Your master gave me permission and I will not be driven off by you? So, if the devil, or conscience, or anything else, says to you, You must not hope in Divine Mercy, nor in any other way lay hold of Christ, you may boldly reply, Your Master said I might! Jesus, Himself, said, If any man thirsts, let Him come unto Me and drink! I thirsted, I came and I receivedand I will never give up what I have received, for I have Christs permission to have it, and keep it, I will.   
Oh, how I wish these words of encouragement would meet the cases of many before me! I thought I would have a full house this morning and if it had been fine weather we would have been densely crowded. But when I saw it raining so very heavily I fancied we would have comparatively few and, perhaps, it would be better to change the topic. But I said, Never mind, I will preach the same sermon to the few as to the many, because I remembered the morning when I found the Savior, myself. It was as wet and miserable a morning as the present one and, moreover, the ground was covered with a deep snow. Sleet was falling fast and the wind was blowing bitterly. I had intended to go to another place of worship half a mile further on, but I could not reach it through stress of weather, otherwise I would not have turned into the little Primitive Chapel. I do not suppose there were more than 20 people present that morning, but it did not matter. That poor mans mornings work was satisfactory, for the Lord blessed a youth who has since then preached to many thousands.

Among a few the best success may yet be gained. Perhaps, this morning, I am to catch some souls who will be useful to multitudes of others. Yonder young man who has come here, he hardly knows why, is to be decided for Jesus! He would not have been here if it had not been so wet. He is the very man the Lord has need of and when he is converted, he shall be used for the Lords Glory! At any rate, from this pulpit rings out the blessed invitation with trumpet voice, If any man thirsts, let him come unto Me and drink.   
IV. We close with THE ENTREATY FOR THEIR COMING. Jesus pleads with them to come. Jesus stood and cried. I cannot picture the enthusiasm of His soul, the passion of His heart as He spoke that morning. If any man thirsts, let him come unto Me and drink. The tones of that pleading voice were both striking and wooing, forcible and tender. When, on that last occasion, He addressed the people, He poured out His whole soul pleading with them that they would come to Him, then and there! Dear Hearts, when I think of Christ entreating us to come, I am astonished that we should need such pleading and that He should give it! Surely the shoe should be on the other foot! Ought we not to entreat Him to let us come? Should we not fall on our knees and plead for permission to receive the Savior? Instead of that, we are cold and callous and it is He that is eager for us to come. He loves us better than we love ourselves! When a man has charity to give away, does he entreat people to come and accept it? No, but they come and knock at his door and beg him to give it to them.   
How strange is this, that you should be unwilling and Christ anxious! That you should be backward and Christ forward! That Jesus should cry, Come, and you should sit still and decline His calls! Should you not come when Jesus, Himself, invites and even entreats? Is it not baseness? Is it not gross hardness of heart if we do not receive Him who speaks from Heaven and cries, If any man thirsts, let him come unto Me and drink? You have not come beforethat was wrongbut the times of your ignorance God winked at and bids you come now. Oh, that His sweet Spirit would accompany my words, so that you might feel your hearts melting towards the Savior and might say, Yes, we will come, we will trust Jesus, we will receive His Grace!   
O my Brothers and Sisters, if this is your hearty consent to Infinite Love, then your sorrow is ended, your danger is over, your joy is begun! The Lord grant it, for His dear Sons sake. Amen.

**PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMONJohn 7.** HYMNS FROM OUR OWN HYMN BOOK906, 492, 500.

NOTE FROM MR. SPURGEON:   
LEAVING home in great weakness, I beg the loving sympathy of my  
friends towards my orphan family of 500 children. Generous donations at   
this season would be greatly valued by me. Direct them to C. H.   
SPURGEON, Westwood, Beulah Hill, Upper Norwood.

Adapted from The C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307 Sermon #1662 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

THE INDWELLING AND OUTFLOWING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT   
NO. 1662

**DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, MAY 28, 1882, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**He that believes on Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spoke He of the Spirit,   
which they that believe on Him should receive: for the Holy Spirit was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified). John 7:38, 39.**

**Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart,   
I will send Him unto you.   
John 16:7.**

IT is essential, dear Friends, that we should worship the living and true God. It will be ill for us if it can be said, You worship you know not what. You shall worship the Lord your God and Him only shall you serve. The heathens err from this command by multiplying gods and making this and that image to be the object of their adoration. Their excess runs to gross superstition and idolatry. I fear that sometimes we who, profess and call ourselves Christians, err in exactly the opposite direction. Instead of worshipping more than God, I fear we worship less than God. This appears when we forget to pay due adoration to the Holy Spirit of God. The true God is triuneFather Son, and Holy Spiritand though there is but one God, yet that one God has manifested Himself to us in the trinity of His sacred Persons.

If, then, I worship the Father and the Son, but forget or neglect to adore the Holy Spirit, I worship less than God. While the poor heathen, in his ignorance, goes far beyond and transgresses, I must take care lest I fall short and fail, also. What a grievous thing it will be if we do not pay that loving homage and reverence to the Holy Spirit which is so justly His due. May it not be the fact that we enjoy less of His power and see less of His working in the world because the Church of God has not been sufficiently mindful of Him? It is a blessed thing to preach the work of Jesus Christ, but it is an evil thing to omit the work of the Holy Spiritfor the work of the Lord Jesus, itself, is no blessing to that man who does not know the work of the Holy Spirit!

There is the ransom price, but it is only through the Spirit that we know the redemption! There is the precious blood, but it is as though the fountain had never been filled unless the Spirit of God leads us with repenting faith to wash therein! The bandage is soft and the ointment is effectual, but the wound will never be healed till the Holy Spirit shall apply that which the great Physician has provided. Let us not, therefore, be found neglectful of the work of the Divine Spirit, lest we incur guilt and inflict upon ourselves serious damage. You that are Believers have the most forcible reasons to hold the Holy Spirit in the highest esteem, for what are you now without Him? What were you and what would you still have been if it had not been for His gracious work upon you?

He quickened you, otherwise you had not been in the living family of God today. He gave you understanding that you might know the Truth of God, otherwise would you have been as ignorant as the carnal world is at this hour! It was He that awakened your conscience, convincing you of sin! It was He that gave you abhorrence of sin and led you to repentit was He that taught you to believe and made you see that glorious Person who is to be believed, even Jesus, the Son of God! The Spirit has worked in you your faith, love, hope and every other Grace of God! There is not a jewel upon the neck of your soul which He did not place there

*For every virtue we possess,   
And every victory won,   
And every thought of holiness,   
Are His and His alone.*

What have we learned, if we have learned aright, except by the teaching of the Holy Spirit? What can we say either in prayer to God or in teaching to men that shall be acceptable unless we receive the unction of the Holy One of Israel? Brothers and Sisters, who is it that has comforted us in our distresses; directed us in our perplexities; strengthened us in our weaknesses and helped our infirmities in ten thousand ways? Is it not the Comforter whom the Father has sent in Jesus name? Can I speak too highly of the riches of His Grace toward us? Can I too much extol the love of the Spirit? I know I cannot and you that know what He has worked in you delight to hear Him highly spoken of and His work and offices set forth! We are bound by a thousand ties to seek His honor who has worked in us our salvation! Let us never grieve Him by our ingratitude, but let us endeavor to extol Him.

For my part, it shall be the labor of this morning to impress upon you the necessity for His work and the superlative value of it. Beloved Brothers and Sisters, notwithstanding all that the Spirit of God has already done in us, it is very possible that we have missed a large part of the blessing which He is willing to give, for He is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think. We have already come to Jesus and we have drunk of the life-giving streamour thirst is quenched and we are made to live in Him. Is this all? Now that we are living in Him and rejoicing to do so, have we come to the end of the matter?

Assuredly not! We have reached as far as that first exhortation of the Master, If any man thirsts, let him come unto Me and drink. But do you think that the generality of the Church of God have ever advanced to the nextHe that believes on Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water? I think I am not going beyond the grievous truth if I say that only here and there will you find men and women who have believed up to that point. Their thirst is quenched, as I have said, and they liveand because Jesus lives they shall live alsobut health and vigor they have not! They have life, but they have not life more abundantly. They have little life with which to act upon othersthey have no energy welling up and overflowing to go streaming out of them like rivers!

They have not thought it possible, perhaps, or thinking it possible, they have not imagined it possible to themselves. Or believing it possible to themselves they have not aspired to it, but they have stopped short of the fullest blessing. Their wading in to the sacred river has contented them and they know nothing of waters to swim in. Like the Israelites of old, they are slow to possess all the land of promise, but rather sit down when the war has hardly begun! Brothers and Sisters, let us go in to get of God all that God will give us! Let us set our heart upon this, that we mean to have, by Gods help, all that the infinite goodness of God is ready to bestow! Let us not be satisfied with the sip that saves, but let us go on to the Baptism which buries the flesh and raises us in the likeness of the risen Lordeven that Baptism into the Holy Spirit and into fire which makes us spiritual and sets us all on flame with zeal for the Glory of God and eagerness for usefulness by which that Glory may be increased among the sons of men!

Thus I introduce you to my texts and by their guidance we will enter upon the further consideration of the operations of the Holy Spirit, especially of those to which we would aspire.

I. We will commence with the remark that THE WORK OF THE SPIRIT IS INTIMATELY CONNECTED WITH THE WORK OF CHRIST. It is a great pity when persons preach the Holy Spirits work so as to obscure the work of Christ. I have known some do that, for they have held up before the sinners eyes the inward experience of Believers, instead of lifting up, first and foremost, the crucified Savior to whom we must look and live! The Gospel is not, Behold the Spirit of God, but, Behold the Lamb of God. It is an equal pity when Christ is so preached that the Holy Spirit is ignoredas if faith in Jesus prevented the necessity of the new birthand imputed righteousness rendered imparted righteousness needless.

Have I not often reminded you that in the third chapter of John, where Jesus taught Nicodemus the doctrine, Except a man is born again of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter the kingdom of Heaven, we also read those blessed words, And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up: that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life? The necessity for regeneration by the Spirit is put very clearly, there, and so is the free promise that those who trust in Jesus shall be saved. This is what we ought to dowe must take care to let both these Truths of God stand out most distinctly with equal prominence!

They are intertwined with each other and are necessary each to each what God has joined together let no man put asunder. They are so joined together that, first of all, the Holy Spirit was not given until Jesus had been glorified. Carefully note our first textit is a very striking oneThis spoke He of the Spirit which they that believe on Him should receive: for the Holy Spirit was not yet. The word, given, is not in the originalit is inserted by the translators to help explain the sense and they were, perhaps, wise in making such an addition, but the words are more forcible by themselves.

How strong the statement, For the Holy Spirit was not yet. Of course, we, none of us, dream that the Holy Spirit was not yet existing, for He is eternal and self-existent, being most truly God. But He was not yet in fellowship with man to the full extent in which He now is since Jesus Christ is glorified. The near and dear communion of God with man which is expressed by the indwelling of the Spirit could not take place till the redeeming work was done and the Redeemer was exalted! As far as men and the fullness of the blessing were concerned, indicated by the outflowing rivers of living water, the Spirit of God was not yet.

Oh, you say, but was not the Spirit of God in the Church in the wilderness and with the saints of God in all former ages? I answer, Certainly, but not in the manner in which the Spirit of God now resides in the Church of Jesus Christ. You read of the Prophets and of one and another gracious man, that the Spirit of God came upon them, seized them, moved them, spoke by thembut He did not dwell in them. His operations upon men were a coming and a goingthey were carried away by the Spirit of God and came under His powerbut the Spirit of God did not rest upon them or abide in them.

Occasionally the sacred endowment of the Spirit of God came upon them, but they knew not the communion of the Holy Spirit. As a French pastor very sweetly puts it, He appeared unto men. He did not incarnate Himself in man. His action was intermittentHe went and came like the dove which Noah sent forth from the ark and which went to and fro, finding no restwhile in the new dispensation He dwells, He abides in the heart, as the dove, His emblem, which John the Baptist saw descending and alighting upon the head of Jesus. Affianced of the soul, the Spirit went off to see His betrothed, but was not yet one with her. The marriage was not consummated until Pentecost, after the glorification of Jesus Christ.

You know how our Lord puts it, He dwells with you and shall be in you. That indwelling is another thing from being with us. The Holy Spirit was with the Apostles in the days when Jesus was with them, but He was not in them in the sense in which He filled them at and after the Day of Pentecost. The operations of the Spirit of God before our Lords Ascension were not according to the full measure of the Gospel. But now the Spirit of God has been poured upon us from on high! Now He has descended and now He abides in the midst of the Church. And now we enter into Him and are baptized into the Holy Spirit, while He enters into us and makes our bodies to be His temples. Jesus said, I will send you another Comforter which shall abide with you forevernot coming and goingbut remaining in the midst of the Church!

This shows how intimately the gift of the Holy Spirit is connected with our Lord Jesus Christ, inasmuch as in the fullest sense of His indwelling, the Holy Spirit could not be with us until Christ had been glorified. It has been well observed that our Lord sent out 70 evangelists to preach the Gospel, even as He had before sent out the 12and no doubt they preached with great zeal and produced much stirbut the Holy Spirit never took the trouble to preserve one of their sermons, or even the notes of one! I have not the slightest doubt that they were very crude and incomplete, showing more of human zeal than of Divine unction and, therefore, they are forgotten! But no sooner had the Holy Spirit fallen, than Peters first sermon is recordedand from then on we have frequent notes of the utterances of Apostles, deacons and evangelists! There was an abiding fullness and an overflowing of blessing out of the souls of the saints, after the Lord was glorified, which was not existing among men before that time!

Observe, too, that the Holy Spirit was given after the ascent of our Divine Lord into His Glory, partly to make that ascent the more renowned. When He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive and gave gifts to men. These gifts were men, in whom the Holy Spirit dwelt, who preached the Gospel unto the nations. The shedding of the Holy Spirit upon the assembled disciples on that memorable day was the glorification of the risen Christ upon the earth! I know not in what way the Father could have made the Glory of Heaven so effectually to flow from the heights of the New Jerusalem and to come streaming down among the sons of men as by giving that chief of all Gifts, the gift of the Holy Spirit when the Lord had risen and gone into His Glory!

With emphasis, may I say of the Spirit at Pentecost that He glorified Christ by descending at such a time. What grander celebration could there have been? Heaven rang with Hosannas and earth echoed the joy! The descending Spirit is the noblest testimony among men to the Glory of the ascended Redeemer! Was not the Spirit of God also sent at that time as an evidence of our Divine Masters acceptance? Did not the Father thus say to the Church, My Son has finished the work and has fully entered into His Glory. Therefore I give you the Holy Spirit? If you would know what a harvest is to come of the sowing of the bloody sweat and of the death wounds, see the first fruits! Behold how the Holy Spirit is given, Himself, to be the first fruits, the earnest of the Glory which shall yet be revealed in us! I need no better attestation from God of the finished work of Jesus than this blazing, flaming seal of tongues of fire upon the heads of the disciples! He must have done His work, or such a gift as this would not have come from it.

Moreover, if you desire to see how the work of the Spirit comes to us in connection with the work of Christ, recollect that it is the Spirits work to bear witness of Jesus Christ. He does not take of a thousand different matters and show them to us, but He shall take, of Mine, says Christ, and He shall show them unto you. The Spirit of God is engaged in a service in which the Lord Jesus Christ is the beginning and the end. He comes to men that they may come to Jesus. Hence He comes to convince us of sin that He may reveal the great Sacrifice of sinHe comes to convince us of righteousness that we may see the Righteousness of Christ and of judgment that we may be prepared to meet Him when He shall come to judge the quick and dead.

Do not think that the Spirit of God has come or ever will come among us to teach us a new Gospel, or something other than is written in the Scriptures. Men come to me with their stories and fancies and tell me that they were revealed to them by the Holy Spirit. I abhor their blasphemous impertinence and refuse to listen to them for a minute! They tell me this and that absurdityand then father it upon the Spirit of Wisdom! It is enough to try our patience to hear their foolish ravings, but to find the Holy Spirit charged with them is more than we can bear! We have tests and judgments by which to know whether they who claim to speak by the Holy Spirit do so or notfor the testimony of the Spirit is always most honorable to our Lord Jesus Christand does not concern itself with the trifles of time and the follies of the flesh.

It is by the Gospel of Jesus Christ that the Spirit of God works in the hearts of men. Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of Godthe Holy Spirit uses the hearing of the Word of God for the conviction, conversion, consolation and sanctification of men. His usual and ordinary method of operation is to fasten upon the mind the things of God and to put life and force into the consideration of them. He revives in mens memories things that have long been forgotten and He frequently makes these the means of affecting the heart and conscience. The men can hardly remember hearing these Truths of God, but still, they were heard by them at some time or other! Saving Truths are such matters as are contained in their substance in the Word of God and lie within the range of the teaching, or the Person, or work, or offices of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is the Spirits

one business here below to reveal Christ to us and in usand to that work He steadily adheres.

Moreover, the Holy Spirits work is to conform us to the likeness of Jesus Christ. He is not working us to this or that human ideal, but He is working us into the likeness of Christ that He may be the First-Born among many brethren. Jesus Christ is that standard and model to which the Spirit of God, by His sanctifying processes, is bringing us till Christ is formed in us the hope of Glory. It is for the Glory of Jesus that the Spirit of God always works. He works not for the Glory of a Church or of a communityHe works not for the honor of a man or for the distinction of a sectHis one great objective is to glorify Christ! He shall glorify Me, is our Saviors declaration, and when He takes of the things of Christ and shows them to us, we are led more and more to reverence and love and to adore our blessed Lord Jesus Christ.

I will not detain you longer with this. You will see how the works of Jesus and of the Spirit are joined together indissolubly, so that we may neither set the work of Jesus before the work of the Spirit nor the work of the Spirit before the work of Jesus. But we are glad to joy in both and to make much of them. As we delight in the Fathers love and the Grace of our Lord Jesus, so do we equally rejoice in the communion of the Holy Spirit and, therefore, these Three agree in One.

II. We will now advance another step and here we shall need our second text. THE OPERATIONS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT ARE OF INCOMPARABLE VALUE. They are of such incomparable value that the very best things we can think of are not thought to be so precious as these are. Our Lord Himself says, It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you. Beloved Friends, the Presence of Jesus Christ was of inestimable value to His disciples and yet it was not such an advantage to His servants as the indwelling of the Holy Spirit! Is not this a wonderful statement? Well might our Lord preface it by saying, Now I tell you the truth, as if He felt that they would find it a hard saying, for a hard saying it is!

Consider for a moment what Christ was to His disciples while He was hereand then see what must be the value of the Spirits operations when it is expedient that they should lose all that blessing in order to receive the Spirit of God! Our Lord Jesus Christ was to them their Teacher. They had learned everything from His lips. He was their Leaderthey had never to ask what to dothey had only to follow in His footsteps. He was their Defenderwhenever the Pharisees or Sadducees assailed them, He was like a brazen wall to them! He was their Comforterin all times of grief they resorted to Him and His dear sympathetic heart poured out floods of comfort at once. What if I were to say that the Lord Jesus Christ was everything to them, their All in All? What a father is to his children, yes, what a mother is to her suckling, that was Jesus Christ to His disciples! And yet the Spirit of Gods abiding in the Church is better, even, than all this!

Now take another thought. What would you think if Jesus Christ were to come among us now, as in the days of His flesh? I mean not as He will come, but as He appeared at His first advent. What joy it would give you! Oh, the delights, the heavenly joys, to hear that Jesus Christ of Nazareth was on earth, again, a Man among men! Should we not clap our hands for joy? Our one question would be, Master, where do You dwell? for we should all long to live just where He lived. We could then sympathize with the Negroes when they flocked into Washington in large numbers to take up their residence there. Why, do you think, did they come to live in that city? Because Massa Abraham Lincoln, who had set them free, lived there! And they thought it would be glorious to live as near as possible to their great friend!

If Jesus lived anywhere, it would not matter where! If it were in the desert or on the bleakest of mountains, there would be a rush to the place! How would the spot be crowded! What rents they would pay for the worst of tenements if Jesus was but in the neighborhood! But dont you see the difficulty? We could not all get near Him in any literal or corporeal fashion. Now that the Church is multiplied into millions of Believers, some of the Lords followers would never be able to see Himand the most could only hope to speak with Him now and then! In the days of His flesh the 12 might see Him every day and so might the little company of disciplesbut the case is altered, now that multitudes are trusting in His name.

If our Lord were at this time living in the United States, we should be much grieved to have an ocean between us and our Leaderall the companies that could be formed would not be able to run enough boats to carry us over. If the Master personally came here to this little island, it would not hold all the vast company of the faithful who would flock to it. It is much better to have the Holy Spirit, because He is dwelling with us and in us! The difficulties of the bodily Presence are too great and so, though we would be thankful, like the Apostles, if we had known Christ after the flesh, yet we do not marvel that they expressed little sorrow when they said that after the flesh they knew Him no more. The Comforter had filled the void caused by His absence and made them rejoice because the Lord had gone unto His Father!

Are we not apt to think that if our Lord Jesus were here it would give unspeakable strength to the Church? Would not the enemy be convinced if they saw Him? No, they would not! If they heard not Moses and the Prophets, neither would they be converted though one rose from the dead! Jesus rose, but they did not, therefore, believe. If our Lord had lingered here all this while, His Presence would not have converted unbelievers, for nothing can do that but the power of the Holy Spirit! But, you say, surely it would thrill the Church with enthusiasm. Fancy the Lord Himself standing on this platform this morning in the same garb as when He was upon earth. Oh, what rapturous worship! What burning zeal! What enthusiasm! We should go home in such a state of excitement as we never were in before!

Yes, it is even so, but then the Lord is not going to carry on His Kingdom by the force of mere mental excitementnot even by such enthusiasm as would follow the sight of His Person. The work of the Holy Spirit is a truer work, a deeper work, a surer work and will more effectually achieve the purposes of God than even would the enthusiasm to which we should be stirred by the bodily Presence of our well-beloved Savior. The work is to be spiritual and, therefore, the visible Presence has departed. It is better that it should be so. We must walk by faith and by faith alone! How could we do this if we could see the Lord with these mortal eyes? This is the dispensation of the unseen Spirit, in which we render Glory to God by trusting in His Word and relying upon the unseen energy.

Now, faith works and faith triumphs though the world sees not the foundation upon which faith is built, for the Spirit who works in us cannot be discerned by carnal minds. The world sees Him not, neither knows Him. Thus, you see that the operations of the Holy Spirit must be inestimably precious. There is no calculating their value, since it is expedient that we lose the bodily Presence of Christ rather than remain without the indwelling of the Spirit of God.

III. Now go back to my first text, again, and follow me in the third head. Those operations of the Spirit of God, of which I am afraid some Christians are almost ignorant, are of wondrous power. The text says, He that believes on Me, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. THESE OPERATIONS ARE OF MARVELOUS POWER. Brothers and Sisters, do you understand my text? Do rivers of living water flow out of you?

Notice, first, that this is to be an inward workthe rivers of living water are to flow out of the midst of the man. The words, are, according to our version, Out of his bellythat is, from his heart and soul. The rivers do not flow out of his mouththe promised power is not oratory. We have had plenty of words, floods of wordsbut this is heart work. The source of the rivers is found in the inner life. It is an inward work at its fountainhead. It is not a work of talent and ability, show, glitter and glareit is altogether an inward work. The life-flood is to come out of the mans inmost selfout of the heart and essential being of the man. Homage is shown too generally to outward form and external observance, though these soon lose their interest and power. But when the Spirit of God rests within a man, it exercises a home rule within him and he gives great attention to what an old divine was known to call, the home department. Alas, many neglect the realm within which is the chief province under our care. O my Brothers and Sisters in Christ, if you would be useful, begin with yourself! It is out of your very soul that a blessing must come. It cannot come out of you if it is not in you! And it cannot be in you unless God the Holy Spirit places it there.

Next, it is life-giving work. Out of the heart of the man, out of the center of his life, are to flow rivers of living water. That is to say, he is instrumentally to communicate to others the Divine life. When he speaks; when he prays; when he acts, he shall so speak and pray and act that there shall be going out of him an emanation which is full of the life of Grace and godliness. He shall be a light by which others shall see! His life shall be the means of kindling life in other mens bosoms. Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. Note the plenitude of it. The figure would have been a surprising one if it had said, Out of him shall flow a river of living water. But it is not soit says rivers.

Have you ever stood by the side of a very abundant spring? We have some such not far from London. You see the water bubbling up from many little mouths. Observe the sand dancing as the water forces its way from the bottom and there, just across the road, a mill is turned by the stream which has just been created by the spring! And when the waterwheel is turned, you see a veritable river flowing forward to supply Father Thames. Yet this is only one river! What would you think if you saw a spring yielding such supplies that a river flowed from it to the north and a river to the south, a river to the east and a river to the west? This is the figure before usrivers of living water flowing out of the living man in all directions!

Ah, you say, I have not reached to that. A point is gained when you know, confess and deplore your failure. If you say, I have all things and abound, I am afraid you will never reach the fullness of the blessing. But if you know something of your failure, the Lord will lead you further. It may be that the Spirit of Life which comes forth for you is but a trickling brooklet, or even a few tiny drops. Then be sure to confess it and you will be on the way to a fuller blessing! What a Word of God is this! Rivers of living water!! Oh that all professing Christians were such fountains! See how spontaneous it isOut of his belly shall flow. No pumping is required! Nothing is said about machinery and hydraulics! The man does not need exciting and stirring up, but, just as he is, influence of the best kind quietly flows out of him!

Did you ever hear a great hubbub in the morning, a great outcry, a sounding of trumpets and drums? And did you ever ask, What is it? Did a voice reply, The sun is about to rise and he is making this noise that all may be aware of it? No, he shines, but he has nothing to say about it! Even so, the genuine Christian just goes about flooding the world with blessings and, so far from claiming attention for himself, it may be that he is unconscious of what he is effecting! God so blesses him that his leaf does not wither and whatever he does is prospering, for he is like a tree planted by the rivers of water that bring forth its fruit in its seasonhis verdure and fruit are the natural outcome of his vigorous life. Oh, the blessed spontaneity of the work of Grace when a man gets into the fullness of it, for then he seems to eat and drink and sleep eternal life! And he spreads a savor of salvation all round! And this is to be perpetualnot like intermittent springs which burst forth and flow in torrents and then ceasebut it is to be an everyday gushing out!

In summer and winter, by day and by night, wherever the man is, he shall be a blessing. As he breathes, he shall breathe benedictions! As he thinks, his mind shall be devising generous things. And when he acts, his acts shall be as though the hand of God were working by the hand of man! I hope I hear many sighs rising up in the place! I hope I hear friends saying, Oh that I could get to that. I want you to attain the fullness of the favor! I pray that we may all get it because Jesus Christ is glorified! Therefore the Holy Spirit is given in this fashion, given more largely to those in the kingdom of Heaven than to all those holy men before the Lords ascent to His Glory.

God gives no stinted blessing to celebrate the triumph of His Son! God gives not the Spirit by measure unto Him. On such an occasion Heavens grandest liberality was displayed. Christ is glorified in Heaven above and God would have Him glorified in the Church below by vouchsafing a Baptism of the Holy Spirit to each of us. So I close by this, which I hope will be a very comforting and inspiriting reflection.

IV. THESE OPERATIONS OF THE SPIRIT OF GOD ARE EASILY TO BE OBTAINED BY THE LORDS CHILDREN. Did you say you had not received them? They are to be had! They are to be had at once! First, they are to be had by believing in Jesus. This spoke He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive. Do you not see that it is faith which gives us the first drink and causes us to live? And this second, more abundant blessing of being, ourselves, made fountains from which rivers flow, comes in the same way! Believe in Christ, for the blessing is to be obtained not by the works of the Law, nor by so much fasting, striving, or effortbut by belief in the Lord Jesus!

With Him is the residue of the Spirit. He is prepared to give this to you, yes, to every one of you who believe on His name. He will not, of course, make all of you preachersfor who, then, would be hearers? If all were preachers, the other works of the Church would be neglected. But He will give you this favorthat out of you there shall stream a Divine influence all round you to bless your children, to bless your servants, to bless the workmen in the house where you are employed and to bless the street you live! In proportion as God gives you opportunity, these rivers of living water will flow in this channel and in thatand they will be pouring forth from you at all timesif you believe in Jesus for the full blessing and can, by faith, receive it.

But there is another thing to be done as well, and that is to pray. And here I want to remind you of those blessed Words of the Master, Everyone that asks receives; and he that seeks finds; and to him that knocks it shall be opened. If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? Or if he ask for a fish, will he, for a fish give him a serpent? Or if he shall ask for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If you, then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him? You see, there is a distinct promise to the children of God that their heavenly Father will give them the Holy Spirit if they ask for His powerand that promise is made to be exceedingly strong by the instances joined to it. If there is a promise that God can break (which there is not), this is not the promise, for God has put it in the most forcible and binding way.

I know not how to show you its wonderful force! Did you ever hear of a man who, when his child asked for bread, gave him a stone? Go to the worst part of London and will you find a man of that kind? You shall, if you like, get among pirates and murderers, and when a little child cries, Father, give me a bit of bread and meat, does the most wicked father fill his own little ones mouth with stones? Yet the Lord seems to say that this is what He would be doing if He were to deny us the Holy Spirit when we ask Him for His necessary workingHe would be like one that gave his children stones instead of bread! Do you think the Lord will ever bring Himself down to that? He says, How much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?

He makes it a stronger case than that of an ordinary parent! The Lord must give us the Spirit when we ask Him, for He has, herein, bound Himself by no ordinary pledge. He has used a simile which would bring dishonor on His name and that of the very grossest kind, if He did not give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him! Oh, then, let us ask Him at once with all our hearts! Am I not so happy as to have in this audience some who will immediately ask? I pray that some who have never received the Holy Spirit at all may now be led, while I am speaking, to pray, Blessed Spirit, visit me! Lead me to Jesus. But especially those of you that are the children of Godto you is this promise especially made! Ask God to make you all that the Spirit of God can make younot only a satisfied Believer who has drunk for himselfbut a useful Believer who overflows the neighborhood with blessing!

I see here a number of friends from the country who have come to spend their holiday in London. What a blessing it would be if they went back to their respective Churches overflowing! There are numbers of Churches that need flooding! They are dry as a barn floor and little dew falls on them. Oh that they might be flooded! What a wonderful thing a flood is! Go down to the river; look over the bridge and see the barges and other crafts lying in the mud. All the kings horses and all the kings men cannot tug them out to sea! There they lie, dead and motionless as the mud, itself! What shall we do with them? What machinery can move them? Have we a great engineer among us who will devise a scheme for lifting these vessels and bearing them down to the rivers mouth? No, it cannot be done! Wait till the tide comes in! What a change! Each vessel walks the water like a thing of life! What a difference between the low tide and the high tide! You cannot stir the boats when the water is gone, but when the tide is at the full, see how readily they movea little child may push them with his hand!

Oh, for a flood of Divine Grace! May the Lord send to all our Churches a great springtide! Then the indolent will be active enough and those who were half dead will be full of energy. I know that in this particular dock several vessels are lying that I should like to float, but I cannot stir them. They neither work for God nor come out to the Prayer Meetings! They do not give of their substance to spread the Gospel. If the flood would come, you would see what they are capable ofthey would be active, fervent, generous, abounding in every good word and work! So may it be! So may it be! May springs begin to flow in all our Churches and may all of you who hear me this day get your share of the streams!

Oh that the Lord may now fill you and then send you home bearing a flood of Grace with you! It sounds odd to speak of a mans carrying home a flood within him and yet I hope it will be soand that out of you shall flow rivers of living water! So may God grant it for Jesus sake. Amen.

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Sermon #2710 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

CHRIST THE CAUSE OF DIVISION   
NO. 2710

A SERMON   
INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS-DAY, JANUARY 20, 1901.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, MARCH 21, 1880.

**So there was a division among the people because of Him. John 7:43.**

IT seems, then, that even when Christ was the Preacher, there was a division among the hearers, so we must not be surprised if the same result follows from our preaching. No doubt strife has sometimes been caused by a preachers harshness of expression, or unwise utterances. He may have spoken unadvisedly, or provokingly, but if he did not, all would not be pleased, for even when Jesus spoke as never man spoke, all His hearers were not pleased. We truly say, Many men, many minds and, therefore, even when Christ spoke, there was a division among the people because of Him.

Nor was the division to be traced to the subject upon which Jesus was speaking at that time. There are some deep, mysterious subjects which seem calculated to stir up controversy, and you might say, Whoever shall speak upon such a topic, even if the wise Solomon were to speak, he must create a division in any audience, if that should be his theme. But, in this case, with Christ for a Speaker, the subject was Himself. It was concerning Him that the schismathe schism occurred. There was a schism among the people, not concerning predestination or free willnot concerning forms of church governmentnot concerning the modes of observing the ordinances, but, because of Him.

So, then, we may not expect unanimity among mankind, whoever shall be the speaker, or whatever may be the subject of address. And I am not quite sure that this is a result that is altogether to be regretted. I have heard of a whole parish in which there were no religious bickering because there was no religion! There were no religious strifes because nobody had anything worth striving for! And that is not a state of things over which I can rejoice. I dread the peace of the sepulcher far more than the battles of life. Life naturally makes a stirit seems inevitable that it should do soand it is better that men should think, even though they think amiss, than that they should not think at all! I am not aware that the cattle in the fields have any diversity of judgmentit is no cause for wonder that there should be agreement where mind is absent. But it seems all but inevitable that where there is mind, where there is thought, where weighty subjects are considered and discussed, there should be differences of opinion. And it is better that there should be those differences than that there should be the apathy, the indifference, the smell of death!

And yet, my Brothers and Sisters, I am sorry that there should be any division among the people about the Lord Jesus Christ, because if there is a point in which all mankind ought to have been agreed, it is concerning Him who came to save menthe Unselfish One who laid aside His robes of Glory that He might take upon Himself our nature, our suffering and our sin, so that He might redeem us from all our iniquities. There ought to have been only one opinion upon this subjectThis is the Son of God! Let us adore Him. This is the Christ of God! Let us trust Him. This is our God! We have waited for Himlet us rejoice and be glad in Him. But it was not soThere was a division among the people because of Him. And, to this day, the greatest division in the world is because of Him.

I. I ask you to notice, first, that THERE WAS A DIVISION AMONG NON-BELIEVERS CONCERNING CHRIST. A large proportion of those who listened to Christ did not accept Him as their Savior and, although they all agreed upon that point, there was a division among them concerning Him.

First, there were some who rejected His claims altogether, and who even said, He deceives the people. They went so far as to wish to lay violent hands upon Him and, more than once we read that they took up stones to stone Him. And we know that they did, at last, compass His death. In like manner, even to this day, there are some who utterly reject the claims of Jesus Christ. They seem as if they could not say anything too bitter and cruel concerning Him. They will not have Him to reign over themin downright, terrible earnest, they reject Him!

But all unbelievers are not so extreme in their opposition to Christ. We noticed, in reading the chapter, that there are some who admit a portion of Christs claims. Some said, He is a good Man. Many said, Of a truth, this is the Prophetthe promised Messiah. They would not shut their eyesthey were too candid to do soto the goodness of His personal Character and to a certain grandeur about Him which betokened that He was a Prophet sent from God. They went as far as that, but they would go no further. And there are many in the present day who act in the same fashion.

There was a third class of persons who went still further. They admitted Christs claims, but neglected to follow out the legitimate consequences of them. They said, When Christ comes, will He do more miracles than these, which this Man has done? Others said, This is the Christ. They were quite certain that He was the Messiah and yet, when they had said that, they coolly went their way and took no more notice of Him. They had made a truthful statement, but it did not in the least affect their conduct! Though they believed Jesus to be anointed of God, they did not enroll themselves beneath His banner, or become obedient to His commands, or ask to be instructed in His doctrine. And, alas, we have a good many persons of that sort still in our midst! I suppose that most of the unconverted people here are persons of that character. You do not deny the Scripturesyou believe in them. You do not doubt the Deity of Christyou believe it. You do not question His Atonementyou believe it. Some of you would not like to hear anything contrary to the doctrine which has been taught to you concerning Him. If anyone were to preach error, you would at once say, This is not the Gospel, but another gospel, and we will not listen to it. Yet you have never accepted Christ to be your very own Savior! You have never committed yourselves to His dear keeping. You have orthodox heads, but heterodox hearts!

It is still true, as it was in our Lords day, that there is a division among the people because of Him. And I ask you, who love the Savior, as you look upon those who do not love Him, to make a distinction between the one and the other of them. As for those who utterly reject Him, pray for them. Do not expect them to love you if they do not love your Lord. And when they speak harshly concerning you, do not be astonished, for Jesus said to His disciples, The servant is not greater than his master. If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept My saying, they will keep yours also. Do not get angry with them because they do not receive the Savior, but pray for them, pity them and love them with a love that will not give them up. Remember that the greatest force in the world is loveit is invincible. You can love a man to Christ, but you cannot bully him into salvation. I never heard of a soul that was scolded to the Savior, but I have known many drawn to Him by love. So love them, dear Friendskeep on loving them more and more until they shall be brought to feel that the love of God shed abroad in your heart has also reached their hearts.

As for those who are prepared to go part of the way with Christ, aid them all you can. If they have not all the Light of God you wish them to have, be thankful that they have any, and tell them that no man who acts honestly up to the light he has, will be left in the dark. If a man has a dozen errors beclouding the truth which he sincerely believes, if he is only a true man, he will come out right. I have often conversed with persons who have been as wrong as wrong can be, but they did not mean to be wrong. They had an earnest desire to know the Truth of God if they could find it, and they had an earnest wish to live that Truth, too. I am always hopeful about such persons. You remember that our Lord Jesus said, concerning His Father, If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it is of God, or whether I speak of Myself. It is the same nowif anyone is desirous to act according to the mind of God, the Light of God will come to him sooner or later, and he shall discover the true Doctrine of Christ. Try and help him discover it. Quietly, lovingly, point him to the Son of God, and rest not content till he finds his Savior.

As for those who believe everything about Christ, but yet do not savingly rely upon Christ, Himself, O my Friends, what shall we say concerning these people? We have brought them to the Water of Life, but we cannot make them drink! We put the Bread of Life before them, but we cannot make them eat it! It behooves us to weep in secret concerning our fellow seat holders and those who come here constantly, or who go to other places of worship where Christ is preached, and who say of what they hear, It is all true, yet they do not receive it in their hearts. O my Hearer, out of your own mouth you will be condemned at the last because you will not be able to say, I did not know the way of salvation, for you do know it! You will not be able to say, I did not accept the Bible as true, for you know it is true, and yet you do not take the practical step that ought to follow as the result of that knowledge! May the Lord, in His infinite mercy, lead you to take it this very hour! If you do not take it, you will be convictedself-convicted at the bar of God! I must not spend more time, however, on this part of the subjectbut you can all see that there was a division among the unbelievers concerning Christ.

II. But now, secondly, THERE WAS ALSO A DIVISION OF BELIEVERS FROM NON-BELIEVERS.   
There were some who did really and savingly take Christ to be theirs and, there was a division among the people on that account, and what a division that always is! How deep it is! How wide it is! Between the poorest saint and the brightest moralist, there is a great gulf. We may not be able to perceive it in the outward character, but there is as deep a gulf as there is between the feeblest form of life and deatha gulf which only Omnipotent Grace can cause any man to pass over. The radical difference between the true Believer and the unbeliever lies in their relation to Christ. That is the point of divergenceThere was a division among the people because of Him.   
For, first, to the unbeliever, Christ is nothing. But to the Believer, Christ is everything. To the unbeliever, a mere opinion about Christ is everything. To the true Believer, the saving knowledge of Christ has covered up all mere opinions concerning Him. He knows Christ, and lives in Him, and Christ also lives in him.

Look at the difference between the Believer and the unbeliever in the matter of trusting Christ. The unbeliever trusts in himself, or in his own works, or in his priest if he is a Romanist or Ritualist. But the true Christian trusts in Christ wholly and alone. There is one thing concerning myself about which I am perfectly sure. When I pass myself through many forms of self-examination, I tremble as I do it, lest I should deceive myself. But about this one matter I know that I am not deceivedI have not the shadow of a shade of a ghost of a confidence as to my ultimate salvation except in Jesus Christ alone! And one reason why I dare not have any confidence except in Him is that I do not know anything I ever did, or ever thought, or ever was in which I could confideso I am driven to trust in Him, and in Him alone. I lie at the foot of His Cross because I cannot stand upright. I must do that, for, like Luther, I can do no other. If I search myself and my whole life over and over again, I cannot see anything but what I call a filthy rag, and I fling it all awaygood works and bad worksso far as mine are concerned, are not worth the trouble of sorting out. So I tie them all up in one bundle and pitch them overboard, and just cling to the ever-blessed lifebuoy of the merits of Jesus Christ, my Lord and Savior. That is what a Believer doeshe trusts Christ, and the unbeliever does notand that difference between them makes a division among the people.   
The same difference is apparent in the matter of love to Christ. The true Believer loves his Lord. He is no fiction to usno mere historic personage about whom we read, but of whom we think little or nothing. We love Him! The very sound of His name has music in it to us. Some seek their pleasure in the world, but the Christian does not. If he is obliged to go into the world, he is glad to get out of it as quickly as possible. While he is with worldlings, he says, There is nothing here to suit me. But let him have his Masters company for half an hour alone, no matter where, and he says, This is to me a foretaste of the bliss of Heaven! Rest assured, dear Friends, that where your pleasure is, there your heart is. If you find your pleasure in the world, your heart is in the world and you are to be reckoned among the worldly. But if Christ is your joy, your pleasure, your delight, your very Heaventhen there is a difference between you and worldlings.   
Further, those who know Christ and trust Him, and love Him, differ in character from worldlings, for those who truly know Christ seek to be like He. They take Him to be their copy, and try to imitate every line, each down-stroke and up-stroke. But he who knows not Christ takes any model that he pleases and aims not at copying the excellence of Jesus, and thus, again, there is a division among the people because of Him.   
This division is also shown in the gradual development of different characters. You may be at a railway stationan important junction, it may bethere are two lines of rails that run parallel to each other. There is a point, a little distance off, where they begin to diverge, one going to the East, and the other to the West. They will be many miles apart before long, but, at first, how slight is the division! So is it with those who begin life side by side. Two young men may be very much alike and for years you may scarcely see any difference between them. But, after a while, the ungodly man develops in his ways, and the lover of Christ develops in his. You see them when they have reached middle life. You see them, perhaps, on their dying bedwhat a vast distance they are from one another! What a difference there is between them with respect to Christ! One knows Him as his Savior and All-in-All. The other knows nothing of Him. One rejoices in Himthe other despises Him. One is triumphing in the thought that he will wake up in his Lords likeness. The other lies down to die moaning that he is without hope. In such cases, there is truly a difference among the people because of Christ!   
But what a difference there will be among the people in their eternal destiny! By-and-by they will awake, and arise! The Judgment Seat will be occupied and Christ, the Judge, will sit upon His Throne. He is the Man upon whom wicked men once spat, but His Countenance shall be bright as the sun in that day! He is the Man whom they scourgedbut then He will sway the scepter of universal Sovereignty and the unnumbered myriads of our race will all stand before Him! What an assembly that will be when before Him are gathered all nations! They will crowd the land and throng the very mountain topsand stand upon the ocean as upon a sea of glass. What a multitude! But there will be one thing that will divide them, and that will be a division among the people because of Him.   
Do you hear the songs and shouts of the ransomed? Louder than ten thousand thunders! Do you hear them? They are clapping their hands! They are shouting, Welcome, welcome, Son of God! The archangels trumpet seems to them, as they wake up from the dead, to be the morning summons that calls them up from beds of dust and silent clay to joy and eternal peace! And every note, as it peals out, is one to which they can sing, and they chant in harmony with it the great anthem, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.   
But what other sounds do I hear amidst those thunders of applause, and that mighty chorus of the redeemed? Listen! Sharp and shrill, there come up cries that pierce the very firmamentterrible sounds that even the glad music of that grand morning hymn cannot wholly drown. I can hear it, though the archangels trumpet waxes exceedingly loud and long, for myriads of lost souls have risen from the tomb, and they are wailing, wailing, wailing, because of Him whom they rejected! And above all other sounds there comes up the awful cry to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sits on the Throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of His wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?   
There will, indeed, be a division among the people because of Him in that tremendous day! On which side of the King will you be, then, my dear Hearer? I pray you to answer that question in the quietude of your chamber this very night. Where will you be when Christ shall make the final division between all the vast masses of the human race? And He shall separate them, one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. Will you be driven to the left hand, among the goats, with the Kings curse thundering in your ears? Or will you be gathered with those upon His right hand, and join with them in singing the hymns of angels and of men redeemed, to whom Christ will say, Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world?   
III. I cannot give more time to that solemn theme, for I must close my discourse with a brief reference to one other topic which arises out of the text. We have considered the division among the unbelievers because of Him, and the division between Believers and unbelievers. Now, in the last place, I want to show you that, WHEN FAITH COMES, UNITY IS PRODUCED.   
Is there any division among Believers because of Christ? Is there a division among the peoplethe people of the Lordbecause of Him? No, Beloved. Christ is the cause of the greatest division, but He is also the medium of the greatest union. No force in the world splits as does Christs battle-axe. He Himself said, I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a mans foes shall be they of his own household. And it is amazing how families have been divided, and how communities and even nations have been divided by the coming of Christ! Those who loved and served Him would follow Him at all costs, and those who would not have Him rejected Him with the utmost fury! There are some people in this world who are like the chip in the porridgethere is no flavor in them, they are of little or no accountbut my Master, the Lord Jesus Christ, is not one of that sort! You must either love Him or hate Him! You must give a verdict for Him or against Him! You cannot be indifferent. He Himself puts the matter thusHe that is not with Me is against Me; and he that gathers not with Me scatters abroad. You are, at this moment, either Christs friend or His foe. You cannot be neutral. Yet, while Christ is the great cause of division, it is also true that He is the great means of union. There is nothing that welds men together as the love of Christ doesit is the most potent force in the universe for gathering together those who are scattered abroad, and making them truly one. In Christ, nationalities are blended. Think of the division between the Jew and the Gentilewhat can make them one, but Christ? He breaks down the middle wall of partition, and unites them. Look at Peter, that stiff, unbending Jew. He never ate of an unclean animal and he never means to do so. He is on the top of the house, praying at noonday, and is very hungry. He hears the command, Rise, Peter. Kill and eat. And there is let down before him a great sheet full of all manner of strange creatures! But Peter has never touched anything of the kind. He does not like such fare, but, by-and-by, he learns the meaning of the vision. There were certain Gentiles on the way to him and he was to go with them, and to preach Christ to all who were assembled in the house of Cornelius. And he must eat and drink with the uncircumcised! And, taught of the Spirit, Peter does it, and Paul does it. Never, I pray you, speak disrespectfully of a Jew. The greatest man who ever lived was a Jew! Christ our Lord was, Himself, of the house of David, of the tribe of Judah, of the seed of Abraham. Glory be to God, the Jews shall be brought in with the Gentiles, but they are the old original branches of the good olive tree, and they shall be grafted in again. It is unbelief that has caused them to be cast outbut I am sure that every man who truly loves Christ, feels that to him there now is neither Jew nor Gentilethat feud is ended once and for all, for all Believers are one in Christ.

So, too, wherever Christ comes, there are no foreigners. Paul wrote to the Ephesians, Now, therefore, you are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God. Tell me that a man is a ChristianI do not care to what nationality he belongshe may be a Dutchman, he may come from Zululand, he may be an Afghan, he may be a Hinduit does not matter what he is, as long as he loves Christ. What more do I need than that? He is my Brother, whatever is the color of his skin. He is near akin to me if he is akin to Christ and all genuine Christians feel that it is so. May there be more and more of this fellow feeling among Believers, for Christ Jesus our Lord has no division among His people as to blacks and whites, race and castethat is ended once and for all.   
And, truly, wherever Christ is known in His saving power, there is a wonderful uniting force among all genuine Christians. Look at PentecostAll that believed were together, and had all things common. They loved each other so much that if one was poor, his rich Brothers and Sisters helped him. They felt as if they were all fused into one body by the intense heat of love to Christ! And there are many, many, many similar cases now, (I speak what I know,) in which Believers have received help and succor which they never would have had if it had not been for the name and love of Christ. Many of you here know that there is much true Christian love in the worldand you could speak of it if it were the time to do sobut these things are not to be blazed abroad.   
In Christ, personal peculiarities cease to divide. We love each otherlet us love one another more and more, for love is of God and everyone that loves is born of God, and knows God. Did you ever notice how true Christian workers love each other? When there is little doing for Christ, a man tries to get all the fish he can into his own net. He says, We must get the people inside our Chapeltry and make Baptists of them, or Wesleyans. But if ever the Spirit of God comes with mighty power, they begin to beckon to their neighbors, who are in the other ship, to come and help them because their boat will not hold all the fish! And they forget all their little differences in the one grand point of unity, for all are agreed about Christ!   
Notice what happens in a real, earnest Prayer Meeting. Christians do not agree about everything. Perhaps we never shall. Possibly it is well that we never should, or else we might make a great big church and have a pope over it, and do nobody knows how much harm! We are sometimes best apart. Some people love one another all the better because they do not all live in the same house. Sometimes it is a cause of disagreement when two or three sets of husbands and wives, who are related to each other, come to live under the same roof. But you get together a number of people who love Christ and set them praying. What was that Brother who prayed just now? He was a Wesleyan. How do you know that? Why, because he prayed a Calvinistic prayer! Who was that last Brother that prayed? He was a Strict Baptist. How do you know that? Why, because he prayed a prayer that was full of generosity and Christian love! Here is anotherwho is he? He is an Independent, I should say. How do I know that? Why, because his prayer was so full of dependence on Christ, and trust in Him. We can sometimes even fight with one another for what we believe to be the Truth of God and rebuke each other to the face if we think there is an errorbut when it comes to Christ and His dear Cross, give me your hand, Brother! You are washed in the blood, and so am I. You are resting in Christ, and so am I. You have put all your hope in Jesus and that is where all my hope is, and, therefore, we are one! Yes, there is no real division among the true people of God because of Christ.   
Let us try, moreover, to make the world see that it is so by everyone endeavoring to magnify Jesus more than his neighbor does. Let there be no strife except to see who can deny himself most for Jesus, who can labor most for Jesus, who can lift the Grace of Jesus higher than others!   
And, oh, what unity there will be in Heaven, where Christ will be the center of the redeemed, where all shall sing of Him and where all shall equally behold Him! All of us who believe in Jesus will be with Him where He is, and so we shall behold His Glory, the Glory which His Father gave Him. Certain brethren think that they will have a place all to themselves. Well, they have not been very amiable down here and, therefore I should not be sorry if they were going to have a place to themselves! But, at the same time, I pray the Lord to have mercy upon them and to enable them to give up all idea of having a place for themselves, and all thought of having anything different from the rest of the Lords family, for I believe that there will be no division among the people of God because of Christ, or concerning the Glory that Christ will give them. But they shall all forevermore behold Him and forevermore call Him theirs, and rejoice in Him world without end. I am quite satisfied to share the lot of the poorest of His people. And if there is a saint in Heaven who has to sit by the door, I will sit with him forever. And if I shall have a rightas I am sure I shall notto a higher and a better place than he has, I will ask my Master to let me sit among the lowliest of His servants, and I am sure that you, Brothers and Sisters, will add, And so say all of us! Let others say what they like, I feel certain that there will be no division among the people of God in Heaven because of Christto whom be praise forever and ever! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **JOHN 7:14-53.**

Verse 14. Now about the midst of the feast Jesus went up into the temple and taught. He was no coward, so He boldly showed Himself in the midst of the throng in the temple.

15. And the Jews marveled, saying, How knows this Man letters, having never learned. Or, How knows He the Scriptures? How has He come to be an instructed Man, having never learned of the Rabbis? He has never passed through our schools of learning, so what can He know?

16. Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not Mine, but His that sent Me. I am not the inventor of what I say. I am but a messenger, delivering the message of Him that sent Me.

17. If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it is of God, or whether I speak of Myself. Any man who is seeking after that which is right, and laboring to do that which is right, is a good judge of the Truth of God. A practical life of godliness makes a man a far better critic as to what Truth is than all the learning of the schools can do.

18. He that speaks of himself seeks his own glory: but He that seeks His glory that sent Him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in Him. If you ever hear a man speaking about the priesthood, meaning himself and his brethren, and about the Church, again meaning himself and his brethrenand about the sacraments, meaning certain performances by himself and his brethrenyou may know at once that God did not send him! But he who speaks to the Glory of God, and does not say, Behold me, but, Behold the Lamb of God, he it is whom God has sent!

19. Did not Moses give you the Law, and yet none of you keeps the Law? Why go you about to kill Me? Did not Moses say, You shall not kill? Then you do not keep his Law, though you profess such reverence for him, for, if you did, you would not go about to kill Me.

20, 21. The people answered and said, You have a devil: who goes about to kill You? Jesus answered and said unto them, I have done one work, and you all marvel. I did it on the Sabbath and you are all stumbling at that.

22, 23. Moses therefore gave unto you circumcision; (not because it is of Moses, but of the fathers) and you on the Sabbath circumcise a man. If a man on the Sabbath receive circumcision, that the Law of Moses should not be broken; are you angry at Me because I have made a man every whit whole on the Sabbath? Surely, there was never a more triumphant answer than that!

24, 25. Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment. Then said some of them of Jerusalem, Is not this He whom they seek to kill? Perhaps some of the same people who had asked Christ, Who goes about to kill You? now enquired, Is not this He, whom they seek to kill?

26, 27. But, lo, He speaks boldly, and they say nothing unto Him. Do the rulers know indeed that this is the very Christ? However, we know where this Man is from, but when the Christ comes, no man knows where He comes from. They had a notionperhaps derived from that passage in Isaiah, who shall declare His generation?that the birth of Christ would be hidden in mystery. At any rate, there was some cloudy idea floating about that it would be concealed.

28. Then cried Jesus in the temple as He taught, saying, You both know Me, and you know from where I come. And yet you do not know Me.   
28-30. And I am not come of Myself, but He that sent Me is true, whom you know not. But I know Him: for I am from Him, and He has sent Me. Then they sought to take Him: but no man laid hands on Him because His hour was not yet come. Something seemed to hold them back. Enraged as they were against Him, a mysterious and mighty awe was upon them so that they dared not touch Him.   
31-33. And many of the people believed on Him, and said, When Christ comes, will He do more miracles than these which this Man has done? The Pharisees heard that the people murmured such things concerning Him; and the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to take Him. Then said Jesus unto themAs they came to take Himperhaps to the very officers sent by the Pharisees, Jesus said  
33. Yet a little while am I with you, and then I go unto Him that sent Me. You may well let me alone now, for it will only be a little while and then I shall be delivered into your hands, and you will no more be troubled with Me.

34, 35. You shall seek Me, and shall not find Me: and where I am, there you cannot come. Then said the Jews among themselves, Where will He go, that we shall not find Him? Will He go unto the dispersed among the Gentiles, and teach the Gentiles? That was always their fear. Is He going to the Greeks? Will He be a teacher to them? Will He try to introduce them into the mysteries of our faith?   
36, 37. What manner of saying is this that He said, You shall seek Me, and shall not find Me: and where I am, there you cannot come? In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and criedI think I see Him standing up in the midst of the great throng. That congregation would soon be scattered, never to come together again, so He stood up in the most prominent place He could find, and, notwithstanding all their anger, and their desire to kill Him, He cried   
37, 38. Saying, If any man thirsts, let Him come unto Me, and drink. He that believes on Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his belly Or, out of the very midst of him   
38. Shall flow rivers of living water. What a glorious Gospel sermon that was! It comes to us down through the ages, and is as true, now, as when Jesus spoke it! Ho, thirsty ones, come to Him, and drink! And He will slake your thirst, and create in you a well of living water which shall bubble up forever and ever.   
39, 40. (But this spoke He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive: for the Holy Spirit was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified). Many of the people, therefore, when they heard this saying, said, Of a truth this is the Prophet. The Prophet about whom Moses spoke.   
41. Others said, This is the Christ. The Messiah.   
41, 42. But some said, Shall Christ come out of Galilee? Has not the Scripture said, That Christ comes of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was? This was blessed testimony even out of the mouth of Christs enemies! They objected against Christ what was, indeed, the fact, for He did come of the seed of David, and from the town of Bethlehem. He was born there and though they called Him the Nazareneand He refused not the titlethough over His head Pilate wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews, yet is He the Son of David and His birthplace was at Bethlehem, though some of them knew it not.   
43, 44. So there was a division among the people because of Him. And some of them would have taken Him; but no man laid hands on Him. He was immortal till His work was done! The hour for His death had not yet struck and He must live on till the appointed time.   
45, 46. Then came the officers to the chief priests and Pharisees; and they said unto them, Why have you not brought Him? The officers answered, Never man spoke like this Man. The charm of His eloquence, the dignity of His Person, His awe-inspiring demeanor and a singular somethingthey knew not whatthat Divinity that hedges about such a King as He wasrestrained their hands. They said, Never man spoke like this Man.   
47. Then answered them the Pharisees, Are you also deceived? You sheriffs officers are generally hard-hearted enoughare you, also, deceived?

48. Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on Him? This was as much as to say, If we have not believed on Himwe who are the great dons of the nationthe rulers and the Phariseeswhy, then, there cannot be anything in His claims! Just as some people seem to think that unless there is a lord in a Society, unless there is an honorable somebody or other in the chair, there is nothing in it.

49. But this people who knows not the law are cursed. They regarded the poor, common people as ignorant and accursed, whereas they, probably, knew as much about the Law and the real spirit of it as these learned teachers did.

50. Nicodemus said unto them, (he that came to Jesus by night, being one of them). Being a member of the council   
51. Does our Law judge any man before it hears him and knows what he does? He only asked a question, that was all, and, timid Christian, if you are placed where you cannot say much for Christif you have too great a fear upon you to vindicate your Master at any considerable lengthyet say what you can! And, perhaps, the simple asking of a question may suffice to defend Him. Nicodemus did but rise and ask, Does our Law judge any man before it hears him, and knows what he does?   
52. They answered and said unto him, Are you also of Galilee? Search, and look: for out of Galilee arises no Prophet. Which was a lie, for prophets had come out of Galilee. Still, they denied it and they were indignant at having such a question put to them by Nicodemus.   
53. And every man went unto his own house. It was like a bombshell exploding in the midst of them! And often, a few brave words dropped into the midst of an assembly of bad men will explode among them and scatter them here and there. Nicodemus had accomplished what, perhaps, he thought he would never do. He was, indeed, like his name, on that occasionone of the conquering peoplefor every man went unto his own house. Nicodemus had scattered them all by his startling question. May each of us witness as bravely for Christ as we have opportunity!

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THE UNRIVALLED ELOQUENCE OF JESUS   
NO. 951

**DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, SEPTEMBER 18, 1870, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**The officers answered, Never man spoke like this Man. John 7:46.**

THE chief priests and Pharisees sent officers to lay hold upon the Savior lest His preaching should altogether overthrow their power. While the constables who had mingled with the throng were waiting for an opportunity of arresting the Lord Jesus, they themselves were arrested by His earnest eloquence. They could not take Him, for He had fairly taken them, and when they came back without a prisoner, they gave their reason for not having captured Him in these memorable words, Never man spoke like this Man.

Two or three remarks as a preface to our discourse. It is a sure sign of a falling Church when its leaders call in the aid of the secular arm. The rule of the Scribes and Pharisees must have been weakness, itself, when it needed to wield the truncheon of the civil magistrate as its only sufficient argument against its antagonist. That Church which has been supported by bayonets, is in all probability, not far off its demise. Any Church which long collects its tithes and its offerings by the hand of the police, and by legal process and distraint, is also, depend upon it, none too strong.

The Church which is unable to maintain itself by spiritual power is dying, if not dead. Whenever we think of calling in an arm of flesh to defend the faith, we may very seriously question whether we have not made a mistake, and whether that which can be supported by the sword must not greatly differ from the Saviors kingdom, of which He said, My kingdom is not of this world, else would My servants fight.

The more a man leans on a big staff the more sure are you that he is feeble. In proportion as Churches rely on Acts of Parliament, human prestige, and legal authorityin that very degree they show their weakness. Call in the sheriffs officer, and you have virtually called in the gravedigger! In this respect it is peculiarly true, All they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. A Church is buried by the State, and not supported, when it draws its sustenance from forced tithes and legalized exactions.

Observe, next, that in the end the spiritual power will always baffle the temporal. The officers are fully armed and quite able to complete the arrest of the Preacher. He has no weapons with which to oppose them. He stands unarmed amid the throngprobably none of His disciples would lift a finger to defend Himor if they did, He would bid them put up their sword into its sheath. And yet the officers cannot seize the non-resistant Preacher. What stays their hands? It has come to a combat between body and mind, and mind prevails.

The eloquent tongue is matched against the two-edged sword, and it has won the day. No fears or qualms of conscience hampered the constables and yet they could not lay their hands on Him. They were chained to the spot where they stoodspellbound by the mystic power of His

speech. His very tones fascinated them! The discourse which He poured forth so fluently held them fast as His willing captives. It has always been sothe spiritual has conquered the physical. Though at first it seemed an unequal conflict, yet in the long run the elder has served the younger.

The club of Cain may lay Abel level with the dust, but it does not silence himfrom the ground the blood of Abel continues still to cry. Martyrs may be consigned to prison, and dragged from prison to the stakeso that to all appearance a full end is made of the good menbut even in their ashes live their wonted fires. At the stake they find a platform with a boundless auditory, and from the grave their teaching cries with louder voice than from the pulpit.

Like seeds sown in the earth they spring up and multiply themselves. Others arise to bear the same witness, and if need be to seal it in the same fashion. As Pharaohs mighty hosts could not combat with the hail and the lightning which plagued the fields of Zoan, and as all their chivalry could not put to flight the darkness that might be felt, even so when God sends His Truth with power upon a land, battleaxe and buckler are vain in the opposers hands. Our appointed weapons of attack are not carnal, neither can they be withstood by shield or armor. Our bowstrings cannot be broken, or the edge of our sword blunted. Let but the Lord furnish His ministers, as he did at Pentecost, with wondrous Words instead of shields, and spears, and swordsand these weapons of the holy war will prove themselves to be irresistible.

Fight on, O Preacher! Tell forth the story of the Cross! Defy opposition and laugh persecution to scorn, for, like your Master, you shall, as His servant, ascend above all your enemies, lead your captivity captive, and scatter good gifts among the sons of men! Note again that God can get testimonies to the majesty of His Son from the most unlikely places. I do not know who these constables may have been, or from what class of men they were drawn, but generally the civil authorities do not employ the most refined and intellectual persons to act as officers.

They do not require much tenderness of spirit for such worka rough hand, a keen eye and a bold spirit are the principal requisites for a constable. The priests and Pharisees would naturally select for the seizing of the great Teacher those who were least likely to be affected by His teaching. And yet these mendoubtless men of brutal habits, men ready enough to do their masters biddingshowed within themselves sufficient mental capacity to feel the power of the matchless oratory of Jesus Christ.

Those who were sent as enemies came back to rehearse His praises, and so to vex His adversaries. Truly the Lord can make the stones to cry out of a wall, and the beam out of the timber to answer it if He wills. He can transform the ready instruments of opposition into the willing advocates of His righteous cause. Not only as in the case of Saul of Tarsus can He direct a high character into the right path, but He can uplift the groveling and put a testimony into their mouths. He makes the wrath of men to praise Him.

He compels His adversaries to do Him homage. Keep good heart, then, O you soldiers of the Cross! Let no thought of discouragement ever flit across your spirits. Greater is He that is for us than all they that are against us. He can and will glorify His Son Jesus. Even the devils shall acknowledge His almighty power. His Word has gone forth and His Oath has confirmed itSurely as I live, says the Lord, all flesh shall see the salvation of God. God will glorify Himself even by the tongues of His enemies! In this hope let us set up our banners.

The text introduces to our notice the eloquence of our Lord Jesus Christ and upon that topic we shall try to speak. May the Holy Spirit enable us. We shall note first the peculiar qualities of it, which amply justified the praise of the constables. Secondly, personal recollections of it, treasured up by ourselves. And, thirdly, prophetic anticipations of the time when our souls shall hear His voice yet more distinctly, and shall say again, Never man spoke like this Man.

I. Let us note the PECULIAR QUALITIES of our Lords eloquence. As among kings He is the King of kings. As among priests He is the great High Priest. As among Prophets He is the Messiah. And so is He the Prince of preachers, the Apostle of our profession. They who are most excellent as preachers are those who are most like He. But even those who by being most like He have become eminent, they are still far short of His excellence. His lips, says the spouse, are like lilies, dropping sweet smelling myrrh. He is a Prophet mighty in word and deed.

To form a right conception of our Lords ministry it is necessary to note the whole of it, and we may do so without departing from the text. For though the officers did not hear all that Jesus said, I have no doubt that the qualities which shone in His entire ministry were, many of them, apparent in the discourse which He delivered on that particular occasion. Follow me, therefore, as I note the leading qualities of His unrivalled eloquence.

The most casual reader of Christs discourses would observe that their style is singularly clear and easy to understand. And yet their matter is by no means trivial or superficial. Did ever man speak like this Man, Christ Jesus, for simplicity? Little children gathered around Him, for much of what He said was interesting, even to them. If there was ever a difficult word in any of Christs discourses, it is because it must be there owing to the faultiness of human language. But there is never a hard word inserted for its own sake, where an easier word could have been employed.

You never find Him, for the sake of display, speeding upon the wings of rhetoric. He never gives forth dark sayings that His hearers may discover that His learning is vast and His thinking profound. He is profound, and in that respect, never man spoke like this Man. He unveils the mysteries of God. He brings to light the treasures of darkness of the ages past which Prophets and kings desired to see, but into which they could not pry.

There is, in His teaching, a depth so vast that the greatest human intellect cannot fathom it. And all the while He speaks like the holy child Jesusin short sentences, with plain words. He speaks in parables with many illustrations of the most homely kindabout eggs, and fish, and candles, and bushels, and sweeping houses, and losing pieces of money, and finding sheep. He never paraded the stale and mildewed metaphors of your mere rhetoriciansrippling rills, verdant meads, star-bespangled heavens, and I know not what besides.

The hackneyed properties of theatrical orations are not for HimHis speech abounds in the true and most natural of images, and is ever constructed not to display Himself, but to make clear the Truth which He was sent to reveal. Never man spoke like this Man! The common people with

their common sense heard Him gladly, for even if they could not always grasp the full compass of His teaching, yet upon the surface of His plain speech there glittered lumps of golden ore well worthy to be treasured up.

For this quality our Savior, then, remains unrivalled, easily understood, yet profound. His speech had this also about itHe spoke with unusual authority. He was a master dogmatist. It was not, it may be so, or, it can be proven, or, it is highly probable. No, it was, Verily, verily, I say unto you. And yet, side by side with this was an extraordinary degree of humility. The Master spoke dogmatically, but never with proud selfsufficiency, after the manner of the children of conceit. He never pestered you with assumptions of superiority, and claims to official dignity.

He borrowed no assistance from a priestly robe, or from an imposing title. Meek He was as Moses, but like Moses He spoke the Words of the Lord with absolute authority. Lowly and gentle of heart, never extolling Himself, nor bearing witness of Himself, for then, as He says, His witness would not be true. He was nevertheless the unhesitating minister of righteousness, speaking with power, because the Lords Spirit had anointed Him.

Coming out of the ivory palaces, fresh from the bosom of His Father having looked into the unseen and heard the infallible oracleHe spoke not with bated breath, with hesitancy and debate as the scribes and lawyers. He spoke not with arguments and reasonings as the priests and Pharisees, creating perplexity and pouring darkness upon human minds. Verily, verily, I say unto you, were His favorite Words. He spoke that He did know, and testified what He had seen, and demanded to be accepted as sent forth from the Father.

He did not debate, but declare. His sermons were not guesses, but testimonies. Yet He never magnifies Himself, He lets His works and His Father bear witness of Him. He asserts Truth from His own positive knowledge, and because He has a commission from the Father to do sobut never as mere dogmatists do with an extolling of their own selves, as though they were to be glorified and not the God who sent the Truth and the Spirit by whom it is applied.

Further, in our Lords preaching there was a wonderful combination of faithfulness with tenderness. He was, indeed, the Prince of faithful preachers. Not even Nathan, when He stood before King David, and said, You are the man, could be more true to human conscience than Christ was. How those cutting words of His must have told, like rifle bullets when they were first hurled against the respectability of the age, Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! Woe unto you, lawyers, and so forth.

There was no mincing matters, no winking at wickedness because it happened to be associated with greatness, no excusing sin because it put on the sanctimoniousness of religion. He neither fawned on the great, nor pandered to the populace. Jesus reproved all classes to their faces concerning their sins. It never occurred to Him to seek to please men. He looked to the doing of His Fathers business, and since that business often involved the laying of righteousness to the line, of judgment to the plummet, He spared not to do it.

Perhaps no preacher ever used more terrible words with regard to the fate of the ungodly than our Lord has done. You shall ransack even medieval records to find more fearfully suggestive descriptions of the torments of Hell. Those awful sentences which fell from the lips of the Friend of Sinners prove that He was too much their Friend to flatter them. Too much their Friend to let them perish without a full warning of their doom. And yet, though He thundered like His own chosen Boanerges, what a Barnabas the Savior was!

What a Son of Consolation! How gentle were His Words! He did not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax. For the woman taken in adultery He had no word of curse. For the mothers of Jerusalem bringing their babes He had not a syllable of reprehension. Kind, gentle, tender, lovingthe speech which at one time sounded as the voice of Jehovah which breaks the cedars of Lebanon, and makes the hinds to calvewas at other seasons modulated to music, softened to a whisper, and used to cheer the disconsolate and bind up broken hearts. Never man spoke like this Man, so faithful and yet so tenderly affectionate, so mindful of the least good which He could see in man, and yet so determined to smite hypocrisy wherever His holy eyes could discover it.

You will observe in the Saviors preaching a remarkable mingling of zeal with prudence. He is full of ardor, the zeal of Gods House has eaten Him up. He never preached a cold, dull sermon in all His life. He was a pillar of light and fire. When He spoke, His Words burned their way into mens minds by reason of the Sacred enthusiasm with which He delivered them! And yet His fervor never degenerated into wildfire like the zeal of ignorant and over-balanced minds. We know some whose zeal, if tempered with knowledge, might be of use to the Churchbut being altogether without knowledgeit is dangerous both to themselves and to their cause.

Fanaticism may spring out of a real desire for Gods Glory. There is, however, no need that earnestness should degenerate into rant. It never did so in the Saviors case. His zeal was red hot, but His prudence was calm and cool. He was not afraid of the Herodians, but yet how quietly did He answer them in that trap concerning tribute-money! They would never forget the penny and the question, Whose image and superscription is this? He was ready to meet the Sadducees at any time, but He was on His guard, so that they could not entangle Him in His speech. He was quite sure to escape their nets, and take them in their own craftiness.

If a question is asked, which for the moment He does not care to answer, He knows how to ask them another question which they, also, cannot answerand send them about their business covered with shame. It is a grand thing when a man can be warm and wisewhen he can carry about him an unexcitable temperament, and yet the force which excites othersunmoved himself, the man of prudence becomes the power by which others are moved. Such was the Savior.

But I must not let that sentence of mine pass unchallengedin the higher sense He was always more moved than the peoplebut I mean as to temper and spirit He was not readily disturbed. He was self-possessed, prudent, wise, and yet when He spoke He flashed, and burned, and blazed with a sacred vehemence which showed that His whole soul was on fire with love to the souls of men. Zeal and prudence in remarkable proportions met in Jesus, and, Never man spoke like this Man.

So, too, everyone who has read our Lords discourses and marked His character will have perceived that love was among the leading characteristics of His style as a Preacher. He was full of tenderness, brimming with

sympathy, overflowing with affection. That weeping over Jerusalem, whose children He would have gathered, was but one instance of what happened many a time in His life. His heart sympathized with sorrow whenever His eyes beheld it. He could not bear that the people should be like sheep without a shepherd, and He worked many deeds of kindness, and said many words of instruction, because He loved them.

But our Saviors speech was never affected and canting. He used no stale honey, there was nothing of thatI do not know the word to use that insincere sweetness, which in some people is disgustingly perceptible. He was far removed from the effeminacy which, in too many cases, passes for Christian love. I loathe in my very soul the talk of those who call everybody, dear this, or dear that, endearing those whom, perhaps, they never knew, and to whom they would not give a sixpence if they wanted it. I hate this sugar of lead, this spiritual billing and cooing.

Where there is the least of the meat of true charity, we find most of the parsley or the fennel which are used for garnishing. The bottle is empty and so they label it to make it pass for full. No, give me a man, give me a man! Let me hear outspoken speech, not effeminate canting, whining, and pretended ecstasies of affection. In nine cases out of ten the biggest bigot in the world is the man who preaches up liberalityand the man who can hate you worst is he who addresses you in softest phrases.

No, let a man love me, but let it be with the love of a man. Let no man cast aside that which is masculine, forcible, and dignified under the notion that he is making himself better by becoming soft and babyish. It was never so with the Savior. He condemned this or that evil in no measured terms. There was in Him no apologizing, no guarding of expressions, no fawning, no using of soft words. They who are shaken with the wind and affect flattering phrases stand in kings palaces. But He, the peoples Preacher, One chosen out of the people, dwelt among the many, a Man among men.

He was manly all through. Love in Him abounded, love unsurpassed, but also manliness of the noble sort. Far above the petty arts of professional orators, and the shallow arguments of thinkers, His teaching dealt out Truth with courageous fidelity and generous affection. He held His own position, but trampled on none. He committed Himself to no man, but He was willing to bless every man. His love was no imitation, but a solid ingot of the gold of Ophir. No one else in this matter has so exactly struck the balance, and therefore, Never man spoke like this Man.

One memorable Characteristic of our Lords preaching was His remarkable commingling of the excellences which are found separately in His servants. You know, perhaps, a preacher who is admirable when he addresses the mind. He can explain and expound very logically and clearly and you feel that you have been instructed whenever you have sat under him. But the light, though clear, is cold like moonlightand when you retire, you feel that you know morebut yet are none the better for what you know.

It were well if those who can enlighten the head so well would remember that man has also a heart. On the other hand we know others whose whole ministry is addressed to the passions and the emotions. During a sermon you shed any quantity of tears, you pass through a furnace of sensationbut as to what is left which is calculated permanently to benefit youit is difficult to discover. When the sermon is over, the shower and the sunshine have both departed, the fair rainbow has disappeared from sight, and what remains? It were well if those who always talk to the heart remembered that men have heads as well.

Now the Savior was a Preacher whose head was in His heart, and whose heart was in His head. He never addressed the emotions except by motives which commended themselves to the reason. Nor did He instruct the mind without at the same time influencing the heart and conscience. Our Saviors power as a speaker was comprehensive. He aroused the consciencewho more than He? With but a single sentence He convicted those who came to tempt Him, so that beginning with the eldest, and ending with the youngest, they all went out ashamed.

But He was not a mere render open of woundsa cutter and a killer. He was equally great in the art of holy consolation. With intonations of matchless music He could say, Go your way. Your sins, which are many, are forgiven you. He knew how to console a weeping friend as well as to confront a boisterous enemy. His superiority was felt by all sorts of men. His artillery struck at all rangesHis mind was equal to all emergencies. It was for good, like the sword of the cherubim at the gates of Eden for evil. It turned every way to keep the gates of Life open for those who would gladly enter there.

My Brethren, I have entered upon a theme which is boundless. I merely touch some of the outer skirts of my Masters robes. As for Himself, if you would know how He spoke you must hear Him. One of the ancients was likely to say that he could have wished to have seen Rome in all its splendor, to have been with Paul in all his labors, and to have heard Christ when preaching. Surely it were worth worlds but once to have caught the round of that serene, soul-stirring voiceto have beheld for once the glance of those matchless eyes as they looked through the heartand that heavenly Countenance as it glowed with love!

His eloquence had, however, this, for its main aspectthat it concerned the greatest truths that were ever made manifest to man. He brought light and immortality to light. He cleared up what had been doubtful. He resolved that which had been mysterious. He declared that which is gracious, that which saves the soul and glorifies God. No preacher was ever laden with so Divine a message as Christ. We who bring the same glad tidings bring the news as second hand, and but in part. He came forth from the Fathers bosom with the whole Truth, and, therefore, Never man spoke like this Man.

II. Secondly, let us try to awaken in the saints Some PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS of the Saviors eloquence. Lend me your memories, you people of God. Do you remember when you first heard Him speak? We shall not talk of words which cleave the air, but of those spirit-words which thrill the heart and move the soul. Follow me, then, and recall to fondest memory His Words of pity, of which I may truly say, Never man spoke to me like this Man.

It was in the dim dawning of my spiritual life, before it was yet light, before the sun had fully risen. I felt my sin, I grieved beneath its weight. I despaired, I was ready to perish. And then He came to me. Well do I remember accents which then I scarcely could understand, which nevertheless cheered my spirit. They sounded like these, Come unto Me, all you

that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Him that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out.

Soft and sweet were the tones, and tremulous with fond anxiety. They came as from One who had bled and died. Do you remember when you also heard them? I do not mean when you heard them from the pulpit, from the ministerbut in your heartfrom Gethsemane, the Cross, and the Throne. It was sweet to know that Jesus pitied you. You were not saved, and you were afraid that you never might be, for the sea worked and was tempestuous, but He said, It is I, be not afraid. You began to perceive that there was mercy if you could get itthat one tender heart felt for youone strong arm was ready to help you. You could no longer lament, No man cares for my soul, for you perceived that there was a Savior, and a great one. Those were sweet sounds that now and then were heard above the tumultuous deep which called unto deep at the noise of Gods waterspouts. None else ever spoke as He did.

Do you remember how in those days you heard His voice with words of persuasion? You had often heard Gospel invitations as the call of man, but then they came to you as the voice of God heard in the silence of your heart, saying, Turn you, turn you, why will you die, O house of Israel? Come now, and let us reason together: though your sins are as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow. Though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool. Do you remember how they followed one another, each word suiting your particular condition and having still accumulated power over your mind?

Did not Jesus often seem to say to you, Yield now, poor Sinner, cast away your weapons of rebellion. Destroy not your own soul! Look unto Me and be saved. For I have loved you and made atonement for your sins? Those were marvelous pleadings which at last won your heart by force of love. You had much ado to resist those persuasions, and you did resist them for awhile. And like the spouse in the Canticle, you permitted the lover of your soul to wait outside your door, and say, Open to Me, My head is wet with dew, and My locks with the drops of the night. Yet you found it hard to resist Him, for the persuasions of His love were mighty upon you as He drew you with cords of love, with bands of a Man, until you could hold out no longer.

Beloved, you surely call to mind when the words of persuasion were byand-by followed with words of power! Never man spoke like this Man, when He said to my darkened soul, let there be light. Well do I remember that admonition, Arise, shine, for your light is come. Awake, you that sleep, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give you light. Do you remember when He passed by and saw you in your blood, and said to you, Live, and cast the skirts of covenant love over you, and washed you, and made you clean, and laid you in His bosom, and made you His forever? Never man spoke like this Man.

Do you remember when He made all your darkness and sorrow to pass away as in a moment by saying to you, I am your salvation? Have you forgotten that word of pardon? I can never forget iteven if I outlive Methuselah, it must still remain green in my memory! The words came with power when I looked to the Cross, and heard the absolving words, Your sins are forgiven you. Never man spoke like this Man.

No priest can give an awakened conscience rest, nor any other, except the great High Priest, Jesus, Melchisedec, the sinners Pardoner. No words of hope, nor thoughts of consolation can ever breed such peace within the spirit as the blood of Jesus brings when it speaks within the heart far better things than that of Abel. It reconciles us unto our God and so gives perfect peace.

Since the time when first we heard His pardoning voice, we, many a time, have heard Him speaking with right royal words, and we have said, Never man spoke like this Man. How sweet it has been to sit in the assembly of the saints when the Gospel has been, indeed, His Word to our souls! Oh, the marrow and the fatness, the feast of fat things, of fat things full of marrow which we have fed upon when the King has sat at the table! When our Beloved speaks His Word of promise, how has it revived our drooping spirit! It came as dew upon the tender herb. It touched our lips as a coal from off the altar. It gave us healing, consolation, joy.

Beloved, cannot you look back to many instances when you had no food for your soul but the promisewhen your soul knew no music but the word of His love? Blest Master, speak to me thus evermore

*Each moment draw from earth away   
My heart, that lowly waits Your call.   
Speak to my inmost soul, and say,   
I am your Love, your God, your All!   
To feel Your power, to hear Your voice,   
To taste Your love, is all my choice.*

And when you have enjoyed His Presence in your solitude, have had communion with Him, and He has revealed His ancient, His unchanging, His never-ending, His boundless love to youhave you not prized His Words far above the choicest joys of earth?

When you have confessed your sins with penitent sorrow and He has given back the word of full remission. When you have revealed your sorrow and received the assurance of His tender sympathy. When you have laid bare your weakness and received the word that strengthenshave you not been ready to challenge all Heaven to compare with Himand exclaimed, Never man spoke like this Man? To those who are unbelievers, and to those professors who live at a distance from Christ, this will sound like mere fancy, but believe me, it is not so. If there is anything real beneath the skies, it is the communion which Christ has with His people by His Spirit.

Truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Christ. We hear His voice, though not with these ears, and we so hear it as to know it, as sheep discern their shepherds voice. And a stranger we will not follow, for we know not the voice of strangers. Our ears being opened by the Spirit, we at this hour can say, I sleep, but my heart wakes. It is the voice of my Beloved, my soul melts while He speaks.

Now, my dear Friends, there are some words of our Savior spoken long ago, which, since we have known Him have been so quickened by His Presence that we number them from now on among personal recollections. That word, I have loved you with an everlasting love. It is true it is written in the Bible, an old, old sayingbut I can say and so can many of you, that it has been a new saying to me. We have by faith been enabled to hear it as spoken to us, and the Spirit of the blessed God has so brought it home to our hearts that it is as if Christ had never said it before, but had spoken it to us personally. Yes, I have loved you with an

everlasting love.

There are many here who have heard Him say, I have chosen you and not cast you away. The Spirit of God has made many an ancient saying a speech from the living Jesus to us. Those words of His when He said, Lo, I come: in the volume of the Book it is written of Me, I delight to do Your will, O My Godour faith has stood at Bethlehems manger and we have seen the Body prepared for Him, and Himself putting on the form of a servant. His coming to seek and to save that which was lost has become a personal coming to us, and we have rejoiced in it exceedingly.

Has not the voice which came of old from the sea when He said, It is I, be not afraid, been a voice to you? And the voice from Jerusalem, How often would I have gathered youhas it never bewailed the perishing ones around you? The voice from Bethany, I am the resurrection and the lifehas it never been heard at the burial of your brother? The voice from the table when He washed His disciples feetand bade them wash one anothers feethas it not excited you to humble service of the Brethren?

Have we not again and again heard the cry of Gethsemane, Not as I will, but as You will? I cannot convince myself that I did not actually hear the Redeemer say that. At any rate, I have rejoiced when in the spirit of resignation the echo of it has been heard in my own spirit. Do I not this very day hear Him saying, though long ago He spoke it, Father, forgive them for they know not what they do? His intercession for my guilty soul. What is it but the continuance of that gentle prayer? And for certain that last concluding sentence, It is finished, Consummatum estmy ears may not have heard it, but my soul hears it now and rejoices to repeat the words!

Who shall lay anything to my charge since Christ has consummated my deliverance from death, Hell, sin, and brought in a perfect righteousness for me? Yes, these old sayings of Christ heard years ago we have heard in spirit, and our witness is after hearing them all, Never man spoke like this Man. None can be compared with Him at their best. His ministers cannot rival Himthey do but echo His speech.

III. I shall close by mentioning certain PROPHETIC ANTICIPATIONS which lodge in our souls with regard to that eloquence in the future. Brethren, you have heard the voice of Jesus, but are you expecting to still hear it? As long as ever you live you are to speak for Jesusbut your hope for His kingdom does not lie in your speech but in His voice. He can speak to the heart, He can make the Truth which you only utter to the ear penetrate to the mind and heart. We expect that our exalted Lord will speak before long with louder voice than before.

The Gospel chariot lags awhile. As yet He goes not forth conquering and to conquer, but He will yet gird His sword upon His thigh and His voice shall be heard marshalling His hosts for the battle. Let but Christ give the word, and the company of them that shall publish it shall be exceedingly great. Let Him send forth the Word of His might from Zion, and thousands shall be born in a day. Yes, nations shall be born at once!

The elect of God, today apparently but few, shall come out from their hiding places, and Christ shall see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied. Despite the melancholy belief of some that the world will come to an end with a defeated God and with only a few saved, I nevertheless am certain that Scripture warrants brighter hopes. One day the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, this we know, for God has said it. In all things Christ shall have the preeminence, and therefore in the matter of souls saved He will have the preeminence over Satan and the souls who are lost.

O for an hour of that voice of the Lord which is full of majesty, that voice which breaks the cedars of Lebanon, and makes them to skip like a calfLebanon and Sirion like a young unicorn! When shall the voice of the Lord shake the wilderness of Kadesh and discover the forests? It shall yet be heard, and in His temple shall everyone speak of His Glory. For the Lord sits upon the flood, yes, the Lord sits King forever. Have hope, then. Let your anticipations be of brighter times, for He will speakHe that shakes both Heaven and earth when He wills it. And when He speaks, you will say, Never man spoke like this Man.

We expect personally for ourselves, if Jesus comes not before we depart, to hear Him speak sweetly to us in the hour of death. Talk of it solemnly and softly, for put it in whatever light you may, it is dread work to die. But when we lie a dying, and the sounds of earth are shut out from the lone chamber, and the voice of affection is drowned in mournful sobs, then Jesus will come and make our bed, and speak as never man spoke, saying Fear not, I am with you. Be not dismayed, I am your God. When you pass through the rivers I will be with you, the floods shall not overflow you. Dying Christians, by the songs which they have lifted up, and by the joy which has sparkled from their eyes have proven that the voice of Jesus is such that, Never man spoke like this Man.

O Beloved, what will that voice be to our disembodied spirits when our souls shall leave this clay and fly through tracks unknown to see the Savior? I know not with what words of welcome He may address us then. He may reserve His choicest utterances for the day of His appearing, but He will not take us into His bosom without a love word, nor receive us into our quiet resting places without a cordial commendation. What must it be to see His face, to hear His voice in Heaven? Then shall we know that, Never man spoke like this Man.

And then when the time ordained of old is fulfilled, when the day comes that the dead shall hear the voice of God, when the Resurrection and the Life shall speak with trumpet tones, and the righteous shall be raised from their gravesoh, then it will be seen, as they all obey the quickening wordthat Never man spoke like this Man. He who speaks the resurrection word is man as well as God. As by man came death, by Man came also the resurrection from the dead. And then, when you and I shall be at His right hand. When the body and soul reunited shall receive the final award, and He shall say in inimitable tones, Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from before the foundation of the world, we shall not need to say, Never man spoke like this Man.

When we, with Him, shall enter into the everlasting rest, when He shall deliver up the mediatorial kingdom to God, even the Father, and God shall be All in All, we, in the retrospect of all He said on earth and said in Heavenwe in the constant hearing of His voice who shall wear His priesthood perpetually, looking still like a lamb that has been slainwe shall then bear fullest witness that, Never man spoke like this Man.

Mark well, my Hearers, that in such confession every soul of you will have to unite. You may live enemies to Christ, and you may die strangers to Him, but that, Never man spoke like this Man, you shall be made to feel. If today you will not acknowledge that His mercy to you is unbounded, that His condescension in inviting you to come to Him today is worthy of loving admiration. If you will not yield, but shut your ears to the invitation of His mercy when He says, Come unto Me, and I will give you rest, yet at the last, an unwilling assent to our text will be wrung from you.

When He shall say, Depart, you cursed, into everlasting fire in Hell, prepared for the devil and his angels, the thunder of that word shall so torment you, the terror of His speech shall so shake you, and utterly dissolve you, that you shall feel, wondering all the while that it was a Man who could speak thus, that, Never man spoke like this Man. You have sometimes upbraided the preacher for speaking too severelyyou will then know that he was not severe enough.

You have sometimes marveled that the minister should give such fearful descriptions of the wrath to comeyou thought he went too far. But when the pit opens wide her mouth and the devouring flames leap up to devour you at the word of the once crucified Savior, then you will say, for terror and for wrath, for overwhelming horrorNever man spoke like this Man. The lips that said Come, you weary, shall say, Depart, you cursed, in tones which none but such lips could give forth.

Love once made angry turns to wrath, intense and terrible. Oil is soft, but how fiercely it burns! Beware, lest His anger is kindled against you, for it will burn even to the lowest Hell. The Lamb of God is as a lion to those who reject His love. Provoke Him no longer. May the Holy Spirit bow you to repentance. God grant that in a far happier sense than this last, you may learn to say, Never man spoke like this Man. But one way or other every soul here, and every soul of woman born, shall acknowledge that, Never man spoke like this Man." To God I commend you. Farewell.

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A VIVID CONTRAST   
NO. 3003

A SERMON   
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, AUGUST 30, 1906.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON THURSDAY EVENING, NOVEMBER 17, 1864.**

**And every man went unto his own house.   
John 7:53.   
Jesus went unto the Mount of Olives.   
John 8:1.**

THESE verses furnish a striking illustration of the unwise way in which, in certain cases, the Bible has been divided into chapters. The meaning of many portions of Scripture would be much more manifest if Gospels, Epistles and even Prophecies were left in their undivided state. The two sentences which I have selected for my text ought never to have been separatedand we may rightly say of them, What God has joined together, let no man put asunder. So we will consider them together as they should be consideredEvery man went unto his own house. Jesus went unto the Mount of Olives.

I. Here we have, in the first place, A FACT FOR OUR EARNEST CONSIDERATION. Let us turn it over in our mind under the Holy Spirits gracious guidance. While Christs friends and enemies had, everyone of them, a house to go to, He must go spend the night in the open air watching and praying on the Mount of Olives.

Observe, first, His extreme poverty. Among them allfriends or foes there was not one without a house excepting Himself. No, more, among some of the meanest of His creatures, there was not one without a shelter. Foxes, though they were but worthy to be exterminated, had holes in which they could hide. And the birds of the air, though many ruthlessly sought to destroy them, had nests wherein they could rest but the Son of Man had not where to lay His head. Possibly, in all Judaea, there was only that one houseless man! Certainly there was no other who was so voluntarily houseless as Himself. He had brought Himself down from the glories of His Fathers court, from the majesty of reigning with His Father in Heaven to become dependent upon the bounty of His own disciples for His daily breadand He had no house that He could call His own, no home to which He could retire when His days work was done. Believers, admire His amazing condescension in that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you, through His poverty, might be rich. If any of you are poor in this world, be comforted, for you are not poorer than your Master was! Remember that every true Christian is the image of Christ but the godly poor man is the express image of Christ! He has one quality beyond those which other Christians have, that is, his poverty, which makes him even more like his Master than they are. He who was born in a stable and cradled in a manger. He who wore the homely garb of the peasantry of Palestine, the garment which was without seam, woven from the top throughout. He who made fishermen His chosen companions, was the poor mans Christ, poorer than the poorest of you and able, therefore, to sympathize with you in all the pangs and griefs which penury may bring upon you! And you great ones of the earth, despise not the unlettered and the poor, for has not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, to be heirs of the Kingdom which He has promised to them that love Him? And has He not exalted One chosen out of the people, even His only-begotten and well-beloved Son, to sit with Him on the Throne of His Glory?

Further, when every man went unto his own house, Christ had no house to go to! And this denotes not only His extreme poverty, but the forgetfulness and unkindness of His friends. Each of us is apt to say, Had I been there, He would not have spent that night amid the cold dews of the Mount of Olives. He would have had the best accommodation my house could have afforded. I would always have had a chamber prepared for the Lords Prophet, like that of the Shunammite woman, with a bed, and a table, and a stool, and a candlestick, and I would have entertained this Prince of Prophets with the greatest joy! So you think, but had you lived in Christs day, John might still have written, He came unto His own, and His own received Him not. And the Prophets lamentation might again have become true, He was despised, and we esteemed Him noteven we, His own people, His blood-bought people, His belovedesteemed Him not.

Surely, never was such a friend used so terribly as the Lord Jesus Christ was used even by His friends and followers! His head must have been wet with the dew of Heaven and His locks with the drops of the night, yet no one gave Him shelter. Yet we must not blame His disciples for their neglect of their Master unless we are also willing to blame ourselves. He has often stood at our door and knocked! Perhaps He is knocking now, but we, in some form or other, refuse to give Him a lodging in our hearts and willingly keep in His place some darling sin. And so the Savior still has to stand outside, for He will not come into our hearts to dwell in peace with sin. He must remain outside until we expel the intruder, or call upon Him to do so.

Observe, too, in the fact of Christ having no home to go to, the loneliness of His spirit. If He had asked one of His friends to entertain Him, probably none would have refused His request. Had not His mother Mary still a home? What had become of His reputed father, Joseph the carpenter? Were not His brothers with Him? Would not one of them entertain Him? There was James, who is called the Lords brothercould not he find Him a shelter? Peter had a wife, for we read of his wifes mother lying sick of a fever and being cured by Christhad he no place to which he could invite his Lord? The loving John had a home, for he took the mother of Jesus, after the Crucifixion, to his own home. Then there were the women who followed Jesus and ministered to Him of their substance. And Martha, and Mary, and Lazaruswould not they give Christ a shelter? Oh, yes, they would gladly have done so, but He was, just then, in the midst of trialsHe was beset by the Pharisees. They were tempting Him on all sides and He needed something better than the companionship of men! He needed a place where He could rest, but there is not one disciple upon whose bosom He could lean His head. John may lean his head upon Christs bosom, but Christ cannot lean His head upon Johns bosom, so the Savior must go away by Himself to the Mount of Olives for He has a lonely spirit and no human being can fully enter into His grief and woes.

We sometime see a Christian minister of high spirit living in a country village. He is the only educated man in the place. There is no one to whom he can talk upon many themes that are interesting to him and his spirit often feels very lonely. His people seem to have nothing to think of but their farm, their milking, their plowing and their sowings. He cannot get them above all these things and there he stands with, perhaps, not a single companion with whom he can discuss his doubts and questions and thoughts about Divine things. It is lonely to be a missionary engaged in Christian work in a heathen landhis loneliness may be even greater than that of such a man as I have been describing. But the Saviors loneliness was still greater! There was not one man upon the earth with whom He could talk at all times. Even in His hours of keenest conflict, Christ knew that His chosen followers would leave Him aloneall would forsake Him and flee. It is true that even then, He could say, Yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me, but apart from His Fathers Presence, His whole life may be compressed into those two sentencesI have trodden the winepress alone. And of the people there was none with Me. So, that night they could all go to their own houses, but God must go to the Mount of Olives, for He must be a lonely Man.

Thus, there are three things which are brought out by the text Christs extreme poverty, the unkindness of His friends and the loneliness of His spirit.

But there is another reason for His action the fond resolution of His heart. Why does He go to the Mount of Olives and not somewhere else? He knew that it was near that saved retreat that He was to sweat, as it were, great drops of blood falling down to the ground, so He resolved to familiarize Himself with the neighborhood which was to be the scene of His terrible conflict with Satan. Do you not think that if Wellington had known beforehand that the fate of nations would be decided on the field of Waterloo, he would have gone to see it, if it had been possible? I believe the great warrior would have gone to look at it and study it to observe the best positions for attack and defense. And the Savior went, with solemn interest, to look at the place where He was to stand foot to foot with the great enemy of souls! If you and I had to bear some terrible suffering, it is very likely, (for the flesh is so weak), that we would try to forget all about itbut it was not so with the Savior! He kept the fact of His atoning Sacrifice constantly before His own mind and spoke of it to others again and again. So intense was His love to His people that He seemed eagerly to anticipate the time when He would suffer even unto death for their sakes. Remember His remarkable saying, I have a baptism to be baptized with: and how am I straitened till it be accomplished! What? Was His death upon the Cross to be, in any sense, a relief to Him? Yes, it was even so. And He was straitened till it was accomplished. Oh, what wondrous love was that which impelled the Savior onward to Gethsemanethe olive press where He was to be pressed and crushed between the millstones of Jehovahs wrath in order that He might suffer the penalty due to our transgressions!

I am not going to thresh these thoughts out for youI merely suggest them as themes for your devout meditationand I think that there is abundant reason for such meditation in those seven words, Jesus went unto the Mount of Olives.

II. Now I want to take the text in another way. The second thing which it presents to us is A VIVID CONTRAST FOR SELF-EXAMINATION.   
What a true description this first verse is of our own usual conduct! Every man went unto his own house. We go, each one of us, to our own house for ease. That is right enough up to a certain point, but do we not often seek our own ease when we should be engaged in the service of our Lord? Christ goes to the mountain to pray, but we go to our beds to sleep, or to our tables to feast, to our friends to while away an hour in empty talk, or to our amusements to kill the time which hangs so heavily upon our hands. I doubt not that the greatest saint among us has some cause to reproach himself for having wasted time and disobeyed that solemn Apostolic injunction, See, then, that you walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time because the days are evil. I can, in imagination, see the Savior lifting up His hands in an agony of spirit on the mountain at midnight, while His disciples are all sleeping comfortably in their beds. As we think of our Savior thus agonizing in prayer for His people, can we not find more time for prayer than the most of us usually do? Might it not be profitable to ourselves to mortify the body a little more that we might have a greater advantage in spirit? I am afraid we would have to present a very poor record if we gave a true account of the time we spend in prayeryet we have no excuse to offer for being slow in this holy duty. It is not a bondage, a slaveryit is the highest privilege of the Believers soul to be engaged in prayer to our Heavenly Fatheryet we often prefer the disastrous ease of wasting our time instead of drawing near to God in prayer!   
I heard someone say to a woman who had been converted, but whose husband kept a public house, There is one room in your house which will keep all the other rooms there from injuring your spiritual lifethat is the room where you retire for private prayer. If that room is kept right, the rest will do you little harm. Christian, imitate your Lord who often retired for prayer to the Mount of Olives, and it shall be well with your soul. At a certain missionary station in Africa, one of the Brothers was accustomed to go for private prayer to a little clump of trees and, to get there, he had to cross some long grass. He had gone so often that he had made a clear trail to the spot where he went to pray. Others had done the same and there were several trails across the grass. After a while, this professor began to grow lax in many ways. He could not enjoy the ministry as he used to do. His dealings in trade were not so exact as once they were. An elder Brother pointed out to him the cause of the change that had come over him. He took him aside to his trail and showed him that the grass was growing upthat it was not trodden down as it formerly had beenand then he said, Brother, there is the cause of all the mischiefthe grass is growing on the trail where you used to go for private prayer. If you and I, dear Friends, had to go to some place like that for prayer, I fear that the grass would not always be well trodden down and that we should often have cause to cry, O Lord, give us the true spirit of prayer! Like the people of whom the text speaks, we go to our houses for ease, but Christ goes to the mountain to pray in lonely solitude. We still have need to say to Him   
*Cold mountains, and the midnight air   
Witnessed the fervor of Your prayer!   
The desert Your temptation knew   
Your conflict and Your victory, too.   
Be You my Patternmake me bear   
More of Your gracious Image here   
Then God the Judge shall own my name   
Among the followers of the Lamb.*   
For what else do we go to our houses? We go there, very often, to take counsel. On the occasion mentioned here, Christs enemies went home to talk together about how they might try to entrap Him. And we sometimes go to our homes to consult with flesh and blood about matters that concern us. We say to one friend, What do you think I had better do? And to another, This is my conditionwhat do you advise in such a case as mine? In this way, poor, erring, human judgments are made to be our chart and our companions, our captain and our pilot! Jesus went unto the Mount of Olives and took His case to His Father in prayer. He consulted not with flesh and blood, but with the Eternal, whose wisdom can make no mistake and whose love can never err. Beloved, may we not be blameworthy in having gone here and there, wasting our breath on our friends and fellow sinners, instead of going to the great High Priest, who wears the Urim and Thummim, and who would have told us what we ought to do? The lines of Cowper are still true   
*Have you no words? Ah to think again!   
Words flow apace when you complain.   
And fill your fellow creatures ears   
With the sad tale of all your cares.   
Were half the breath thus vainly spent,   
To Heaven in supplication sent,   
Your cheerful song would oftener be,   
Hear what the Lord has done for me!*   
Again, we go to our houses, very properly, for the enjoyment of sympathy. We feel that if it is to be found anywhere, we shall find tender sympathy there and that if the whole outside world should misunderstand and misrepresent us, we shall be understood and not misrepresented at home. Whoever may slander us away from our home, no one will falsely accuse us thereall hearts there will beat in sympathy with usso we go to our own homes. But Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. I say this not to blame you or myself for seeking sympathy here, for Christ, Himself, did the same. On that memorable night in Gethsemane when He sweat, as it were, great drops of blood, He said to His disciples, Could you not watch with Me one hour? He seemed to feel the need of sympathy in that dread hour, but He had to learn, as we also must learn, that there is a point where human sympathy cannot avail us. We must say, as Jesus did, O My Father, for only in His heart can true sympathy be found. Yet this I may say, without any harshness, that while we prize the sympathy of beloved friends, let us not forget to go to God in prayer. Let us tell the sad tale of all our griefs into His ear and pour out the story of all our sorrows into His heart. He has a bottle for our tears and a book for our complaints. Precious in the sight of the Lord is the grief (as well as the death) of all His people. He counts the number of their wounds as well as the number of the stars. So, while we may seek sympathy from our friends at home, let us not forget to go to the Mercy Seat, that we may also secure the sympathy and help of the best Friend we have!

We go home, also, for rest and refreshment. We are toil-wornit is not more ease that we need, but real repose. We go to our beds, not because of idleness, but that we may be ready for tomorrows labor. There are times when the strongest men must turn aside from their toil and rest for a little whileand it is right for us to go to our homes for this purpose. Yet Jesus went to the Mount of Olives when every man went to his own homeand this suggests to us that we are not to be so concerned for the health of the body as to neglect the requirements of the soul. We must cry with David, Renew a right spirit within me, and go to our God in prayer in the hope that we may be quickened in His way. Prayer to God is a even better refreshment than sleep, just as the soul is better than the body. A certain amount of sleep is necessary for the body, but prayer is just as necessary for the soul. The bed will give rest to the tired limbs, but the Mercy Seat will give refreshment to the powers and passions of the spirit. Let us get strength for service, power for endurance and might for conflict by going to the Mount of Olives with the Savior and watching and praying with Him.   
I think that I have said enough upon this point of contrast. To my mind there is a very suggestive line of thought in these two sentences Every man went unto his own house. Jesus went unto the Mount of Olives.   
III. Just for a minute or so, dear Friends, I want to remind you that we also have here A COMPARISON FOR OUR INSTRUCTION.   
Perhaps I shall startle and surprise you when I say that Jesus Christ did exactly what His disciples and the other people did. They went to their own houses and He went to His own house. They went home and He went home. They sought ease, and He sought ease. They sought counsel and He sought counsel. They sought sympathy and He sought sympathy. They sought refreshment and He sought refreshment. The Mount of Olives was, to all intents and purposes, Christs home. It was there that He met with His Father. It was there that the Man, Christ Jesus, met with kindred spirits in the Father and the Holy Spirit. It was there that He cast off the cares of the day and unburdened Himself as a weary son does in his parents presence. It was there that He told the tale of all the traps which had been laid to trap Him in speech, of all the ways that His enemies had tried to catch Him. It was there that He cried to Heaven for wisdom and it was there that, made strong by fresh contact with His Father, He girt on His golden armor to go forth once more fully protected from all the arrows of the Evil One. Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ, that season of prayer upon the Mount of Olives was to Jesus what our going to our houses and to our loved ones is to us. We grieve that His body was wet with the dews of the night, yet we would gladly have some of those same drops upon our body if we could have communion with Him in spirit. We have sympathy with the members of His physical frame because they were tried by the cold of the mountains, and the loneliness of His night vigil, but we wish that our souls could be braced with something like the same vigor which He received upon the Mount of Olives, or in the Garden of Gethsemane. Yes, the cold mountain was His home. There He had a place where He could lay His head, and rest, though only in a spiritual sense.   
IV. There is just one other point for me to mention and then I will close. We have here A TYPE FOR OUR EDIFICATION.   
We hope to go to our houses after this service, but Jesus is still, in a certain sense, on the Mount of Olives interceding for us. I suppose there are some people in their houses who are plotting and scheming against the cause of God. The Jesuit is seeking to spread his nets so that he may, with his many allurements, entice the unwary and extend the evil influence of the harlot of Babylon. The persecutor is planning with the view of tripping up a saint here and overthrowing another yonder. The devil is suggesting, in the minds of atheists and infidels, crafty arguments against the Inspiration of the Scriptures, new difficulties to startle youthful Believers, fresh blasphemies concerning the Person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. If we could have the roofs taken off the houses in London, tonight, or if we could look into the many evil hearts in this modern Babylon, how many might we see taking counsel together against the Lord and against His Anointed! Very many will be going to their houses tonight to plot, plan and imagine all sorts of evil! But, supposing they do, shall we sit down and be afraid? Shall we give way to despair? No! Verily there is still hope and more than hope for the true Church of Christ, for Jesus has gone to the Mount of Olives on high! There He stands, at the right hand of the Father, pleading the cause of His Church. Knowing her difficulties, foreseeing her perils, reading all that is in the hearts of her enemies and her own, He stretches out His hands, points to His wounds and, for Zions sake, He will not hold His peace! For Jerusalems sake He will not rest until her righteousness shall go forth as brightness and the salvation of His people shall be as a lamp that burns! There, Church of God, is your star of hope! The interceding Savior is our unfailing protection, our strong bulwarks and our munitions of war! Fear not, O Zion, for, while the Savior pleads, He that sits in the heavens does laugh at His enemiesthe Lord has them in derision   
But some will, I hope, go home in quite another mood. I trust that some will go home to mourn over sin. I hope that out of this company which I am now addressing, there are some who are going home to pray. As you, by your bedside, pour out your supplications to Our Father who are in Heaven, do not forget that Jesus went to the Mount of Olives to prayand remember that He is still praying for His people before His Fathers face. Sinner, there will be two pleading for you while you are praying for yourself! As you plead with Christ, Christ pleads for you. When you put your case into His hands, every groan of yours is sprinkled with His precious blood and every penitent tear of yours is made acceptable to God through the merit of Christs Sacrifice. Be not discouraged if your words will not come, if there are within you groans which cannot be uttered, or if you are half choked with emotion, so that you cannot speak out what you really feel within, for there is One who can speak for you as never man spoke! And if you cannot plead for yourself, He can plead for you according to that gracious assurance, If any man sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous. Just as Jesus went to the Mount of Olives to pray for His people, He has now gone up to Heaven to continue pleading for them and also to make intercession for the transgressors.   
It is very likely that many will go to their houses simply to sleep, as most of those probably did in our Saviors day. Many professing Christians come to Gods House to sleep and then go home to sleep. They walk about sleeping, sleeping with their eyes open, spiritually sleeping while they are wide awake about mere secular matters. But it is a comfort to know that while professors sleep and lambs sleep, Jesus still goes, spiritually, to the Mount of Olives. The only hope for the slumbering Church is the wakeful Savior! Even if the earthly watchmen sleep, the best of all Watchmen keeps guard over the vineyard which He has planted. He says, I the Lord do keep it. I will water it every moment. Lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day. The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward Him.   
It may be that some of you will go home to be tempted. It is a sad thing to go from the House of God to meet with temptation, yet that happens to many of you. You come in here on Sabbath days or weeknights and try to get spiritual food for your soul and then, perhaps, the first word that you hear as you cross the threshold of your home is an oath. What a comfort it is that Jesus goes to the Mount of Olives to plead for you and that He knows, beforehand, the exact temptation which you will have to meet, even as He said to Simon Peter, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for you, that your faith fails not. Be satisfied, O Believer, that Christ will never put His gold into the furnace without Himself sitting at the mouth of it to watch the whole purifying process! He never takes His eyes off the precious ingot as long as it is in the furnaceand only when He sees His own image reflected in the pure metal does He take it out of the fire! You can be sure of this, though the devil may come out against you and assail you in fashion which shall utterly stagger you, God has not forgotten you! Jesus has gone up on high and He is pleading for you that in this, your time of utmost weakness and need, the Grace of God shall be sufficient for you and make a way of escape for you out of all your troubles and temptations!  
I might enlarge upon this fruitful theme, but I will not do so. And so I close by expressing the hope that some of us intend, from this day forth, to serve God better than we have ever done. I know that there are some members of this Church who feel stirred up to do more than they have ever yet done for Christ and, after all, the most of our members do not do much for Him. There are some in the Church who have no share in all that is done for Christ. It is not the many, but the few, who really do the work. If all the members of this Church felt such love for Christ as some do, and were all as ardently devoted to His cause as some are, I know not what we might not do for Christ, nor how rapidly His Kingdom might be extended by us! If any of us go to our homes solemnly praying that we may, from this day forth, be completely consecrated to the Lord, to serve Him with a perfect heart, we may rest assured that Jesus is praying a similar petition before His Fathers face! He is praying that His people may be holy! That they may be happy! That they may love Him with their whole heart and bring forth much fruit to the praise and glory of His holy name! So, when you truly desire to serve God, Christ hears you and His prayer and your prayer agree well together!

Let us, therefore, go to our houses remembering that thought of Jesus retiring in secret to pray for His peopleand before we close our eyes, let us go again to the Mercy Seat where Christ has often met with us. And as we close this service, let us for a few moments go in spirit to the Mount of Olives in prayer.

**Before the Throne of God above   
I have a strong, a perfect plea,   
A great High Priest, whose name is Love, Who always lives and pleads for me! My name is engraved on His hands, My name is written on His heart I know that, while in Heaven He stands No tongue can bid me thence depart. One with Himself I cannot die,   
My soul is purchased by His blood. My life is hid with Christ on high With Christ, my Savior and my God!**

**EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: JOHN 7:30-63; 8:1.**

John 7:30, 31. Then they sought to take Him: but no man laid hands on Him, because His hour was not yet come. And many of the people believed on Him, and said, When Christ comes, will He do more miracles than these which this Man has done? Well might they ask that question, for Jesus had worked such marvelous miracles that they could not imagine anything greater! Surely this must be the Christ or if He were not, when the Christ did come, could He and would He do any greater miracles than this Man had done?

32. The Pharisees heard that the people murmured such things concerning Him. Whispered these things, afraid to speak out boldly because of the Pharisees and, therefore, they quietly said it among themselves and, after all, there is no fire more to be dreaded than a smoldering fire.

32, 33. And the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to take Him. Then said Jesus unto them, Yet a little while am I with you, and then I go unto Him that sent Me. That was a blessed way for Christ to describe His return to the heavenly worldI go unto Him that sent Me. Possibly He said this to the very men who were sent to take Him.

34. You shall seek Me, and shall not find Me: and where I am, there you cannot come. No officers can arrest Him now that He has gone up into His Fathers Glory. There is no fear of any of them being there to catch Him in His speech, or to drag Him before the ecclesiastical and secular judges, as they did when He was here.

35, 36. Then said the Jews among themselves, Where will He go, that we shall not find Him? Will He go unto the dispersed among the Gentiles and teach the Gentiles? What manner of saying is this that He said, You shall seek Me and shall not find Me: and where I am, there you cannot come? They appear to have had some intimation of that glorious love of Christ which was not to be confined within the bounds of the Jewish nation, yet they could not or would not understand His words.

37. In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried. Shouted, spoke with all His might! And He stood, although He usually sat to deliver His messages. But now, as if His whole being was awakened to its utmost energy, on account of the last day of the gathering having come, when perhaps the people would go home and He would be unable thus to speak with them again, Jesus stood and cried.

37. Saying, If any man thirsts, let him come unto Me, and drink. O blessed invitation! How sweet it should be to every thirsty soul! If any manprince or pauper! Any manmoral or utterly debauched! If any man thirsts, let him come unto Menot to ordinances, nor to human priests, let Him come unto Me, and drink, as much as He will without money, and without price.

38. He that believes on Me, as the Scripture has said, out of His belly shall flow rivers of living water. He will not only drink enough to satisfy his own thirst, but he will, himself, become a fountainstreams of Grace shall be communicated to his fellow men through him.

39. (But this spoke He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive: for the Holy Spirit was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified). He was not given then, but later. On the day of Pentecost He was givenand He has never been withdrawn!

40-43. Many of the people, therefore, when they heard this saying, said, Of a truth this is the Prophet. Others said, This is the Christ. But some said, Shall Christ come out of Galilee? Has not the Scripture said that Christ comes of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was? So there was a division among the people because of Him. It is still true that Christ is a cause of division, as He, Himself, foretold that He would be.

44. And some of them would have taken Him but no man laid hands on Him. In the 30th verse of this chapter, and in the 20th verse of the next Chapter, we are told why they did not take HimHis hour was not yet come. And, like their Lord, saints are immortal till their work is done!

45-48. Then came the officers to the chief priest and Pharisees; and they said unto them, Why have you not brought Him? The officers answered, Never man spoke like this Man. Then answered them the Pharisees, Are you also deceived? Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on Him? They professed to be the spiritual leaders of the nation and expected all to follow them.

49-51. But the people who know not the Law are cursed. Nicodemus said unto them, (he that came to Jesus by night, being one of them), Does our Law judge any man before it hears him and knows what he does? Nicodemus asked a simple question, but they could not answer it without convicting themselves of disobeying that very Law of God of which they pretended to be the exponents.

52, 53. They answered and said unto him, Are you also of Galilee? Search, and look: for out of Galilee arises no Prophet. And every man went unto his own house.

John 8:1. Jesus went unto the Mount of Olives.  
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THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD   
NO. 3534

A SERMON   
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, OCTOBER 19, 1916.   
DELIVERED BY C H. SPURGEON,   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE PULPIT, NEWINGTON

**Then spoke Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world; he who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.   
John 8:12.**

OUR Lord did not speak in this way at the beginning of His ministry. He did not thus bear witness to Himself, saying, I am the light of the world. But it was befitting on this occasion, when the people before Him had already received sufficient evidence from other quarters. John the Baptist, whom all men counted for a Prophet, had testified that Christ was the true Light of God which lights every man that comes into the world. The witness of John they rejectedstartling, if not conclusive, as it must have beenconsidering the esteem in which his oracular voice was held. Moreover, Jesus, Himself, had worked conviction in their hearts by His teaching. Had they not listened to His famous Sermon on the Mount? Could they not feel the authority with which He spoke? Did they not confess to the impressions He produced on them? The weight and the wisdom of His discourse manifested a power that could melt their thoughts into the very mold of His ministry. Nor was it merely His teaching, transparent though that was, but the signs He showed and the miracles He worked with the majesty of His voice and the virtue of His touch proclaimed that He was the Light of the world! Thus the infirmities of the creature called forth His Divine compassion. With radiant eyes of pity He looked on the wretched and gave them quick reliefHe shone on their sadness like the Sun of Righteousness, with healing in His beams. They hailed His visit in every town and village as the Healer of all who were diseased. Might not the quick sense of every unprejudiced spectator detect in Him the Messiah and welcome His advent to the worlds? At length, as though aggrieved by their unbelief, He speaks loudly and proclaims plainly, I am the light of the world. Such high ground does He take before His adversaries. Well might He say it to their teeth. Hardly an hour before He had flashed that Light into their eyes and blinded them with its brilliance! They had stood before Him, with the unhappy woman whom they sought to make the instrument of entangling Him, and soon they had sneaked out of His Presence conscience-stricken, when He said, He that is without sin among you, let him cast the first stone at her. One ray of His Omniscience had lighted up the secret chambers of their memory and exposed, at least to themselves, the righteous Law they had broken, and the crimes they had to answer for. He who could thus convince them, is able to convince the world of sin! He who lit up the deepest recesses of the heart is the Light of the world! So Jesus here boldly and openly avowed the truth concerning Himself when He said, I am the light of the world.

Let our meditation now be directed to our Lord Jesus Christ as the Light of the worldthe true Lightthe guiding Lightand the universal Light!

I. JESUS IS THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD.   
That Jesus is the Lightthe Light of the worldis to be seen in all parts of His blessed history. Look at Him in His cradle. Shines there a star above the house wherein the young Child sleeps? Brighter far than yonder star is He, who lies cradled in the manger! He has come, the predictions of whose Advent had illumined centuries of darkness! As a Baby, devout men hail Him, A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of His people Israel. To the eye of faith, what radiance emanates from the newborn Baby! Look, for the like was never looked on before! There God is veiled in human flesh. Behold the mystery of the Incarnation! God is manifest in our nature! He dwells among us. The Light is clear and dazzling.   
Well might the angels have, sung, Glory to God in the highest; on earth peace, goodwill towards men. Sweet Baby! You have pierced the thick darkness of earths sorrow! You have enlightened her scenes of sadness, infusing joy into her gloom! Your coming revealed the love of God, His sweet compassion and His tender pity towards the guilty sons of men. With growing years, while His increasing wisdom kept pace with His increasing stature, He shone, exhibiting a Childs delight in the two tables of the Law. His first concern being to do His heavenly Fathers business and His constant habit being to submit Himself and to honor His earthly parent. Not rashly or recklessly did He begin to teach. His Baptism throws a wonderful light upon consecration to Godand the dire temptations that quickly followed, in all of which He foiled the tempterhave thrown a brilliant light on the pathway of Christian ministers! As a Preacher, He was luminous. He expounded the spirituality of the Law of God. Light penetrated the precept through and through as He made the very essence of purity apparent! His Light cleared the Law of the mists and fogs that the Rabbinical writers had gathered around it. He shed Light, too, upon the Covenant of Grace. He promulgated the Gospel of peace among the sons of men. He told of God the Father, willing to receive His prodigal children back again into His bosom. His parables threw wondrous Light upon the dispensation of the Kingdom of Heaven. His counsels and His cautions brought the final destinies of the righteous and the wicked into full view. Eternity dawned on His hearers while He spoke. His own life exhibited the power of love, the value of sympathy and the virtue of forgiving injuries. His death gave yet more palpable evidence of unfaltering submission to the will of Godand unflinching self-sacrifice for the welfare of men!

Oh, Beloved, the Light of Christ comes out brightest upon the Cross! Someone called it the Lighthouse of this worlds sea. So it is. This is the Lighthouse that throws its beams across the dark waters of human guilt and misery, warns men of the rocks, and guides them to the haven. A Savior! God in human flesh! He whom the Seers predictedA king shall reign in righteousness, appears as the Divine symbol represented Him a Lamb slain. Behold Him shedding His precious blood to atone for the sins of men! Never did such Light shine on the Law and the Prophets! Never did such Light gleam on the faith and hope of pure hearts! Never did such Light irradiate the repentance and conversion by which sinners are retrieved! Behold the Sun as He comes forth from His chamber and rejoices to finish His course! He before whose eyes Jesus Christ has been evidently set forth crucified, has seen a Light which outshines all earthly splendor! The sin and the sorrow, the shame and the sentence, all vanish when we see the Redeemer die for us! And if from the gloom of His death so much comfort can be extracted, what shall we say when He rose again from the dead? His dark sepulcher reflects Glory now that He has arisen from the dead! The shroud, the mattock, and the grave are shorn of their terrors   
*No more a morgue, to fence   
The relics of lost innocence,   
A vault of ruin and decay   
The imprisoning stone is rolled away.*   
Into the sepulcher you can peer now that Christ has broken down the door and torn away the veil. Through it you can look. For those that follow Christ, it is a passage into everlasting life! He has brought life and immortality to light. Since He has risen from the tomb and left the dead, the Light of God, clear and transparent, shines on the exodus of the soul from earth! On, onward still, track His path as in His ascension He goes flaming up the skies! There, there is a road of Light that shows us the way to God! He enters Heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father. There, as our Representative, He sheds the Light of comfort down upon us. There He waitsand while He waitsHe wills that where He is, there should His people be! Oh, happy thought, today, my Brothers and Sisters! Among the sons of men, Christ is still the Light. He has sent the Holy Spirit to be His Representative here on earth. He testifies of Christ. The Divine Paraclete occupies the place of our departed Teacher. The Church, inspired by the blessed Spirit, with ten thousand tongues, proclaims the Gospel of salvation. You are the light of the world, said Jesus. In His people, Christ still shines forth with even a brighter light than in the days of His earthly sojourn! He has ten thousand reflectors, instead of twelve. Ten thousand times ten thousand tongues proclaim His Gospel and ten thousand times ten thousand hearts burn and blaze with the Light of the Divine Word! Christ is the Light of the world! From His cradle to His Throne, and onward till He comes in full splendor at the Second Advent, the Lamb is the Light of God that illuminates this dark earth! Then spoke Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world.   
II. JESUS IS THE TRUE LIGHT.   
There are other lights. Before His Coming there had been some typical light. Do you not remember that a golden lamp stood in the Holy Place, with its seven branches? It was an admirable piece of sacred furniture, and highly instructivebut Jesus seems to put it away. In fact, it had been already put away. He had come to put an end to its meaning by fulfilling its intent. This was not the Light of Godit was only the type of the Light. I am the true light, He says. Even that light which flamed across the desert way when Moses led the host of God through the wilderness was but a typical light. The veritable Pillar of Cloud and Fire is Jesus, who leads the whole host of Gods elect through this weary wilderness to the Canaan of the blessed!   
Jesus Christ was the true Light in opposition to the smoking flax of tradition. Listen to those Rabbis! They think themselves the light of the world! Their sophism is an endless strife of wordstheir research is not worth your studytheir knowledge is not worth the knowing! They can tell you exactly which is the middle verse of the Bible and which is the middle letter of the middle word! They discussed their paradoxes till they became addle-headed! They refined on their subtleties till doctrine dwindled down into doubt, simple Truth was degraded into silly twaddle, their translations of Scripture were a travesty and their commentaries an outrage upon commonsense! But Christ, the true, the heavenly Light of God, extinguishes all your earthly luminaries! The Jewish Rabbi, the Greek philosopher, the ecclesiastical father, and the modern theological thinker are meteors that dissolve into mist! They make void the Word of God through their traditions or their conjectures. Flee away from the nebulous forms and noxious fumes of their old traditions and new discoveries! Believe what Jesus said, His Apostles taught, and what you have had revealed to you in His own pure Word! Christ is the true Light of God!  
In opposition to the glare of priestcraft, with which so many in all ages have been enamored, Christ is the Light of the world! There is some reason to suppose that this declaration of our Lord bore allusion to a custom observed among the Jews at that time in connection with the Feast of Tabernacles. Maimonides says that on the previous evening two enormous candelabragolden lampsof a vast size were set up in the court of the women in the open air, and that these flamed with such a brilliant light that they appeared to illuminate the whole city of Jerusalem. And the women came with a torchlight procession and stood around these flaming candelabra, and there executed a sort of sacred dance and solemn pageant. This was done, not on the authority of Moses, but on the authority of traditionto keep the people in mind of the cloudy and fiery pillar of the wilderness! The Feast of Tabernacles, you know, was designed as a memorial of the 40 years that the children of Israel wandered in the wilderness, dwelling in tents. But this particular rite was of their own inventiona supplementary observance intended to remind the people of the fiery pillar that illumined the camp in those days of yore. Now it is supposed, not, I think, without good reason, that it was on the morning after this celebration that Jesus stood in the court. The lamps were gone out, but the golden columns that the night before had flamed, still remained in their placesthe remnant of a spectaclethe lamps minus the light. Just then the sun was rising in its own peerless splendor. The scene they beheld gave force to the sentence He uttered. The contrast between the lamps which the priests had lita fit emblem of superstitionwere all going out, perhaps with a noxious smell, while the mighty orb of day was rising when Jesus said, I am the light of the world; He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness. Whether the scene and the circumstances were as has been so well imagined, or not, the truth is fitly illustrated by the similitude. When every lamp that ever man has kindled, and fed with the oil of superstition, shall have died out, as they must expire, our Lord Jesus Christ shall, like the morning sun, make glad the sons of men! Away you go, you bright meteors of the night, around which the children of superstition execute their maddened dance of implicit belief! Away you go! Already you begin to go out! I see how you all flicker, even now. The day comes on apace in which the blast of Gods eternal Spirit shall blow you out in everlasting night. But Jesus shines! He is the true Light of God and will shine on forever! I live in the twilight of Christianity, said Voltaire, and he unwittingly spoke a truth. He thought that it was the twilight of the evening, but it was the twilight of the morning, for Jesus still shines brighter and brighterthe true Light of God before which the lamps of superstition and priestcraft must pale their ineffectual fires! This is what the Savior meantHe was the true Light.   
Very different, too, is the Light of Christ from the sparks which are to be seen all the world over. Every now and then a scientific gentleman picks up a flint arrowhead and he strikes a wonderful light with it. And he that has his tinder-box ready and a brimstone match may soon think he has got the true lighttill another philosopher comes and, with the lid of the aforesaid tinderbox, puts out that light! This is the cardinal virtue of philosophersthey extinguish one another! Their fine spun theories do not often survive the fleeting generation that admires them! A fresh race starts fresh theories of unbelief, which live their day, like ephemera, and then expire. Not so the Light of Christ! It burns on and beams forever! We have friends who have been dazed by the light of public opiniona very bright light is that. And we have known some decent scholars who have been enraptured with the light of the 19thCenturya wonderful luminary, indeed, but slightly darkened by the follies, frauds and crimes which every days newspaper reveals! We have had the light of knowledge which lauded Aristotle, and made the heathen author supply a textbook for Christian colleges! We have heard more than enough of the light of the Church in which we can discern nothing but colors and conceits, borrowed from the medieval darkness of Christendom. But we have the trustworthy and the true when we hear Him exclaim, I am the light. Where else shall light be found? Where shall the bewildered sons of men find a reliable guide? In the teaching of the Person, the Life, the Death, the Sacrifice of the Christ of Nazareth, we have the Light of God selfevidential, palpable by its own brilliance! Guiding Light is here, alike, clearly visible. This to follow is not fallacious. I am the light of the world; He that follows Me shall not walk in darkness. Thus, then, is He a Light that is to be followed! Do any of you want to enjoy the light that streams from Christ? Be assured you cannot realize it by reading about ityou must follow it! If a man could travel so fast as always to follow the sun, of course he would always be in the light. If the day should ever come when the speed of the railway shall be equal to the speed of the worlds motion, then a man may so live as to never lose the light. Now he that follows Christ shall never walk in darkness! To follow Him means to commit yourselves to Him, to believe Him and yield yourselves upobediently doing what He bidsand implicitly accepting what He says. You must have no other Master. Say not, I will be taught by Calvin, or, by Luther, or, by Wesley, or, by someone else. Jesus Christ, only, must be your Light! His Word, by the testimony of His Spirit, must be your sole authority!

III. JESUS IS THE GUIDING LIGHT FOR THE SOUL. For the soul that pants after God. Do you say, with Philip, show us the Father, and it suffices us? Jesus says, I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life; no man comes unto the Father but by Me. Christ is the guiding light through the multitude of authors. If you want to thread your way among them, let the early Fathers, the sturdy Reformers, the rigid Puritans and the modern Evangelists be your companions, if it so please you. But let Him be your Guide and His counsel your stay till you reach the gates of Glory. Amidst the conflict of opinions, His sure Word will prove your safe chart! He is the guiding Light through sickness and sufferingtrust Him, and He will make your bed in your sicknessHe will bring lasting benefits out of your most lamentable afflictions. He is the guiding Light through deaths dark vale. In those gloomy shades you need fear no ill if you keep close to Him   
*Sun of my Soul, You Savior dear,   
It is not night if You are near.*   
Christ has said, He that follows Me shall not walk in darknessso the terror of night flies at His Presence! The atoning blood shall speak peace to you. Ignorance shall vanish before the brightness He manifests. Christ shall teach you. Despair shall dissolve before the sweet beams of hope. Even doubt, with all the indecision that comes of it, melts at the sound of His animating voice, This is the way; walk you in it. Thrice happy the man who commits himself to Jesus! He shall always have the Light of God and shall never walk in darkness!   
IV. JESUS IS THE UNIVERSAL LIGHT.  
He says, I am the light of the world. He does not merely say, I am the light of the Jews, or, I am the light of the Gentiles. He is both. He is the Light of all mankind! There is no clear light in which any man can discern God, or rightly understand himself, perceive the bitterness of sin, or apprehend the destiny and the doom of Heaven and Hell, but what flows through Jesus Christ! I do not doubt that among the various religious professions spread over the worldin many of which Christianity is much debasedthere are devout persons who enjoy a share of communion with God and a sense of pardoned sin, though the tone of their thoughts, like the tongue of their utterances, widely differs from our ownbut it is all through one common Lord, our Savior, Jesus Christ, they find acceptance! When I get hold of a book that teaches erroneous things, yet if there is a savor of Jesus Christ in it, I censure the faults without condemning the author. Never let my strong criticisms be mistaken for anathemas. I sometimes perceive that the man who wrote it has evidently found salvation because he has laid hold of our Lord Jesus Christ. He that follows Him is on the right tack. Though he may err in a thousand minor considerations, by following Christ in the main thing, he is safe. Learn of Him and obey Him in all thingsthen shall you be blessed, yourself, and useful to others! Happy the man who has seen this Light and walks in this Light of Christ, for this is the light that lights every man that comes into the world! There is a little Light in Mohammedanism. Indeed, considering the age in which Mohammed lived, he had a great deal of Lightthe religion of the Koran is immeasurably superior to the religions of the age in which the prophet flourished. He even taught the Unity of the Godhead most clearly. Yet the light in the Koran is borrowed from the Old and New Testament. It is borrowed light. The intelligence is pilfered. The light of the Parsee, the light of Zoroaster, the light of Confucius came originally from the sacred books of the Jews. From one source they must have all come, for all light comes from the great Father of Lights. Wherever you alight upon any truth in strange places about mans state and condition, or about God and the way to safety, you may rest assured that the light, if tracked to its dawn, would lead you up to Jesus Christfor all the true Light comes from Him.   
Christ is the Light of the world, destined to shed His beams over the whole earth. The day comes when all mankind will see this Light. How often I have been told of late that the world is all going to rack and ruin, and that all that we ought to do is to try and man a lifeboat and save a few strugglers, hastening ourselves to leave the wreck before she breaks up! Well now, I am not so desponding as that. I am of opinion that, by Gods good Grace, we shall tug the old vessel off the rocks, and that the kingdoms of this world will become the Kingdoms of our God and of His Christ, for the Lord has sworn that all flesh shall see the salvation of God! I cannot believe that this dispensation will be wound up as a tremendous failure, that the Gospel zealously preached everywhere shall result in only a few being saved, and that the whole economy shall go out in darkness as the snuff of a candle is extinguished. No, I look for better things! They who dwell in the wilderness shall bow before Him and His enemies shall lick the dust. The isles shall bring Him tribute. Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts, yes, all kings shall fall down before Him. I cannot help believing that the Gospel is yet to be triumphant. I look for the coming of Christ. Let Him come when He may, our hearts will leap for joy to greet Him! But for this dispensation to end without success would almost seem to me like thwarting the purposes of God. It is not His way in the world. He has deliberately entered into battle with Satan, choosing poor feeble instruments like ourselves to confound the forces confronted against Him! And if He should withdraw His troops from the field, or come, Himself, to the front and take up the fight single-handed which His chosen legions could not conduct, it would look as if He had not wisely foreseen the engagement, or had needed to alter His plans to compass His ends! His Spirit can inspire inveterate feebleness with irresistible force. He can use means without miracles, or He can work wonders without wantonness. His first act foretold auspiciously. The twelve Apostles, like a little compact square of grenadiers to fight against the foe, is no ill omen! It surely does not mean that the battle shall not end till the enemy has turned his back and fled! Moreover, He keeps on sending fresh battalions. He raises up new traps and, every now and then, when the battle seems to waver, He recruits the ranks and sends out new enlistments, strengthening the ranks that are thinned and harassing the enemy with His reserves. Courage, my Brothers and Sisters! There shall be revival after revival! There shall be reformation after reformation, shock of battle after shock of battle, and the dread artillery of Gods great Gospel shall be fired off against the hosts of Hell! The gods of the heathen shall fall. Antichrist shall be overthrown! Babylon shall sink, like a millstone, in the flood. The crescent of Mohamed must wane into eternal darkness! Israel shall behold her King, and the fullness of the Gentiles shall be gathered at His feet. So let our faith excite our courage, our courage stimulate our patience and our patience give zest to the full assurance of hope while we worship our Lord Jesus Christ as the Light of the world!   
Thus have I carried out my design of amplifying on the four points that I propounded to you at the outset. Let me wind up with a personal questionSince Christ is the Light of the world, I would ask  
V. HOW ARE WE ACTING TOWARDS HIM?  
Do any of us shun the Light? I know some men slight the privileges they ought to prize. They do not want to know Him whose going forth is as the light of the morning when the sun rises. They never read the Bible, or search into the history, the prophecy and the promises. They do not like an earnest ministry. They have a sort of happy-go-lucky style of religionthey take in whatever anybody else tells themthey attend their place of worship as a matter of habit, and observe all the proprieties of fashion. But as to doing right or seeking the Light of God, they seldom or never give it a thought! They do not count it desirable. Too much of the Light of God could expose much that would not bear inspection. Dear Friend, if you are afraid of the Light of God, be suspicious of yourself, for it is deceit that dreads detection! Who are the people who like darkness rather than light? If it were put to a meeting of the inhabitants of London, who would vote for putting out the gas at night? Well, I guarantee you, every burglar would! Every murderer wouldand there are certain libertines who would rather like it. Every man that does evil hates the light! I do not mean to compare you with those gentlemen. Still, the saying is very comprehensive, He that does evil hates the light, neither comes to the light lest his deeds should be reproved. Of course, when some men sneer, we can appreciate their sensitiveness. The Doctrine of Christ does not suit the dissolute. Lax living never does lead up to an admiration of pure piety. What a price the profligate have to pay for their pleasures! Are you, my Friend, conscious of anything you need to conceal? Look closely at it. Recollect that you will have to look at it in that Great Day when the secrets of all hearts will be exposed. When Jesus comes to judge the world with righteousness and His people with equity, from the light of justice, from the heat of judgment, nothing whatever shall be hid! Be wise, therefore, to repent now of the evil, lest calamity reach you when there is none to commiserate.   
Do I see a curl of the lip, a shrug of the shoulder, a cynical expression of the countenance, as someone asks, Are we really, then, to regard the Christ you speak of, the Atonement you preach, the resurrection you are so confident about, as the Light of the present age, the Light of other agesin fact, the Light of the world? You put it well, my Friend, and you look well as you ask the question. It occurs to me that I might meet you in altered circumstances, when your tone would be altered likewise. Flesh is frail. Your eyes will not be always full of luster. Your spirits will not be always blithe and gay. Your health will not be always strong and vigorous. Not yet have you felt your need of the Light of God which has irradiated past ages, can enlighten this age and will shine with undiminished Glory in the everlasting age! Proud man, are you a philosopher or a politician? Are you a man of science, or a mere pretender? Know this, that in darkness you did enter this worldyears passed before you dreamed that life had a purpose and in darkness, still denseryou must make your exit, if, pleased with a fancy or enamored of a fallacy, you fail to see the Light that makes time and eternity resplendent! When we preach the Gospel purely and simply, we seem to be challenging the question on the part of some of you. To what purpose? The Light of God we propound, you do not need! How can I answer you? No arguments of mine will avail while you are blind to the perils you must meet with in traversing those unknown paths and untried experiences that lie before you! And as to the objections that any of you raise, let the man that takes objection to Gods counsel and spurns His kindness, answer for the rashness he will have to rue!

Petty scruples! Paltry excuses! They betray your insincerity! It is absurd to trifle when the outlook might well make you tremble to plead for yourselves. You will not put your cause in the hands of the Counselor. Hence the gloom that comes of your doubts! Hence the wretchedness of a sinners reflections on the Grace of his Redeemer! Do you quibble at the Light of God? Do you know the reason why? Well, I think it is for very much the same reason that made the Brahmin break the microscope. He thought it wicked to destroy life of any kind. He would not eat meat, or feed upon flesh, fish, or fowl, for anybody who destroyed life would destroy his own soul. Well, said a missionary, but you must do violence to your own conscience every time you drink, for the water you swallow teems with animalculeliving, moving creatures. Then he showed him a drop of water magnified by a microscope. The evidence was clear, but instead of yielding to conviction, the Brahmin was enraged at the instrument which worked the discovery, so he broke the microscope! In like manner, men despise and attempt to disprove the Gospel because it reveals Truths of God that are unwelcome. It explodes their traditions! It disparages their opinions, it debases their cherished tastes and so it destroys their peace of mind! It will not let them live comfortably in sin. The love of sin and superstition, a zeal for your clan and your craft, animate your opposition to malevolence and madness! I think I hear somebody say, I wish I could see it. Well, dear Friend, I wish I could credit your candor. The Light of God that streams from Christ is visible, but not to eyes that are shut! Not to hearts that are hardened! Not to consciences that are seared! Open your eyesit is all you have to do. Look, Sinner look and live! All around you is the Light of everlasting Love. Do but open those poor eyes of yours that unbelief has kept closed so long! O Lord, open the sinners eyes that he may now see! The Light of God is all around you, Brother! The Light is all around you, Sister! Others see it and rejoice. Only let your eyes be opened, and you shall hail the glorious orb which makes manifest all that is obscure and awful to your present apprehension!   
Have you seen the Light? Is there one who says? Well, thank God, I have seen that Light? Then, dear Brother, dear Sister, be grateful and give thanks! We are, none of us, as thankful as we ought to be for the Light that shines in the face of Jesus Christ. There was a custom on the Alps in the olden time, which, I fear, has dropped into disuse. Someone was appointed to stand upon the topmost Alp with a great cow horn, and as soon as he beheld the rising of the sun, with a loud blast he gave notice. From peak to peak of the Alps might then be heard, in those good old days, a Psalm of praise! Oh, you happy souls that have beheld the rising of the Sun of Righteousness, tell it forth with trumpet tongue! Well may a thousand voices take up His praise! Blessed be the name of Jesus! Forever be His name adored! Magnify His Grace for the Light that shines, for the goodness it diffusesfor the joy, the abounding joy, it awakens on every side!   
And now, Brothers and Sisters, let gratitude and benevolence prompt your zeal to spread the Light, to reflect it all around, near and far! I am very anxious that all the members of this Church should endeavor to disseminate the Light of the knowledge of Christ which has shone in their own hearts. I pray you, Brothers and Sisters, do not get cold, formal, or indifferent. The Truth of God you have believed through Grace is a precious trust committed to your charge. You have been a praying people, and you are still soblessed be Gods name. Do not forsake the Prayer Meetingsfrequent them regularly and conspire together to make them still more full of life and energy. I have been known to say with honest gratitude that most, if not all, the members in fellowship with us were actually engaged in some work for Jesus. Is it so now? Are you all interested and occupied in telling and teaching the good news and the great lessons of the Gospel? We have no notion of leaving to pastors the whole work of the Christian ministry in which every faithful disciple should take earnest part. One man, alone, perhaps, may preach to such a throng as this, but if we are to have preaching everywhere, you must all preach by word and deed to circulate the heavenly wisdom in every sphere of earthly resort!   
Oh, my Sisters and my Brothers, the best of all preaching, because the most simple and unostentatious, is to be found in the ordinary communion you hold with your fellow creatures when, with a good conversation, you avail yourselves of all the occurrences and opportunities of daily life! In your families the sweetness of your temper, the gentleness of your manners and the purity of your actions should bear witness that you have been with Jesus and learned of Him. The integrity of your business habits should speak for the sanctity of your morals and commend the school in which you have been trained. Your character must be clear, or the utterance of your lips will be despised. Then an outspoken testimony will take hold of mens hearts. Tell your children, your brothers, your sisters, and your intimate friends the way to Jesus! Tell the strangers who sit by your side, if you can, something of your own sweet experience of the Light of God that there is in Jesus! God has recently taken away some of our best workers, as you know. Oh, Brothers and Sisters, make up for the loss of one of the best of men, long known as a deacon and Elder in our midst, who is now laid asidehis health departed, his strength prostrate. Oh, Sisters, try to make up by double energy for the loss of that good Sister who was a mother among you all! Oh, let us all see to it that there are no gaps in the ranks of Christs army which are not quickly filled up with fresh recruits! If there should happen to be a vacancy, and the man has fallen who stood next to me, I will try, by Gods strength, to fight with both hands at this time till some other shall step up to take his place. Since Christ is our Light and He has ordained us to be lights in the world, let us shine to the utmost of our capacity until the Master shall take us to dwell with Him in the Light of God forever! Amen.

Adapted from the C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Version 1.0, Ages Software.   
PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #1165 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

THE CHRISTIANS MOTTO   
NO. 1165

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, MARCH 22, 1874, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**I always do those things that please Him.   
John 8:29.**

OUR Lord Jesus stood alone as the Advocate of right and truth in the days when He dwelt among men. It is true He had a few followers, but they were so slow to learn and so weak in action that they rather increased His difficulties than rendered Him assistance. He was a solitary Champion in the midst of armies of foes. Those foes were powerful, cunning, cruel and exceedingly active, yet He was calm, unmoved and faced them without fear. He was never put to the blush by them and never turned His back in retreat. Our Lord was victorious all through the campaign of His ministry. I may say of Him that He went forth conquering and to conquerand on the Cross He gained His crowning victory!

Since you, also, will meet with enemies, would you learn to be as calm as He? Since difficulties must beset your pathway, would you possess the same strength as He? Would you, in fact, live as He lived, and, finishing your course, would you enter into His joy? Then study well the records of His sublime career and you will see that the secret of His power was the Presence of His GodHe that sent Me is with Me. And the secret of His comfort was fellowship with JehovahHe has not left Me alone. If you would know how you can enjoy the Presence and fellowship of the Lord and all the power and comfort which come thereby, the Savior tells you the secret in the following wordsFor I always do those things that please Him.

If we would have God with us, we must be agreed with Him. Shall two walk together unless they are agreed? Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said, He that has My commandments and keeps them, he it is that loves Me, and he that loves Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him and will manifest Myself to him (John 14:21). To do the things which please God is the way to secure His Presence and consequent power and happiness. I shall, at this time, endeavor to set forth the Savior before you all under two aspectsas the Mediator, in which office we delight to trust Him, and as the Model, in which Character we endeavor to imitate Him. May the Holy Spirit so illuminate our minds that under both aspects our souls may be greatly blessed as we gaze upon our Lord.

I. First, then, as THE MEDIATOR. He says of Himself, as God-Man, the appointed Redeemer, the sent Son of God, I always do those things that please Him. This was and is true of our Lord every way. Of His Incarnation we read those memorable wordsLo, I come: in the volume of the Book it is written of Me, I delight to do Your will, O My God: yes, Your Law is within My heart. In the same Psalm He describes Himself as a servant whose ears had been opened or bored that He might be a servant forever.

And in another place He says, He wakens morning by morning; He wakens My ear to hear as the learned. The Son of God was willing to come to earth to do His Fathers will and His birth at Bethlehem was one of the points in which He pleased the Father.

He was also doing the things which pleased the Father during His obscure life as the carpenters Son. We know but little of it, and it is vain, by pencil or tongue, to attempt to paint what Scripture has left beneath the veil of silence. But we know this much of it, that He was about His Fathers business and that He grew in favor with God and man. He was the holy Child Jesus, and therefore must have done the things which pleased God. At the end of His retirement, when He came forth at 30 years of age, the Father set the seal upon the past as well as bore witness to the present when He spoke with an

audible voice from the excellent Glory, and said, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

His subjection to His earthly parents and His reverent silence till the hour was come to speak were things which pleased the Father. When He entered upon His public and active service He began well, for He commenced, by an act of which He said, Thus it becomes us to fulfill all righteousness. It was at His Baptism that the Father expressed His pleasure in Him and the Spirit descended upon Him. His Baptism was an emblem and a type of the perfect obedience which He intended to renderit set forth His immersion into depths of suffering, His sinking in death and burial, His rising again from the tomband His ascension into Heaven for us. Doubtless, all these are to be seen by the spiritual eye in the symbolic rite practiced in Jordans waves. Blessed are they who follow the Lamb where ever He goes!

Immediately after this our Lord was led by the Spirit into the wilderness where He was tempted of the devil. His going there and His threefold victory over the Tempter were well-pleasing to God. Did not Jehovah send His angels to minister to Him? And what was this but a token that He had pleased God by defeating the arch-enemy? Throughout His life our Lord was always acceptable to God and fulfilled in very deed that ancient Word of the Prophet Isaiah, in his 42nd chapter, at the 21st verse, in which he spoke and said, The Lord is well-pleased for His righteousness sake; He will magnify the Law and make it honorable.

He magnified the ceremonial Law by coming under it and observing it until the time when it passed away. He magnified the moral Law, for He obeyed every preceptboth of the first and of the second tableand could say to all His accusers, Which of you convicts Me of sin? He was perfect in all His ways! There is not one action upon which a question can be raised by any candid observer as to the exactness of its justice and its full conformity to the perfect law of right and love. He always did the things which pleased God and He had Gods attestation of thisfor though the splendor of His Godhead was veiled when He dwelt here, yet gleams of it burst forth here and thereas if the Father would let men know that the lowly Mediator was still great with God.

See Him on Tabor where He was transfigured and you see how the Father loved Him! It was the Man Christ Jesus who there talked with Moses and Elijah, while Peter, James and John were eyewitnesses of His majestyof which Peter has writtenFor He received from God the Father honor and glory, when there came such a voice to Him from the excellent glory, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from Heaven we heard, when we were with Him in the holy mount. It is clear, then, that the Glory of our Lord was looked upon by the Apostles as a token of the Fathers love to Him. Listen, also, to that Voice which answered Him out of Heaven when He prayed, Father, glorify Your name. Then came there a Voice from Heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.

The miracles, also, proved His acceptableness with God, for they were not only evidences of His own power, but tokens of His Fathers good pleasure. And therefore, Peter, in his famous sermon spoke in this fashion, Jesus of Nazareth, a Man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by Him in the midst of you, as you yourselves also know. Everywhere the Father gave forth signs that He had not left Him alone, but was with Him, because He did His will. As a servant, for our sakes, He pleased not Himself, but suffered the zeal of His Fathers house to eat Him up. From the first day in which He spoke to John at the Jordan, to the day in which He was taken up into His Glory, He always did the things that pleased God.

His death, which was His own voluntary act, was the most pleasing of all, if there could be degrees where all was perfect. He was, indeed, allpleasing to the Father when rising up from supper He said, Let us go hence, and He went without a murmur to be obedient to death, even the death of the Cross. That bloody sweat in Gethsemane, when He conquered Natures fears and took the cup of trembling, saying, Not as I will, but as You willwas not that the doing of the things which pleased God? Do you not remember that notable saying of the Prophet, It pleased the Father to bruise Him? There was a Divine satisfaction given to the Father in the willing, the submissive, the believing, the triumphant pangs of Jesus!

On Calvary He was pressed with grief beyond measure, yet He did not fail to bear all the pleasure of the Lord in silent submissiona submission which must have greatly pleased the Lord. On the Cross He was tried as gold in the furnace, but no dross was found in Him. On the accursed tree the stress of the worlds sin lay on Him and yet He did not wish to depart from the enterprise which He had undertaken till He had been obedient to the Father and accomplished all His will, even to the endurance of death itself! He always did the things which pleased God.

Having already made the text encompass parts of our Lords work which were subsequent to the time when He uttered it, I shall push on yet further, for I have facts beneath my feet and I would remind you that our Lord still always does those things that please God. It pleased God that He should ascend and sit at His right hand. It pleased God that there He should be our forerunner, preparing our heavenly mansions for us. He is accepted, we know, for we, also, are accepted in the Beloved. It is the Fathers good pleasure to give us the kingdom and therefore it is His pleasure that our Divine Representative should take the kingdom on our behalf. The intercession of Jesus, also, is always sweet with God. The Father always hears Himand hears us, also, when we plead His name.

And when He shall, so come in like manner as He went up to Heaven. When He shall, take to Himself His great power and reign, and when on the clouds of Heaven He shall appear to judge the quick and dead, He will still always do the things which please God. Yes, let me say it joyfully, the saving works of Jesus are lovely in the Fathers eyes! Whenever our Lord Jesus says to a sinner, I absolve you, it pleases God. Whenever the Savior calls a wanderer to Himself and draws Him to holiness by the attractions of His love, it pleases God. What else is meant by the passage, The pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand. He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied?

It is the pleasure of God that sinners should find a complete Savior in Jesus. The Father has no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but had rather that he should turn unto Him and live, but there is joy in the heart of God Himself over sinners that repent. Sheep brought back to the fold are rejoiced over by Him of whom we sing, We are the people of His pasture and the sheep of His hand. Prodigals leaving their riotous living are pressed to the Fathers bosom and cause pleasure to the soul of the benign Deity. Oh, returning Sinners, you have not to ask Christ to appease the Father, for the Father, Himself, loves you and your salvation gives Him joy!

As for the benefit which Christ bestows upon saints, the matchless blessings which He has received as gifts for men, and scatters among His peoplethese all please the Father. It pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell, and it pleases Him when of His fullness we receive Grace for Grace. Oh, Brothers and Sisters, if you are rich in Divine Grace, you are not rich with gifts which the Father grudges! And if you shall ask for more, it is your Fathers good pleasure that you should have them! Receive them freely, for He freely gives! Delight yourself in them, for the Father delights to see you partaking of His Sons abundance! Be of good courage, Sinners, when you come with empty hands. And be of good courage, you impoverished Saints, when you come with hungry mouths, for Jesus Christ, in giving freely, will only do what pleases the Father!

I feel greatly comforted by this text when I think that whatever Christ has done and is doing pleases God. The Gospel, which is the sum and substance of the doings of Jesus, is always acceptable with God. It is a sweet savor unto God in every place. It delights the Father that Jesus Christ should be preached. I have often thought, when I have been extolling my Lord and Master, Well, if not a soul in the place yields itself to Jesus, nevertheless, thanks be unto God who always causes us triumph in every place, for we are unto God a sweet savor, as well in them that perish as in them that are saved! If Christ is preached, a sweet oblation is presentedsweeter than the incense of Arabyand it delights the Most High more than costly frankincense. As of old He smelled a sweet savor of rest when Noah brought the victim and laid it on the altar, so when Christ is lifted up, God takes pleasure in Him, and delights when men glorify His Son.

Thus I have spoken very feebly about our Lord Jesus as the Mediator. No man nor angel can fitly set Him forthHe is too fair, too perfect for description. Earth cannot show His rival nor Heaven His equal! He is good and only good! All glory to His name! He has glorified the Father and He can say to the fullest, I always do those things that please Him.

II. Now, Brothers and Sisters, we have stern work to do. We have not merely to look, but we have to be transformed as we look. We are now to behold our Lord as THE MODEL and to copy His example. Truly we shall need the Spirit of God to hold our hand or we shall never write according to such a Copy as He has set us. It is the business of every Christian to be able to say, I always do those things which please Him. Come, Believers, and lovingly muse upon our Lord Jesus as our Model!

Here at the outset let me remind you that this will imply that we, ourselves, are rendered pleasing to God. Remember that as long as a man, himself, is obnoxious to God, everything he does is also obnoxious. From a sinner comes nothing but sinan evil tree brings forth evil fruita foul fountain pours forth polluted waters. It is vain, therefore, to think, any one of you, that you can do anything that is pleasing to God till, first of all, you, yourselves, are reconciled unto Him. The way of reconciliation is only by Jesus Christ. When your persons are pleasing, your works will be pleasing. But until you are personally acceptable to God through Jesus Christ everything that you do is displeasingand even those things which you

think to be virtues are only, as Augustine called themsplendid sins, mere glittering dross, lacking the essential purity and preciousness of the pure gold of love.

Paul says, They that are in the flesh cannot please God. And again He says, Without faith it is impossible to please Himimpossiblewhatever is thought, attempted, or done by you! Even acts of religion are only pretentious forms of sin until the nature is renewed, the heart changed, and the man, himself, washed in the blood of Christ and covered with His righteousness. Therefore, I shall have to speak entirely and only to those who have been, by the redemption and righteousness of Christ, made pleasing to God. And I hope that they, having obtained the major blessing of personal acceptance, will press forward for the further blessing of sanctification, that they may always do the things which please their gracious God.

In pleasing God there is implied an avoiding of all things which would displease Him. We cannot say we, always do the things which please Him unless we earnestly renounce the follies which vex His Holy Spirit. Now, you know what the works of the flesh are, and those, as defiled garments, are to be put off that we may go in unto the wedding in the new garment. Like leaven they are to be swept out of the house that we may keep the paschal feast. We must put off and lay aside all pride, whether it is the pride of talent, the pride of self-righteousness, the pride of wealth, the pride of dress, the pride of rank, or the pride of spiritual attainmentsfor even a haughty word is detestable with God. Among the things which the Lord hates we find prominently mentioned a proud look. If a proud look is His abomination, what must pride, itself, be?

It is written, The Lord resists the proud. This implies that their views and designs are contrary to His own and He sets Himself to oppose them. He carries on continual war with Pharaohs and Senacherib. The moment He sees a man great in his own esteem He resolves to bring him down, as He did the boastful monarch of Babylon. He lifts up those that are bowed down, but He casts down the mighty from their seats. If we are proud, we cannot do that which pleases God. In fact, we cannot please Him at all. Sloth is another vice which the Lord abhors. He calls the idle servant in the parable, You wicked and slothful servant. He that knows his masters will and does it not, the same shall be beaten with many stripes. He that knows to do good and does it not, to him it is sin.

God is not pleased with those who are idle, wasters of their talents and their time, even though they may plead that they are gentle folks and have no need to labor. An idle nobleman is as much to be blamed as an idle farmer. Christians, if you always do the things that please God, you must be diligent servantsHe takes no delight in sluggards and those who are lovers of ease. God is not pleased with unwatchfulness, careless walking, indifference to His commands, or neglect of cleansing the heart. Those virgins who were not thoughtful, forgot to take oil in their vessels with their lamps, and, in consequence, their lamps went out and they could not enter the marriage feast with the bride. Beloved, you must walk carefully, earnestly, zealously with God, or you cannot please Him. He is a Jealous God and we must jealously watch even our thoughts, or we shall soon offend Him.

Neither is He pleased with anger, which is not only, as far as we are concerned, a temporary insanity, but as God judges it, it is murder! He that is of a quick and hasty spirit. He that bears ill will against another. He that seeks revenge is not acceptable with God. To a God of Love, malice is abominable! He would have us do good as He does and spread happiness all around as He does. Cross, crabbed, morose natures do not please the Lord! Unkind husbands, fractious wives, rebellious children and domineering parents are far from pleasing Him. God cannot smile upon oppression, craftiness, greed, or the grinding of the poor. Neither is covetousness, which is idolatry, pleasing with God. He that is covetous, angers the great Giver of all good, whose liberal soul cannot endure churls and misers.

The same is true of all worldliness. The lust of the eyes. The lust of the flesh. The pride of lifethese are things which God condemns. In them He has no pleasure whatever. O you Believers, I pray you purge yourselves of all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit! And as for the deeds of darkness, have no fellowship with them, but rather reprove them! Come out from among them, be you separate, touch not the unclean thing and then you will please your heavenly Father. God is equally displeased with unbelief. Doubts of His power, His love, His faithfulness. Trembling lest He should not keep His promise, lest, after all, His Word should failthis is not pleasing in His sight!

Neither is it pleasing to Him that good men should be cumbered with much serving and should complain of the labor of His serviceHe would not have His servants think Him a hard Master. Brothers and Sisters, He would have us serve Him with joyfulness! Free from care because we cast our care upon Him! Free from fear because we wholly confide in Him. Above all, He would have us free from murmuringNeither murmur you as they also murmured, who were destroyed of the Destroyer. His dear Son was free from everything of this kind. And as He was, so are you, also, in this worldtherefore closely copy Him and lay aside all these evil things by the help of His Holy Spirit.

Here is the place to say that it should be our intent and earnest design to please the Lord. We shall not do this by accidentwe must give our whole souls to the work and labor mightily. No arrow reaches this target if the bow is drawn at a venturethe heart must aim with earnest intent and vehement desire. May the Holy Spirit work in us to will after this fashionand then in due time we shall be sure that He will work in us, also, to do of His good pleasure. We will continue the same strain but touch another key. Remark attentively that the text does not deal with negatives, though it implies them. Christ did not say, I do not the things which displease Him, but He said, I always do those things that please Him.

The sentence is positive and practical, relating to actual deeds and not to negatives. We must copy our Master in all the practical virtuesand what a Model He is! What a pattern He has set before us! Brethren, what was the most conspicuous thing in the life of Christ? I cannot tell you everything is so conspicuously admirable! There is a harmony, a blending of every virtue in the life of Christ so that you can scarcely put your finger upon one thing and say, This was superior to the rest. But if there is some excellent things more marked than others, one of them is prayerfulness! How continually do we read, as He was praying, or, as He was praying in a certain place, or, every man went to his own home, and Jesus went to the Mount of Olives.

We are told that He spent whole nights in prayer upon the mountain sideHe was always in communion with God. For God to speak out of Heaven to Him was not a strange thing, for Christ was always speaking up into Heaven to His God. Be you such! It cannot please the great Father for His child not to speak to Him by the hour together, and to be indifferent to Himto give Him no word, either of request or of thanksgiving. Alas, I fear some professors seldom speak with their heavenly Father in spirit and in truth! If we fail here, we certainly fail in one of the things which please Him. Next in Christs life, one of the more prominent qualities was His loveHis love to God. We ought to love God with all our hearts and spend and be spent for His Glory. It must be our meat and drink to do the will of Him that sent us, and to finish His work if we are to do the things which please Him.

But our great Exemplar also showed the warmest love to men. How He pitied the fallen! With what tenderness He spoke to sinners! How gently did He warn! How sweetly did He woo! Brethren, we must be gentle, too. That which is hard and domineering savors more of the princes of the Gentiles than of the lowly Lambwe must put it away. Like our Master and Lord, we must wash the disciples feet and bear one anothers burdens. Gently, kindly, tenderly, we must labor for the good of all and not consider ourselves. This is to do the things which please God. If we would follow Christ, we must practice self-denial, for He pleased not Himself.

It should be said of us as of Him, He saved others, Himself He cannot save.

Did you ever, in anything, find Christ making provision for Himself? Can you discern a speck of selfishness in His Nature? There is a crown before Him, but He will not have ityet He longs to see us crowned! What does He care about being made a king? His joy is that the Lord reigns! He felt it better to obey His Father than to sit on a Throne. Oh that we might catch His spirit! The life of Christ is peculiar, too, from its separateness from sinners. He was with sinnersHe ate and drank with them. He went to their marriage feasts and sat at their banquetsbut He was as distinct from them as the sun from the ash-heap upon which it shines. He was outside the camp in Spirit, even when He was in it in Person. He bore reproach all His life and last of all bore it up to Calvary. We, too, must be different from other mennot conformed to this worldbut transformed by the renewing of our minds.

It is folly to be singular except when to be singular is to be rightand then we must be bravely singular for Christs sake. And in the lonely path of holy nonconformity we shall find Jesus more near than ever we knew Him to be in the whole course of our lives! I cannot enlarge here. The picture is so beautiful that merely to dwell upon a touch or two of the pencil is to give you no idea of the matchless perfection of the work. Be as He was! Copy Him as disciples should copy their Master! Furthermore, my dear Brothers and Sisters, if you want to know what things please God, let me refer you to one or two passages of Scripture. David says in the 69

th Psalm, the 30th verse, I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify Him with thanksgiving. This, also, shall please the Lord better than an ox or bullock that has horns and hoofs.

The Apostle says in Hebrews 13:16, But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased. Let us, then, constantly praise God! Let us have hymns in store for moments when we can sing and thoughts in store for moments when the tongue must be silentbut when the heart may yet sing aloud unto the Most High. Bless the Lord, for whoever offers praise glorifies Him. A thankful spirit is always pleasing to God. Therefore cultivate it and shake off, as you would shake off a viper from your hand, the spirit of murmuring against the Most High! Yonder thankful, humble, poor woman may please God better than the most talented minister who is evermore complaining of the dispensations of God.

John tells us in his first Epistle, third chapter and 22nd verse, that we are to do those things that are pleasing in His sight, and he adds, This is His commandment, that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another. Faith, therefore, is one of the pleasing Graces. We read of Enoch that, before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God. But without faith it is impossible to please Him. Love to the Brethren is another of the Graces which please God. He would have us love His people, care for the poor, relieve those that are sick and cheer those who are cast down. Brethren, if you would please the Lord, put aside all petty jealousies and labor to prevent disunion, for brotherly love is one of the most pleasing sights which the Father of mercies sees. It is as the dew of Hermon, as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion, for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore.

Read, furthermore, in Colossians the first chapter, from the 10th verse, a long list of excellences. That you might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God, strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness; giving thanks unto the Father, which has made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. So you see, you sufferers, your resignation to the Divine will, your patience under a smarting rodthese are all well-pleasing to God! And these and all the other Graces of the Spirit are the things, which, through Jesus Christ, are pleasing in His sight.

Now, note particularly this, that these things must be actually done. I DO, says Christ, those things which are pleasing. It will not suffice to talk about them, nor to even pray about themthey must be done. Do not merely feel charmed with a virtue, and fascinated with a dutybut go and actually carry it out. Let not the purpose be strangled in its birth, but let it be born into actual being. There is a word in the text which is a hard one to put in practicealways,I always do those things that please Him. It will not suffice to say, I do the things that please God when I go out to worship. I hope you do, but the Christian must aim to say, I always do.

At home, Husband, there must be such a discharge of your relationship, that as a husband and as a father you please God. My good Sister, it must be as a wife and a mother that you please God. In all those relationships, at all times, you must act as in His sight. True religion is perhaps better tested at the fireside than anywhere else. What a man is at home, that he is, and though he is a saint abroad, if he is a devil at homeyou may depend upon it that the last is his real character! At the same time, we must not think that our religion ends at home. I do not suppose we shall, but if we do we are mistakenwe must always do the things that please the Lord.

There must not be, at any moment about our Christian career, anything we should not like God to see, for He does see. Neither must we be where we would not like Christ to find us. Neither must we even think as we would not have Jesus know that we think. This is a high standard, but our Lord Jesus Christ sets it before us, and it is not for us to alter the pattern which He has givenI always do, He saysthe things that please Him. Are there not many things, dear Friends, which you have done in former times which you will not do again now you have been reminded of your failings? There are many things which certain Christian people leave undone, which they will attend to at once if they realize the full meaning of this textI always do the things that please Him. Always!

I have known some persons take a holiday from Christs service sometimes. They say, Once a year, surely, one may indulge. What would you do if you might be indulged? Because whatever you would do if you had your own way is the best test of your heart. If holiness is slavery, then

depend upon it, you are the slave of sin! When I have heard of Christian men attending doubtful amusements as an occasional treat, I have seen at once which way their hearts wentthey evidently loved the pleasures of sense better than spiritual joys. Where either a mans pleasure or treasure is, there his heart isand whatever gives you the most pleasure is really your god. To be flattered is the greatest delight of manytheir god is themselves. To make money is my greatest delight, says one. Then the golden calf is your god. Whatever is your greatest joy and treasure, that is your heaven and your Godand if you do not find the greatest pleasure in the things of God, then you do not know what the new life meansand neither will you ever know the pleasures which are at Gods right hand!

Dear Brothers and Sisters, I beseech all of you to notice that by always doing the things which please God, the Holy Spirit enabling us to do so, we shall enjoy and retain the Presence of the Father. He that sent Me is with Me, He has not left Me alone, for I always do those things which please Him. Do you complain that you do not enjoy fellowship with God? Do you tell me that the joys of religion have not been yours for many a day? Do you come with long faces and complain that you find the way to Heaven very rough? God has a controversy with your soulsthere is some hidden evil withinor some evil habit which does not please Him.

Is not that hint of mine enough for you without my pressing it? Does not your tender conscience say, I will examine myself. I will ask God to search me, and I will solemnly promise to Him

*The dearest idol I have known,   
Whateer that idol be   
Shall now be dashed from off its throne   
That I may come to Thee.*

Let no pleasurable sin become an image of jealousy to provoke the Lord our God! As you love the Lord, and I know you doas you would not grieve your crucified Master, ask Him to search you and see if there is any evil way in you and deliver you from itthat you may always do the things which are pleasing in His sight. Furthermore, by so doing, we shall not only have communion with God, but we shall be girded with His strength. He that sent Me is with Me.

What is the reason why some workers for God do not succeed? They cannot succeedit is not possiblefor they are in an evil case. Here is a man trying to build a wall with a broken arm. He makes slow progress, for he can hardly lift a brick into its place. Here is another man trying to run a race while he is lame in his feethe will be far behind when the winner passes the goal. Here is a man trying to leap whose every muscle is weakhe would be more at home in an infirmary. Personal spiritual health is essential to vigorous, successful, Christian effort! And that health depends upon our living near to God. If we do that which is pleasing in Gods sight the Lord will be with us in our workbut only if we strive to always do what pleases Him.

Suppose a minister to have been living through the week a careless, prayerless lifehe may preach his best, but as he is not a vessel fit for the Masters usehe may not reckon upon being used by the Lord. If the Sunday school teacher goes to her class after indulging in light conversation or in an angry temperis there any wonder that souls are not converted by her teaching? If the city missionary does not find souls blessed in his district, need he wonder, when upon looking within he sees a cold heartand upon looking without he sees a negligent life? A mother wonders that her children are not saved and yet it would be a far greater wonder if they were, when her general conduct and spirit are taken into consideration!

A father has been astonished that his boys have not turned out Christians, while everyone except himself can see that it would have been a thousand miracles if they had become religious, for their fathers religion is of that sour, melancholy, rigid, frigid, unlovely type that you could not suppose anybody could like unless they had a partiality for sour grapes and bitter aloes. We must get rid of the things that displease God if we are to be useful! And when that is done, then shall we be able to say, He that sent Me is with Me; the Father has not left Me alone.

Now I close, and closing I ask youis this too high a Model for you? Would you prefer an example which would let you abide content in a measure of sin? I hear many say, I love Christ, but their love does not make them imitate the Lord! I fear that they do not know Him and if they did, they would not love Him, but would think Him a deal too precise and self-denying. There is such a thing as loving a Christ of our imagination not the Christ of the New Testament whose Character is absolute perfection. Do you love the holy Jesus? If you do, then I am sure you do not think His Character too elevated, or His example too pure. No, you say, Lord, I love this holy living, I only wish I could, in all things, copy it. Oh, for more holiness! Grant it to me!

Do you think it is impossible to act as Jesus did? Then I must ask you another questionDo you think the Holy Spirit has not yet come, or do you conceive that the Holy Spirit is deficient in powerso that He can only lead men up to a certain point and must, there, necessarily cease working? Do you not believe that all things are possible with Him? Do you not believe that all things are possible to Him that believe? I grant you that men do not live as my text requires and that the most of professors do not even

try to do sobut the fault is in themselvesnot in the Holy Spirit! He is able to do exceeding abundantly above what we ask or even think!

Somebody asked me the other day whether I thought Christians could be quite perfect, and, I have no doubt, expected a long pompous speech from me! But I cut him short, for my secret thought was, Well, you are a fine fellow to be asking such a question, for there is no danger of your coming anywhere near that condition. That question from most men is about as consistent as if a beggar should come to my door for bread and then request to see me. I go to the door, and he says, Sir, I have a very difficult question to put to youdo you think every man in England might make his fortune and be worth a million of money? What a question for a man in rags to agitate! Surely he might put off that inquiry till he is worth two pence, himself, and can pay for his nights lodging. I say to him, My good fellow, you are not at all in danger of becoming too rich, and have no need to raise questions about millions. Get out of your rags and make

yourself commonly decent before you puzzle your head over that.

It is too early for most professors to be discussing the higher life and entire sanctification. They are like babies taking the measure of giants. I am sick of seeing a set of beggarly professors whose poverty of Divine Grace is manifest to everybody but themselves, shaking their heads at those good Brothers who preach up a high standard of Grace. They need be under no alarm about growing too devout, too prayerful, or too holy! They may go a long way before they will be mistaken for perfect! I do not believe in a great deal which our modern perfectionists say about themselvesand I should think a deal more of them if they thought less of themselvesbut at the same time I labor under no dread as to any of them becoming too good. Nor dare I set up a lower object of sanctified aspiration than that which Jesus has set before us in the command, Be you perfect, even as your Father in Heaven is perfect.

Have you failed to do as the text says? Then grieve over it! Do you wish to do as Jesus did? Then He will help you, for He works mightily with us. Commit yourself unto His teaching. Give yourself up to the purifying power of His Spirit, and He will bear you up to heights of Divine Grace and glories of character which you have never thought you could reachbut which, when you reach them, will not puff you upfor you will feel constrained to cry, Not unto us, not unto us, but unto Your name give praise!

If we have done all, we are unprofitable servantswe have only done that which it was our duty to have doneand therefore unto Grace shall be the praise through the precious blood of Christ, forever and ever. Amen.

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BELIEVING ON JESUSAND ITS COUNTERFEITS   
NO. 2191

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, FEBRUARY 22, 1891, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**As He spoke these words, many believed on Him. Then said Jesus to those Jews which had believed Him, If you continue in My Word, then are you My disciples, indeed;   
and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. John 8:30-32.**

Our Lord, on this occasion, was surrounded by quibblers. We must not be astonished if the like should happen to us when declaring the Gospel. Our Lord went on preaching, all the same, and He did not conceal objectionable Truth because of oppositionsay, rather, that He set it forth with greater boldness and decision when surrounded by His enemies! The more they opposed, the more He testified.

The Lord Jesus also told the contradicting sinners that the day would come when quibblers would be convicted. Observe how He put itWhen you have lifted up the Son of Man, then shall you know that I am He, and that I do nothing of Myself. Quibblers may have a fine time of it just now, but they will, one day, be convicted either to their conversion or their confusion! Let us hope that many will see the Truth before they dieearly enough to seek and find a Savior. But many in our Lords day who discovered it after His uplifting on the Cross and His uplifting from the grave, came by their knowledge sadly late, for in the meantime they had crucified the Lord of Glory. Ah, how much of sin comes out of delayed faith! A far greater number of these Jews were convicted in their minds altogether too late, for when they were driven to feel, by the attendant circumstances of His Crucifixion and Resurrection, that He really was the Son of God, they still persevered in rebellion and sank into obstinate rejection of His claims. On such His blood rested to their eternal condemnation. Quibblers, you may riot for a little season, but your time is short! The hour will come when you shall behold and wonderand perish. I pray that there may come an end to your unbelief by your being convicted in this life and led to repentance. But if it is not so, you will certainly be ashamed and confounded in the day when the Lord shall come in His Glory and you shall, in vain, beseech the mountains to fall upon you and hide you from His face!

Quibblers ought to be convinced even nowthe Savior implies this when He adds, He that sent Me is with Me: the Father has not left Me alone; for I always do those things that please Him. The Character of Jesus should have convinced the Jews of His mission. His evident obedience to God and the equally evident witness of God to Him, would have led them to see His Messiahship if they had not been blinded by prejudice and pride. Any candid man at the present day, studying the life of Christ and observing His unique Character, should be convinced that He is the Son of Godand should come to believe in Him.

But, Beloved, though the Savior was thus surrounded with objectors and had so much to endure from their ignorance and their malice, yet His controversies with them were not without hopeful effects, for our text informs us, As He spoke these words, many believed on Him. Albeit we may be surrounded with general and virulent opposition, yet there will be fruit from the preaching of the Truth of God. The Word of the Lord shall not return unto Him voidit shall prosper in the thing whereto God has sent it. We may hope that not only a few, but many will accept the sacred testimony, since we see that, even in the midst of an exceedingly hot dispute, it happened that, As He spoke these words, many believed on Him.

I. These Believers were not all of one kind and upon that fact I shall enlarge in this beginning of my sermon. Let that stand as our first observation upon the textOUR LORD HAD DIFFERENT KINDS OF BELIEVERS AROUND HIM. There were evidently two sorts of Believers who may be set forth to you by the differing expressions used in the Revised Version. We read in verse thirty, Many believed on Him. And then in the 31st verse we read of those Jews which had believed Him. Mark the distinction between, believed on Him and, had believed Him. It is a singular expression, also, Those Jews which had believed Him. They were still Jews as to their traditional belief and connectionJews first of all whatever they might be in connection with their Judaism. The omission of the word, on, or, in, is a happy one, because it is exactly accurate, and it helps to bring out an important distinction while it also accounts for what seems so strange, that those who had believed Him should, almost immediately after, charge Him with being a Samaritan and having a devil, and should even take up stones to stone Him! There were two sorts of Believers and on these I will speak a while.

The first, believed on Him. These are the right kind. What is it to believe on Christ? It means not only to accept what He says as true and to believe that He is the Messiah and the Son of God, but trustfully to rest in Him. To believe on Him is to take Him as the ground of our hope, as our Savior, upon whom we depend for salvation. When we believe in Him or on Him, we accept Him as God sets Him forthand we make use of Him by trusting on Him to do for us what God has appointed Him to do. This trusting on Jesus is saving faith! As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name. He that believes on the Son has everlasting life. To believe Him may be a very different thing from believing on Him. Such belief may fall far short of saving faith. To believe on Him means heartily to give yourself up to Him and to follow Him as the Way, the Truth and the Life to you. Rejecting all rival confidences, the heart leans all its weight on Jesus and leaves all its burdens with Him. Believing in Him, we repose all our concerns, for time and for eternity, in His hands.

To believe on Him is also to believe implicitly. We believe all that He may yet say. We accept not only what He says which we can fully understand, but that which as yet is dark to us. We so believe in Him that we go with Him in all His teachings, be they what they may. We not only go as far as He has revealed Himself to us, but we are prepared to go as much farther as He pleases. What He says is the Truth of God to us, on the sole evidence that He says it! We believe in Jesus, not because we judge that what He says can be endorsed by our understanding (though that is, indeed, the case), but because He says it! Our Lords Word is reason enough for us. The ipse dixit of the Son of God suffices us, even if all men deny His assertions. He has said it and He is the Truth of God, itself. We believe on HimSon of God and Son of Man, living, dying, risen again, ascended into the heavenswe trust Him. He is our Infallible Prophet and our Omniscient Teacher. We rest ourselves wholly on Him! That is saving faith. Oh, that it may be said of this congregation, Many believed on Him!

But there is another kind of faith which was produced by the Saviors testimony. It had much of hope in it and yet it never came to anything. There is a temporary faith which believes Jesus, in a sense, and after its own way of understanding Him, or rather of misunderstanding Him. This faith believes about Him; believes that He was undoubtedly sent of God; that He was a great Prophet; that what He says is, to a high degree, reasonable and right and so forth. This faith believes what He has just now said, but it is not prepared to believe on Him so as to accept everything that He may say at another time. This faith believes everything that commands itself to its own judgementit does not, in fact, believe in Jesus, but believes in itselfand in Him only so far as He agrees with its own opinions. This faith is not prepared to obey Christ and accept Him as its Master and Lord. This was the kind of faith these Jews possessedit was a faith which was so crowded up with a mass of favorite prejudices that before long it was smothered by them! They might accept Jesus as the Messiah, but then He must be the kind of Messiah they had always pictured in their own mindsa leader who would defeat the Romans, who would deliver Palestine from the foreign yoke, rebuild the Temple and glorify the Jewish race. They half hoped that He might turn out to be a great leader for their own purposes, but they did not believe in Him as He revealed Himself as the Light of the world, as the Son of God and as One with the Father.

A great deal of disbelief and misbelief is current at the present day. We are encouraged by certain persons to include in our churches all that have any sort of belief and, indeed, the line is to be more inclusive, still, for those who have no belief at all are to find an open door! The Church of Christ is to be a menagerie of creatures of every kind. I fear if they come into this Noahs ark, wild beasts, they will also go out wild beasts. Only those who enter by the door of regeneration and spiritual faith will, in very deed, be within the Kingdom of the Lord! If they have received Christ, we may receive them into His Church, but not else. It is true, the people of temporary faith will creep into the visible Church, but they do so on their own responsibility.

Nor need we think that some strange thing has happened to us as a Church when the baser sort are found among us, for one such entered into that college of Apostlesa man who, doubtless, believed the words of Jesus, and thought Him to be the Messiah. I mean Judas, who, with a traitors hand, sold his Master. His intellect had been convinced, but his heart had never been renewed. He even dared to use his profession of religion and the position which it brought him, as a means of unhallowed gain. Another notable believer of this sort was Simon Magus, who believed because he saw the signs and wonders worked by the Apostles. But as he, also, sought to make gain of godliness, he remained in the gall of bitterness and in the bonds of iniquityand never became a disciple, indeed. There is a greater one than all these, even the devils. We read that the devils believe and tremble. They hold the faith and feel something of the power of it, for they tremble which is more than modern critics do! Devils know that Jesus is the Christ of God, for they have, upon occasion, confessed it, and have borne witness to the Gospel in the open streets, crying after the preachers of the Word. And yet, with all their knowledge, and with much of a sort of faith, and with an apprehension which leads to trembling, they still remain devils and make no advance towards God.

Ah, my Hearers! Beware of that faith which is a mere intellectual movement, which does not control the heart and the life. To come to faith through a cold argument and to feel no spiritual life is but a poor business. You need a faith that leads you to an entire reliance upon the Person of Jesus, to the giving up of everything to Him, to the reception of Him as your Savior and King, your All in All. You have not believed unto eternal life unless you have so believed on Him that you make Him the foundation and cornerstone of your hope! You must believe in Him as taking away sin! God has set Him forth to be the Propitiation for sin and you must believe on Him in that capacity!

This will suffice upon our first headand this very naturally leads us to the second remark.   
II. OUR LORD TAKES NOTICE EVEN OF THE LOWEST SORT OF FAITH. When He saw that these people believed Him in a measure and were willing to accept His testimony so far as they comprehended it, He looked upon them hopefully and spoke to them. Out of a weak and imperfect faith, something better may arise. Saving faith, in its secret beginnings, may be contained in this common and doubtful faith. It is written, When the Son of Man comes, shall He find faith on the earth? Certainly He can find it if anyone can! He has a very quick eye for faith. He deals with little faith as we used to do with a spark in the tinder, in the days of our boyhood. When we had struck a spark and it fell into the tinder though it was a very tiny onewe watched it eagerly, we blew upon it softly and we were zealous to increase it, so that we might kindle our match thereby. When our Lord Jesus sees a tiny spark of faith in a mans heart, though it is quite insufficient, of itself, for salvation, yet He regards it with hope and watches over it, if, haply, this little faith may grow to something more. It is the way of our compassionate Lord not to quench the smoking flax, nor break the bruised reed. If any of you have only a little faith, now, and that marred by ignorance and prejudice, it may be like a connecting thread between you and Jesusand the thread may thicken to a cable. Your partial and feeble faith as yet only takes hold upon a part of the Revelation of God, but I am glad that it takes hold on anything which is from above! I would not roughly break that single holdfast which now links you to the Truth of Godand yet I would not have you trust to it as though it would stand the stress of tempest. Oh, that your faith may be increased till you trustfully commit yourself to Jesus and believe in Him unto eternal life!   
Our Lord addressed Himself especially to these questionable Believers. He turned from His assured disciples to look after those who were more in danger. Their character was a curious combinationfull of perilJews who believed Him. You that are familiar with the New Testament Scriptures will think the phrase more suggestive than it, at first sight, appears. It reminds me of those of you who believe the Gospel and still remain worldly, impenitent, prayerless. You fear the Lord and serve other gods! You are not infidels in name, but you are atheists in life! To you there is urgent need that I speak. The Master turned round and spoke to those who were Believers and yet not Believersholding with Jesusand yet really opposed to Him. Oh, you that halt between two opinions, my Lord looks on you with a pitying hopefulness and He speaks especially to you at this time! May you have Divine Grace to hear and obey His Word!   
It is clear that He encourages them, but He does not flatter them. He says, if. A great, if, hovered over them like a threatening cloud. Wisely does our Lord commence His word to them with, if. If you continue in My Word, then are you My disciples, indeed. Continuance is the sure test of the genuine Believer. Our Lord does not say, Go your way, you are not My disciples. He, in effect, says, I stand in doubt of you. The proof of your discipleship will be your persevering in your faith. If we say that we believe in Jesus, we must prove it by abiding in believing and by still further believing! The Word of Jesus must be the object of our faithinto that Word we must enterand in that Word we must continue. Beginning to believe is nothing unless we continue to believe!   
Our Lord showed His interest in the weaker sort of Believers by helping them on in the safe way, urging them to continue in His Word. You believe, He seems to say, continue to believe! Believe more. Believe all that I say. You have entered into My Worddive deeper into it and abide in it. Let My Word surround youdwell in itcontinue in it. Good advice this! And it is the advice I would give in my Masters name to any here who are feeling after Christ and His Gospel. As far as you have already come in faith, keep fast hold and seek for more! You are on the right track in believing Jesusa track which will lead to the Kings Highway if fairly followed. Any kind of faith is better than that deadly doubt which is cried up so much nowadays! By faith comes salvation, but by doubt comes the opposite! Your feeble and imperfect believing has in it much of hopefulness, but it must be continued, or we shall be disappointed. Your home and refuge must be the Word of the Lord Jesus and in that refuge you must abide!   
Believe what Jesus says in His New Testament of Love. Whatever you find that He reveals by Himself or by His Apostles, receive it without question! Hold fast His Word and let it hold you fast. First, believe Him, believe Him to be true, believe Him to be sent of God for your salvationand then put yourself into His hands. When you have committed yourself to Him, continue to do so. Do not run away from your faith because of ridicule. Mind that you so believe in Jesus as to practice what He commandsyou cannot continue in His Word unless you learn to obey it. The text of faith is obedience. What He bids you, do it. Let your life be affected by the Truth He teaches. Let your whole mind, thought, desire, speech, bearing and conversation be colored and savored by your full faith in Jesus! Enter into His Word as a man into a stream and live there as a fish in the water!   
Continue in My word. Get into Christs Word as a sinking sailor would get into a lifeboat and, once there, keep inside the boatdo not throw yourself out into the stormy waves through despairbut continue in the place of hope. This is Christs gracious counsel to those in whom there seems to be some hopeful sign.

My Hearers, we never preach the saving power of temporary, unpractical, unsanctifying faith! If a man says, I believe in Christ and, therefore, I shall be saved, his faith will have to be tested by his life. If, sometime after, he has no faith in Christ, that faith which he claimed to have is proven to be good for nothing! The faith of Gods elect is an abiding faith! It is precious faith and, like precious metal, it survives the fire! Now abides faith, hope, charity, these three. Thus true faith is classed among the abiding thingsit is undying, unquenchable. If you truly believe in Jesus, it is for life! Saving faith is a life-long act. It is the relinquishment of all trust in self, once and for all, and the trusting in Jesus forever. He is and always shall be our only confidence. That is the faith which saves.   
But the temporary faith which comes and goes, is worth nothing. The shout of, I believe it, too often ends when the excitement is over. To sing, I do believe, I will believe, is well enoughbut unless that believing appertains to daily life and changes the inner natureand abides even till deathit has not saved the man. The measure of faith of which we have been speaking may turn out to be the beginning of saving faith, but it may, on the other hand, turn out to be a mere deception soon to be dispelleda morning cloud which disappearsan early dew exhaled by the sun.   
I think I have said enough upon my second point. Let it encourage you, that our Lord takes notice, even of the lowest kind of faith. But let it also warn you, when you see that He receives it with an, if, and goes on carefully to exhort and warn, lest the hopeful thing should die and its promise should be unfulfilled.   
III. But, next, OUR LORD SETS BEFORE THESE PEOPLE INDUCEMENTS TO CONTINUE IN HIS WORD. Jesus therefore said to those Jews which had believed Him, If you abide in My Word, then are you truly My disciples, indeed; and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. Observe three inducements, each one of them greatand when placed together exceedingly attractive.   
The first was certified discipleshipThen are you My disciples, indeed. That is to say, if they persevered in obeying His Word, they would be disciples, not in name only, but in truth. It is a small thing to be called Christians, but it is a great matter to truly be Christians. Further, they would not be merely superficial learners, but deeply taught and inwardly instructed disciples of Jesus. They would really and truly know what Jesus taught and would receive it into their inmost soulsthey would be not untrained beginners in the school of Christ, but pupils of the sixth form, disciples, indeed.   
Dear Friends, it is a great thing to be no longer a probationer, but a disciple, indeed! There is more in the expression than I can readily set forth in words. A certain person says he is a disciple of Christ, but you would never know it if he did not tell you! You might live with him for years without hearing an expression or remarking an action which is distinctly Christianthis is NOT to be a disciple, indeed! Another man loves his Lord and treasures His Words. He puts his discipleship of Christ before everythingand you cannot live with him a single day without perceiving a savor of Christ in his words and action. You say of him, That man is, indeed, a Christian! In such a case, religion is not exhibited by way of pride, as with the Pharisees of old, but it is seen because it is there and must shine forth. Faith throbs in the mans pulse! It looks out from his eyes. It tunes his voice and lights up his countenance! It rules his house and controls his business. The man lives for Jesus and if it were necessary, he would die for Him. How we prize a thoroughbred Believer! Your mongrel is a poor animal. Blessed is he who makes his Masters service his pleasure! His Lords Law is his delight! His Saviors Glory the absorbing occupation of his time. He is a disciple, indeed!   
To be a disciple, indeed, creates within the mind a blissful assurance. Some are always asking themselves, Am I truly a disciple? It is not amazing that they ask the question, for it is a great question. But he that continues in Christs Word in loving obedience soon ceases to ask that questionhe has the witness in himself, or, better still, as some read it, he has the witness in Christ. He knows that he is Christs disciple, for he continually follows his Master. He not only believes, but he knows that he believes! He has continued in the Word so long that he has no doubt about his being in it. How can he doubt, when he is, from hour to hour, feeding on the Word in which he lives like a mite feasting upon the cheese in which he dwells? He is a disciple, indeed, for his deeds are those of a disciple. Oh, you that believe my Master at times and up to a certain point, you must go on to believe Him more constantly, more thoroughly, more absolutely! May you cheerfully stake your souls upon your Lords veracity! O my Friend, if you would find Jesus to be your Savior, surrender yourself to His wisdom, yield your whole being to His power! So shall you become a disciple, indeed, and be able to claim all the love, care, comfort and honor which such a Lord puts on His faithful disciples! May you bring forth much fruitso shall you be His disciplesand to you shall be the double portion which belongs to those who follow the Lamb wherever He goes.   
The next blessing which our Lord set before Believers was that of sacred knowledge. Observe, You shall know the truthnot a truth, but the truththe saving, purifying, glorifying Truth of God! Keep on believing and Jesus will teach you that great Truth which is above all other truth essential, quickening, cleansing, Divine! You shall know the Truth of God! You may be charged with dogmatism, but you will not flinch from the assurance that you know the Truth! You no longer guess at Truth, nor hit on a sliding scale of probabilities, but you know it assuredly! You will grow familiar with it! The Truth of God will be to you a well-known friend! You will discriminate so as to know the Truth when you see it and detect it, at once, from the deceptive falsehood. You will know the Truth and you will not be led away by the flattering voice of error. You will have the touchstone with you and will not be deceived by base metals. You will so know the Truth of God as to be influenced by it, actuated by it, filled by it, strengthened by it, comforted by it and, by its power, you will, yourself, be made true! Surely this is a good reason for abiding in Christs Words!   
The third benefit was spiritual libertyThe truth shall make you free. Our Savior further on explains that He means free from sin. He that lives in sin is the slave of sin. Sincere belief in the Word of Christ leads to emancipation from the tyrannical power of the evil which dwells in our members and from the dominating power of the sin which rules in the customs of the world. The truth shall make you free. You shall be free from your own prejudices, prides and lusts. You shall be free from the fear of man. If you have sunk so low as almost to ask of the great ones permission to breathe, you shall break that irksome fetter! The Truth of God known within your spirit shall make a free man of you! Up to now you have been the bondsman of self. You have enquired, What will this thing profit me? And thus the desire of self-aggrandizement has ruled everything! But when Jesus is your Lord, you shall be free from this sordid motive! The truth shall make you free. This is a noble saying! Oh, the liberty that comes into the soul through believing on Jesus, who is the Truth! It makes life to be life, indeed, when this freedom is enjoyed! In laying hold on the Truth of God as it is in Jesus, the soul lays hold on the charter of her liberties and she enters on her citizenship in Heaven!   
Dear Brothers and Sisters, I hope many here enjoy these three privileges. Disciples, indeed, you believe anything that is taught to you in Gods Word, be it what it may. The Truth of God has so entered into you that you now know it and are sure. And this believed-Truth has made you so free that you defy the fetters which men would cast around you! Your Lord has caused you to believe in Him and you have now found the element wherein your soul may abide in life, light and liberty. Thus our Lord dealt with those in whom He saw some hopeful signsHe set choice blessings before them to induce them to proceed further.   
IV. But now, fourthly, OUR LORD THUS TESTED THEM BY THE MOST EFFECTUAL MEANS. The test was very sharp in its action and sudden in its results. He said to them, You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. And what follows? They answered Himanswered Him rather than believed Him! How did they answer? Did they say, Yes, Lord, we believe. Teach us Your Truth and make us free? No, no. They cried, We are Abrahams seed and were never in bondage to any manwhy do You say, You shall be made free? These supposed Believers stumbled at the Lords Wordstumbled at a privilege. Jesus said, The truth shall make you free, and that offended them! To make freedom a stumbling block is folly! On another occasion our Lord spoke to His disciples concerning eating His flesh and drinking His blood. And then we read, From that time many of His disciples went back, and walked no more with Him. The privilege of feeding upon His Sacrifice, which binds many of us to Him with bands of love, drove others away from Him with cords of hate! Sad fact this!   
But it is so in many ways. I believe that God chose His people from before the foundation of the world, I rejoice in the glorious Doctrine of Election! But a great many refuse to believe because of this heavenly privilege. The privileges of the Gospel are the stumbling blocks of legalists! It is too large a Gospel for narrow souls, for, it is too glorious a Gospel for groveling intellects. Men refuse the gift of God because it is so excellent. If we would cut it down till there was nothing left but a more cheese-paring of Grace, I suppose they would accept it. But the very Glory of the Gospel which should fascinate and attract them, repels and disheartens them!

The reason why these Jews became so angry with our Lord was that He touched their pride. Make us free, indeed! they cried. We always were free! We were never slaves. We enjoy the largest rights through our father Abraham. We have never come under the dominion of any false prophet or idol god. Make us free, indeed! How can You say this? Thus the wild thinker claims that he is free and needs no liberty from Christ. The sinner who is in bondage to his passions says that he leads a free and easy life and scorns the idea of being set at liberty, as if he were a slave! The more a slave a man is to his own conceit or his own lusts, the more he talks about his freedom! We would not know that he was free if he did not call himself so. Unbelief calls itself, Honest doubt, and not without cause, for we would not have known it to be honest if it had not labeled itself so. When a man puts up in his shop window, No cheating practiced here, I should trade next door. He protests too much. Your free love, free thought, free life and so forth, are the empty mockery of freedom! Oh, that men knew their stateand then freedom would be prized! For lack of selfknowledge, the blessings of the Gospel prove an offense when they should have hearty welcome.   
The prejudices of the Jews which believed Him were wounded. Oh, how often do we find men who will hear the Gospel just so far, and no farther! They have not believed on the Lord Jesus Christ. They have not entered into His Word so as to be prepared to believe all that He teaches and, consequently, when some doctrine is heard which grates upon their feelings, or jars on their judgments, or conflicts with their original conceptions, straightway they grow angry with their Savior! After all, it would seem, from the criticisms which you offer, that you know better than the Son of God! Your judgment would seem to be clearer than His, for you sit in judgment upon His Word! What is Christ to you? Why, He comes before you like the prisoner who stood before Pilate. You question Him, as the Roman Governor did when he asked, What is truth? You believe what you choose to believe and disbelieve what you choose to disbelieve! In such a case, who is the greater, the disciple or his Master? Surely you presume too much when you act as judge of Him who is to be the Judge of all the earth!   
You are no disciple of His! You can never know the Truth and the Truth can never make you free, indeed! No blessing can come to you since you put yourself out of its way. You may talk about believing, but you have not believed, and you cannot be saved by Jesus until you yield your judgment to His Infallibility, your heart to His Rule, your every faculty to His Grace. Welcome Him as undisputed Lord of your bosom and crown Him Lord of All within your soulsuch loyal faith He claims and this He must haveor you will fall short of His salvation.   
These people soon showed their true character, for very soon afterwards they said, Now we know that you have a deviland they took up stones to cast at Him! Oh, that we may be delivered from having a faith which will end in open rejection of the Lord!   
V. I close with a fifth pointOUR LORD DESERVES OF US THE HIGHEST FORM OF FAITHyes, the highest degree of faith which is possible! Would you mind looking in your Bibles into the next chapter, which fitly follows the present one? It contains the story of the man blind from his birth, to whom the Savior gave sight. Let me read a description of the kind of faith which I desire for you all. Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when He had found him, He said to him, Do you believe on the Son of God? He answered and said, Who is He, Lord, that I might believe on Him? And Jesus said to him, You have both seen Him and it is He that talks with you. And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped Him. That is the faith which savesthe faith which learns of Jesus from Jesushears and believes, and takes Jesus to be its God! The faith which bows at the feet of Jesus and worships Him as Divine is the faith which saves!   
Men will not do this till their eyes have been opened. While they say, We see, their sin remains and their blindness, too. Only he who can say, One thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see, will worship Jesus with all his heart. The gracious Lord has come and touched my sightless eyes and given me heavenly sight and, therefore, I trust Him! I, that could see nothing at all, have seen Him! I, that had no idea of what light was, for I was born blind, I have seen the light through Him and I both believe and adore! Oh, for a worshipping faithfaith on its knees in the Presence of the Son of God! Faith beholding Jesus with the eyes which He has opened!   
Alas, says one, I wish I had that faith. Listen, then, that you may find it. Faith comes by hearing. When I meet with converted persons, I like them to tell me what text was blessed to them, for then my mind runs on that text. I have sometimes asked a convert, What part of the sermon was it that God blessed to you? Because I would like to repeat that passage more than once or twice. I would like to tell it oer and oer again. Perhaps the Lord would bless it to another, and another. Think, then, what part of our Lords sermon was it that brought faith to those many who believed on Him? I think it was the 28th and 29th verses.   
In verse 28 the Lord spoke of His death and all that went with it, and all that came out of itWhen you have lifted up the Son of Man, then shall you know that I am He. How did they lift Him up? They lifted Him up on the Crossit alludes to His Crucifixion. But they did not know that in another sense they lifted Him upit was through His death that there was a possibility of His Resurrection! And when He rose again and ascended up on high, the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the Churchand He entered into Heaven to make intercession for usand all this was emphatically a lifting up!   
The Cross and its surroundings remain, to this day, the great arguments for our holy faith. The things that should lead men to believe on Jesus Christ are found at His Cross. He was the Son of God, but He died the death of the Cross for love of men. Being dead and buried, His Father raised Him from the dead and thus gave evidence of His mission and of His acceptance with God. There is no question about His Resurrectionit is proved beyond all doubt that Jesus rose again from the dead on the third day. His disciples saw Him for the space of 40 days and ate and drank with Himand then they beheld Him go up into Heaven till a cloud received Him out of their sight. They waited at Jerusalem and the Holy Spirit came upon them in cloven tongues, the Divine testimony to His ascended power! By the preaching of His Word in the power of the Holy Spirit, the nations were made to hear concerning Jesus, the Savior, and bowed before His Cross.   
Now, the more you think of this unique occurrencethis fact which could not have been a piece of imagination, this fact which was attested by honest men, who bled and died for itthe more you think of this, I say, the more you will feel faith stealing over your spirit! Christ on the Cross is thought to be hard to believe in, but it is not so, for the more you know of a Crucified Christ, the more easy will faith become! Christ raised to the Crown by His Cross is the great breeder of faith! Christ rising from the dead is a marvel, yet it is the keystone of the arch of faith. Believe it! Christ gone into Glorythe Son of God bearing His Manhood into the highest place of supreme sovereignty and pleading there for guilty men think much of this Truth of God and you will find faith come to you, for faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God. Especially is faith begotten and nourished by that part of Gods Word which treats of the Cross and the Crownthe double lifting up of Jesus!   
Also, once more, and I have doneyou will find faith much helped by looking to the life of Jesus set forth in the Gospels. Read the verse, He that sent Me is with Me: the Father has not left Me alone, for I always do those things that please Him. What a perfect life is that of Jesus! Could it have been invented? He who could have sketched it from his imagination must, himself, have been perfect. But, then, no perfect man could have been guilty of a forgery. Jesus was obedient to the Father in all things and yet He put no force upon Himself in so doingit was natural to Him to be holy. It was His meat and His drink to do the will of Him that sent Him, and to finish His work. And the God of Heaven, by His miracles, was with Him and bore witness to Him.   
There is no superfluous miracle recorded in the Gospelsthey are all necessary evidence, such as was called for in that court wherein the Perfection, the Messiahship, the Deity of our Lord were tried. If you read His whole life through till you come to His death, and even study that death in which the Father hid His face from Him as to the enjoyment of His smile, you can see that God was always with His Son Jesus, working out His Divine purposes by Him and bearing witness to Him. God is in accord with Jesus, that is clear. He is with Him even now! Nobody can doubt that there are such things as conversions, for they are common phenomena in every living Church of God. And conversions are Gods testimony to the Word of Jesus and the proofs that the Father and the Holy Spirit are working with the Son.   
Think of this, and then yield to the Son of God, since God bears witness of Him to you! Come along with you, you that have had other notions. Come and take Jesus to be your Light and Life! You that have had other confidences, leave them all and believe on Him, for He is worthy of your utmost confidence. You that have been hesitating, believe in Jesus once and for all! You that have been procrastinating, come this very day and listen to that voice which shall at once set you free! Oh, that you would now trust Jesus, my Lord and my God! May the good Spirit help you, now, to believe on the Crucified One and may this be another of those occasions concerning which it shall be written in the Book of Record, Many believed on Him! God grant it, for our Lord Jesus sake! Amen.

**PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMONJohn 8:12-59.** HYMNS FROM OUR OWN HYMN-BOOK427, 565, 564.  
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CHARACTERISTICS OF CHRISTS DISCIPLES   
NO. 2650

A SERMON   
INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS DAY, NOVEMBER 26, 1899.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, JULY 16, 1882.

**If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters,   
yes, and his own life, also, he cannot be My disciple. Luke 14:26.**

**Then said Jesus to those Jews who believed Him, If you continue in My word, you are My disciples indeed. John 8:31.**

**By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.   
John 13:35.**

**By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.   
John 15:8.**

This morning, [Sermon #1669, Volume 28Teaching for the Outer and Inner Circles read/download the entire sermon free of charge at http://www.spurgeongems.org] I

preached upon one of the privileges of the disciples of ChristWhen they were alone, He expounded all things to His disciples. They formed the inner circle and they had the privilege of hearing the expositions and explanations which our Lord gave only to His disciples. As I was speaking, I think the question must have arisen in the hearts of many of my hearers, What is a disciple of Chris? and also the further enquiry, Am I one of His disciples? It is very important for us who are preachers to know what a disciple is, for we are bidden to go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. What is involved in the making of a disciple? We cannot fully answer that question until we know what a disciple is!

In order to help you, dear Friends, to ascertain whether you are truly disciples of Christ, I am going to call your attention to four texts in which the Lord Jesus mentions some of the things which are essential to true discipleshipand without which a man cannot be His disciple. I pray the Holy Spirit to make those who are disciples to rejoice in their discipleship and to count it the highest honor of their lives to have the Son of God for their Teacher and Leader. And I also pray that those who fear that they are not His disciples may be brought to Him even while I am speaking. May they, by His Grace, resolve that they, also, will be His disciples, and may the Divine Spirit conduct them into the School of Christ, that they may sit at His feet and receive His Word from this time forth!

I. The first mark of discipleship to which I am going to call your attention is mentioned in the Gospel according to Luke, the 14th Chapter, and the 26th verse. If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life, also, he cannot be My disciple These words prove that the first requisite of a disciple of Christ is WHOLEHEARTEDNESS.

The meaning of this passage is that Christs disciple must so love his Lord that, in comparison with the love he bears to Christ, all other love shall burn but dimly and be scarcely worthy of even being named! This verse has puzzled a great many people because they have supposed that Christ really wished them to hate their father, mother, wife and so on. The slightest possible thought ought to have convinced them that He could never have wished them to do anything of the kind! If you take Christs Words without seeking to find their meaning, you can make mischief out of them, for, sometimes, He speaks very boldlyI might almost have said, with the utmost reverence, very baldlyin order to make His point clear. He speaks in a manner which, in others, would be foolishness. He goes beyond what He means us to understand literally, because He knows that this is the only way in which He can bring His teaching home to some minds. There was really no reason why anybody should have made such a mistake and understood these words just as they stand in our version. It is not possible for a man to be a disciple of Christ if he hates anybody, for the religion of Christ is a religion of loveand hatred must be expelled from the bosom of those who receive it. It is utterly inconceivable that anybody who hated his father could be a disciple of Christthat would be a violation of the First Commandment with promise, which bids us honor our father and mother. Certainly Jesus never taught anything contrary to the Commandments of His Father! He who hated his own mother would be a monsternot a disciple of the meek and lowly Jesus who cared for His mother amid His agony on the Cross. Does not nature, itself, teach us that our love should certainly flow out to those who were the authors of our being and who so kindly cared for us when we were unable to take care of ourselves? I am not afraid that any of you, dear Friends, will err in that respect and then fancy that you have the warrant of Christ for hating your father and mother!

Then, should not a man love his wife? Yes, that he should, for the Apostle says, Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church. I have heard of one who was said to love his wife too much, but I did not believe it, because the model for a husbands love is, even as Christ also loved the church, and who could go beyond that? A man may be excessively submissive or devoted which, in some cases, may have been carried to such excess as to become folly and idolatry, but from this evil I hope that we have escaped. But a man could not be a disciple of Christ if he literally hated his wife. He would be unworthy of the society even of the moral, much more of the society of the gracious, if he so acted. Neither can we imagine Christ bidding anybody hate his own children. Nature itself dictates that we should love them and we dowe cannot help it, nor do we wish to help it. We should be traitors to Christ if we tried to expel an affection which He, Himself, has implanted within us. No man can hate his children and yet be a Christian! It would be a clear proof that he had nothing of Christianity about him, just as the Apostle says, of another matter, if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he has denied the faith and is worse than an infidel. So, we are not to hate our childrennor are we to hate our brothers and sisters. It is only in a comparative sense and not literally, that the term can possibly be used. And to make this very clear, Christ said that we are to hate our own life. The next step to that would be suicide and the Savior could never have meant any of His followers to commit that terrible sin! What He did mean was that He is to have the first place in our hearts and all who are dear to us are to be second. Yes, and we ourselves are to be second, too, and are to be prepared to break every earthly tie rather than the tie which binds us to Christ Jesus our Lord.

The teaching of the text is that Christ is to be loved more than all our relations. It may be that we shall never have to endure the test of choosing between Christ and our loved ones, but some have had to do that. You have, perhaps, heard the story of the martyr who was going out to be burned for Christ. And as his enemies had failed to move him from his steadfastness, they made one more attempt to do so as the good man was on his way to the stake. They brought out his wife and his 11 children to meet him and they were all weeping and kneeling down before him, begging him to recant. His wife pleaded, My Husband, be not so willful! Do not go to the stake, and each of the children had been taught to lay hold of the father and to say to him, Father, live for my sake, and for mine, Father. This was a trial which the good man had not expected and as he stood there, surrounded by his loved ones, he said, God knows how dearly I love you all, and how gladly, for your sakes, I would do anything that I may do, with a clear conscience, to make you happy. But, compared with Christ and His Gospel, which I love with all my heart and soul, I must give you all up and treat you as if I had no love for you. I must go and yield up my body to be burned for the Truth of Christ. Therefore, do not weep and break my heart. It was grandly done on his part and you can probably get a better idea of the meaning of my text from that incident than I could possibly convey to you by any words that I might use.

Well, dear Friends, though your faith may never be subjected to that supreme test, a matter of life or death, yet you may have to be tested to see whether you love Christ more than you love your relatives. There was a certain godly bishop who had a brother who came and asked him to ordain him and to give him a living, for his trade did not prosper as he wished. The good bishop loved his brother and he would have done anything that was right to help him. But he said, My dear Brother, you are not called of God to undertake such work, so I cannot ordain you, or give you a living. I will gladly give you money to help you in your business, but I cannot make use of my position in the church to put you into a place for which you are not qualified. Had you been a fit and proper person for this holy service, I would have been delighted to carry out your wish. But as you are not, I cannot use my influence on your behalf in this way. I wish that every bishop would act in the same waythey have not always done so. Yet there was the crucial point in which the good man felt that he must rather regard the welfare of the church than the benefit of his relative and he must treat him just as though he had been a stranger. That is how we should deal with anyone who comes to us for a similar purposeif he is a suitable person, let him be encouraged to enter upon the work for which he is qualified. But if he is not, let him go back to his forge, or to his plow, or to his awl, or to his plane, or let him engage in some business in which he will be earning a livelihood and doing no mischief to his fellow men, as he would do if he were put to work for which he is not fitted.

Have not some of you, dear Friends, met with cases in which the same difficulty has arisen? You must either do a wrong to Christ and to His people, or else you must appear to be hard and unkind towards some relative or friend. Well, you cannot be Christs disciple if you hesitate a minute about what course you shall adopt! Brothers, sisters, wife, children, father, mother must never be allowed for a moment to be put in competition with Christ! I remember one who, when quite a youth, felt that he must be baptized on profession of his faith in Christ, but those who were nearest and dearest to him did not agree with him upon that matter. He had not one relative who thought as he did concerning it. He laid his case before them and, being so young, he asked that he might have permission to carry out his conscientious convictions, but, at the same time, he said, If the permission does not come, I shall obey My Lords command, for, in this case, I acknowledge no father or mother, but simply do as my Savior bids me. In matters of religion, Christ alone is our Leaderand our conscience can never obey any supremacy but that of our Lord Jesus Christ. This decision is to be announced very gently, without any bitterness of spirit, with much humilityand prayer for wisdom and guidancebut there must be no question about your action! You are to put your foot down, and say, In everything which concerns Christ and my soul, I call no man, father, upon earth, but, at all costs, I must follow my Lord wherever He leads me. I think you can now see the drift of the Saviors Words. The rule for you who are His disciples must beChrist first and everybody else as far down as you like. Everybody treated with kindness and due consideration, but nobody permitted to usurp the Throne of the great King. So, in the first place, we must love Christ more than all our relatives.

And, next, we must love Christ more than life. You know that there have been many who have not loved their lives as much as they have loved their Lord, for they have freely yielded them up for the sake of Him who laid down His life for them. Christians, in past ages, have known what was involved in being faithful to Christ. You may have read that letter which Pliny wrote, concerning the early Christians, in which he said that he knew not what to do with them, for they were men of good character, but they had this one peculiarity that they must in everything follow Christ. They actually came with calm confidence, even to the Roman judgment seat, well knowing that if they were convicted of being Christians, they would be put to deathand they seemed as if they were eager to dieso anxious were they to put their love to Christ before any thought of freedom from pain or escape from death! What the torments were, to which they were put, under their many persecutors, I scarcely dare to tell you. Think of one of them forced to sit in a red-hot iron chair. And of others dragged at the heels of wild horses, or tossed to and fro by bulls, or torn in pieces by savage beasts. Everything that could add ignominy and pain to death was invented in those timesbut did the martyrs flinch or turn back? No. They stood fast for Christs sake and threw their lives away as if they were worth nothing at all, rather than be found traitors to Jesus Christ their Lord and Savior!

We are to be prepared to do the same as they did, if necessary. Only, in our case, probably it will never come to that point in this country where, thank God, we have so much civil and religious liberty. Yet, often, a similar test may be applied to us in a modified way. There may be, for instance, some loss of business through doing what we know to be right! There are some persons who have been in the habit of carrying on their trade on the Sabbathbut when they have become Christs disciples, they have shut up their shop on that day, and people have said to them, You will be ruined, you will never earn a living. You know, we must live. I have often heard that last little sentence, but I do not believe it. I do not see any necessity for us to live. There is a necessity for us to be true to Christ, but not for us to continue to live! It is a great deal better that we should die than that we should do a wrong thing. And we should be prepared at any time to say, If necessary, we will let our trade go and we will be poor. But we will keep a clear conscience. And he who has that little bird in his bosom will never lack for music! And though he has scarcely a penny in his pocket, yet if he wears the flower called heartsense in his buttonhole, he need never envy the richest man in the world!

It may happen to you, in your business, that there will be an opportunity of getting money by being thieves in a respectable kind of waythere are plenty of such thieves about. But if you are a Christian, you will say, No, money gained by dishonesty will carry a curse with it. I cannot touch it any more than I would handle blood-money. If it comes by any wrong method, I must leave it alone, for pelf and wealth shall not come to me if they cannot come honestly. I must and will serve the Lord Jesus Christ first and foremost.

Sometimes you know that for Christs sake, our Brothers and Sisters go as missionaries to India or China, and some go to the Congo or to other stations in Africa where it is almost certain that, in a short time, they will be cut down by the fever. But how brave it is on their part! How truly a disciple of Christ is such a man or such a woman, who, knowing all that may be expected, nevertheless says, My Lord calls me to serve Him in Africa. And if He sends me to a mangrove swamp and to a fever, I will as readily go there for Him as if He summoned me to sit upon a throne.

To sum up the teaching of this first text, it means that Christ is to be loved more than anything. If this were the choice set before usthe whole world, or Christthank God there are many of us who would not wait a minute for the decision! And if this were the choiceshame in the eyes of men, or else the far greater shame of deserting the Savior, oh, I hope we would not hesitate even for an instant! No, says the Christian, Christ is my All-in-All. If I have all things, I will try to find Him in them and if I have nothing, I will find all things in Him. So the meaning of this text is that Christ must have wholehearted servants and if you come to Him to be His disciples, you must bring your whole being with you. Christ will never be King over a divided manhood. There was a time when this island was a heptarch and seven little kings ruled over it. But now we have but one sovereign and in this united realm we never shall have but one supreme ruler. So should it be in mans heart. The devil is quite willing to share the kingdom with Christ. Oh, he says, let Christ reign and let me reign, too! We shall make an excellent pair to rule over men. But Christ will not have it so. If we are to be His subjects, He will rule over us from the crown of our head to the soles of our feet, and He will not permit Satan to have a single stronghold within us that he can call his own. Out you must go, you vile usurper, for He has come who is King of Kings and Lord of Lords! The crown sits upon His brow, nor will He allow a rival even for an hour! Come, then, Beloved, what do you say? Are you wholehearted for Christ? If not, you are not His disciples. Listen while I read our first text again, and as I do, you read into it the true and full meaning of the words and feel their force. If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, and brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life, also, he cannot be My disciple.

II. The second requisite for being a disciple of Christ is found in the 8th Chapter of the Gospel according to John, at the 31st verseThen Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, If you continue in My word, you are My disciples indeed. So CONTINUANCE is the next trait in the character of a true disciple of Christ.

There are a great many persons who, like those Jews, profess to believe in Jesus Christ for a time. When opposition and persecution came, they deserted Him and so proved that they were not really His disciples. I do not know much about the merits of the question, which is often discussed in the papers, with regard to enlistment for a short or a long term of service in the Queens army, but I know that my Lord and Master will not accept any of you unless you enter His army for lifeno, morefor all eternity! In Christs true Church there is no profession of faith merely for a time. Once you have made it, you have made it forever. The very way of confessing Christ, which is by Baptism, signifies this, for the man who is rightly immersed into the name of the Sacred Trinity is first buried and then he rises againand that burial, having once taken place, can never be cancelledwhatever happens, it is an accomplished fact. Then, again, the act of immersion can never cease to be a fact. Marks made in the flesh may be removed, but when the watermark has been put upon the whole body, it can never be removed. He who has been buried with Christ may have been a hypocrite and a deceiver, but, notwithstanding his hypocrisy and deception, he has passed through the outward form of the ordinance and he can never clear himself from the responsibility of it. It will be to his everlasting disgrace if he is a baptized reprobate! At the Day of Judgment it shall be conclusive evidence of his guilt that he either tried to deceive himself, or deceived Gods people and made a mockery of the ordinances of Christ. But in the case of a true believer in Christ, continuance in the right road proves him to be a Christian.

First, we are to continue believing Christs words. Whatever new doctrinal errors may spring up, we are to take no notice of them, but just continue in the faith of Christ. Then shall we be His disciples indeed! In these evil days, some new heresy appears nearly every week. There are some people who seem to spend all their time in inventing lies and these, joined to the old errors that are continually being vamped up, puzzle those who are not well established in the faith so that they scarcely know what is orthodox doctrine and what is heterodox. But he who keeps close to his Master, sits at His feet and learns of Himwhen he is taught of the Spiritand holds fast what he has received. Mr. Whitefield used to say that in his day there were some persons for whom it was impossible to make a creed. He said, You might as well try to make a suit of clothes for the moon, for they change as frequently as she does. And we have many people of the same sort in our day! They are everything by starts, and nothing long. But that is not a characteristic of Christian discipleship! A man is not Christs disciple if he is tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, allowing anybody to put an oar into his boat and turn and twist him wherever the intruder pleases. No, the Masters message to His followers is, If you continue in My word, you are My disciples indeed.

But we must also continue in obedience. It is the part of a true disciple of Christ to do his Lords will in the teeth of every temptation that may assail him. You will not be obedient to Him very long without being pulled by the coat, first this way, and then that. But the true disciple of Christ says, If all the kingdoms of this world were to be given me on condition that I would fall down and worship the god of this world, I would not, for an instant, think of doing so, for I am enlisted in the army of the Cross. I serve the Lord Christ and Him alone.

And we are also to continue in Christs word when we are in affliction. There are, alas, some who, if God seems to treat them roughly, grow mightily offended with Him. A dear child is taken away from their family circle and they say that they will never forgive God. They have trouble upon trouble and straightway they complain that God behaves evilly to themand they are ready to turn back at the first crossroad that they come to in their pilgrimage. But this will not do for those who would be disciples indeed. We must hold on, come fair or come foul, and this must be our motto, one that I have often quoted to you and one that I love to think of myselfThough He slay me, yet will I trust in Him. We have committed ourselves to Him as unto a faithful Creator. We have lifted our hand in token of our allegiance to Him, and we cannot go back!

Dear Friends who have just lately been converted to Christ, let me exhort you to be steadfast and immovable! You cannot be Christs disciples unless you are firm and decided. A Christian soldier who had to sleep in a tent with some ungodly comrades, knelt down at night to pray and every time he did so, he was assailed by all sorts of missiles. He consulted the chaplain as to what he had better do and that time-serving individual said he thought, perhaps, it was not necessary for the soldier to kneel down publicly before he retired to rest. The soldier tried the cowardly plan for one night, but he was very unhappy and his conscience was troubled about it. He had failed to bear testimony for Christ, so, the next night, he knelt down as he had done before and it pleased God that, by degrees, the opposition ceased and, more than that, the influence of his brave example and the words he spoke at different times, brought all the other men in the tent to kneel down, too, before they went to rest! Whether they were all converted or not, I cannot tell, but, at any rate, there was at least the form of prayer in that way. When the soldier saw the chaplain, again, and told him what had happened, the chaplain commended him, and then the soldier asked him, Dont you think it is better for us always to keep our colors flying?

That is a good watchword for you, BelovedAlways keep your colors flying! There are some professors who say, We can carry our flag wrapped up in a waterproof case and when there is a favorable opportunity, we can let it fly in the breeze. No, no! It is best to keep your colors always flying. There may be danger and difficulty through flying the flag, but a hundred times worse danger comes from rolling it up and putting it away out of sight. Never be ashamed of what there is no reason to be ashamed of! If any man is ashamed of being a Christian, surely Christ has cause to be ashamed of him! Let it not be so with you, dear Friend, but rather let each one say

*Ashamed of Jesus? That dear Friend   
On whom my hopes of Heaven depend?   
No! When I blush, be this my shame   
That I no more revere His name.*

But, as to blushing when I acknowledge that I am His servant, may never such a crimson token of shame come onto my cheek! So stand fast in the faith, Beloved, for thus shall you prove that you are, indeed, Christs disciples.

III. I must now pass on to a third mark of a genuine disciple of Christ, that is, BROTHERLY LOVE. Kindly look at the 13th Chapter of Johns Gospel, and the 35th verseBy this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.

This is to be a mark of discipleship which all men can see. Whenever there is genuine love among Christian people, everybody knows at once that they are Christs disciples. Good men and bad menthe most ignorant and the most foolish men cannot help seeing that love is, as it were, a sign hung out as a mark of the business done within. That disciple whom Jesus loved, wrote, Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God; and everyone that loves is born of God, and knows God. He that loves not knows not God, for God is love.

Now, Brothers and Sisters, how are we to love our brethren so as to let all men know that we are Christs disciples? One ready way is by considering their needs and doing the best that we can to help them out of their difficulties. If we say to the cold and the hungry, Be you warmed and be you filled, and yet do nothing practically to help them, how dwells the love of God in us? What kind of Christianity is that which is liberal only in words? Dear Friends, there are many poor people among us who are struggling to get a livelihood and, alas, there are many others who cannot find any employment at all. And it is incumbent upon any who are being prospered by God to help their poor brothers as far as they can. Very often a man can truly help his fellow, even though he has no money to spare. I read a pretty story of a Cornish miner who was getting rather old and the captain of the mine said, John, I think that I can put you into an easier berth than the one you now hold. You will get more money and you will have to be an overseer of others rather than to do much yourself. I know that I can confide in you, so I will put you into that place next month. The miner said, in reply, Captain, do you know our brother Tregony? Yes, answered the captain. You know that he is older than I am, said the miner. He cannot do a days work, now, and I am afraid that he will have to give up altogether. I wish you would let him have that berth because, though I am getting old, I think that I can keep on for another year or two. So let old Tregony have the overseers position.

The captain did so and that is true Christian love when a man is willing to make a sacrifice because he feels that he is not quite as much in need as another. I remember saying to a poor widow who came one morning to the Orphanage with her child, There is another woman outside. You have been talking to her, have you not, while you were waiting to come in? Yes, Sir, she answered. I said, She has nine children and we can only take one. How many have you? Three, replied the woman. Well, now, I asked, which of those three shall we take? Oh, Sir! she said, there is not a minute needed to deliberate about it! You take one of that other poor womans children. I will try to do the best I can, though it is a hard pinch for me, but that woman has a heavier burden to carry than I have, poor thing. I was pleased to see such a spirit of selfsacrifice and I am always glad when Christian people feel that kind of sympathy and love for one another. How often might rough roads be made more smooth if all acted like that! This is just what we must be constantly doing, for we cannot be Christs disciples unless we have love for one another.

Beside that, we can show our love to our brethren by bearing their faults. It is a grand thing to be able to put up with a good deal. There are some people who seem to think that they have come into the world that other people may put up with themand they certainly do play their part, for they give other people plenty to put up with! And if anybody should in the least resent it, they say, So-and-So is out of temper with me. I was going to say that an angel might be out of temper with some people, but I do not suppose that he would. Still, I wish that these people would remember the provocations they often give as well as the sharp retorts they sometimes get. Oh, says one, I do not believe that there is any love among Christians. Brother, you are measuring our corn with your bushel! You see that you have not any love in your heart, for, if you had, there would be some love in your eyes and you would perceive some, also, in others. But when it is clean gone out of your own soul, you suppose it must also have departed from others.

Of course, you do not admit that it has gone out of you and you imagine that you see outside of you what is really inside, so, when you say that there is no love anywhere, it is because you are looking at yourself in the mirror, that is all. But we who love the Lord can, I trust, bear with one another. I sometimes try to think which is the greater wonderthat you, dear Friends, have put up with me so long, or that I have put up with you! There are some of you who are the best people in the whole world and there are others of you who are not the best, but rather the reverse, and some of you do cause us trouble sometimes. Well, may God give all of us great patience and may we believe in one another! That is half the battle in all the difficulties that arise among Christiansthat we should not impute wrong motives to our fellows, and not be ready to bring accusations against one anotherbut just believe that each of our fellow members is a child of God and if there is something which he has done, and which looks wrong, say, It must have been misrepresented or misreported. I am sure it musthe cannot have done such a thing. I will stand up for him. He is my Brother-in-Christ, so I will defend him.

There is one other point in which some of you may exercise love for one another and that is, in rejoicing in each others happiness. This is a point which is far too often forgotten. You know the tendency among menhere is a man who is rising in the world, so there are many who say, Ah, humph! They do not say anything more, but they shrug their shoulders and they look full of unutterable things. Or there is a Brother who has done well in the Church and he is referred to in terms of approbation. Then at once somebody begins to try to pull him down and says, Ah, yes! I could have done what he has done. Then why did you not do it? Oh, but he had such great advantages! Yes, perhaps he had, and you also have had opportunities of doing something or other, but you have not made the best use of them. Now, instead of being jealous of our Brothers success, ought we not rather to be rejoicing in one another? If a man is poor, let him rejoice that everybody is not as poor as he is! If he is troubled about his worldly circumstances and he meets with a Brother who has no cause for such sorrow, let him say, I am glad he is better off than I am. I do not want him to have anything to worry him as my troubles perplex me. I praise God for his prosperity, I bless the Lord for his happiness. Then when we see an especially gracious and gifted man coming into the Church and serving God, let us welcome him heartily and say to one another, Here is a true comrade for us and we are glad that God has sent us such a man to help us in His work.

I wish that we were all of the mind of that noble Spartan who wished to be a magistrate, but another man opposed him and received twice as many votes as he did. What did the Spartan say? I am grateful that the country has better men than myself and I am glad to see that it knows where to find them when it needs them. So, dear Friends, be glad when God provides better men than you are to do His work. Let the preacher rejoice when another preacher excels him. That is the point to which we must all bring ourselves. Let the Sunday school teacher praise the Lord when she finds another teacher who altogether eclipses her. What a blessed thing it is for the Bible class teacher who has a large company around him, to find another Brother raised up who gets a better class than his has ever been! Bless God when it is so, dear Friends. This is one of those points that is often difficult, but it ought to be easyand it would be easy if we had love for one another! And if we have not such love, we are not Christs disciples.

IV. I must close now with just a few remarks about the last characteristic of a disciple of Christ. It is mentioned in the 15th Chapter of Johns Gospel, at the 8th verseBy this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples. So the last mark of a disciple is that of FRUIT-BEARING.

What is bearing fruit in this sense? Well, first, it is doing service for Christ. He said to His disciples, He that abides in Me, and I in him, the same brings forth much fruit: for without Me you can do nothing, plainly implying that the fruit which is to come from abiding in Him will be seen by our doing something for Him. Christian men and women, the Lord Jesus Christ does not want to have any followers who never foil or fight for Him! He does not wish to have with Him shepherds who never feed His flockmerely nominal Christians who never do anything for Him. Does this touch any of you? Some of you come in here, Sunday after Sunday, and you sit and enjoy my ministry, but you do not help in the Sunday school, you do not distribute tracts, you do not preach, you do not do anything! How can you be Christs disciples? I suppose you are like some officers of whom I have read, who draw large salaries because they are such distinguished ornaments to the service. It is a great honor to have these people in the army, though they never saw a sword drawn except on review days. So, no doubt, it is a very fine thing to have a number of Church members who are simply ornamental personsthey swell our numbers when they are counted with us and people say, They are so very respectable that they help to make us all respectable.

Well, now, to tell you the truth, we do not care an atom about your respectability! We think that the most respectable person in the world that is, the person who most deserves to be respectedis the one who is doing something! He who does nothing deserves to be starved, even as the Apostle Paul said, This we commanded you, that if any will not work, neither shall he eat, which is much the same thing as letting him starve. Let us try to be fruit-bearing disciples by doing all that we can for Christ, because, if we do not bear fruit, we cannot be His disciples.

Next, fruit-bearing will be proved by our prayers. Notice the words of our LordIf you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you shall ask what you will and it shall be done unto you. By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit. Prayer, then, is a blessed fruit of Divine Graceprayer for others, prayer for Christs Church, the prayer that brings down unnumbered blessings from above. Many a sick, bed-ridden saint who cannot speak and who can scarcely lift her hands, can lie there and do great things in prayer! Joan of Arc was not half so mighty as that poor invalid! She is the Kings true warrior! While she lies there apparently helpless, she is commanding the legions of Heaven by her invincible petitions! See, then, dear Friends, that you bear much fruit in earnest, prevailing prayer!

Another method of fruit-bearing is by a holy character. O Beloved, I implore you to be holy men and women! Seek after close conformity to the likeness of Christ. Nothing does more good for a Church than for its members to live the Gospel in all their concerns at home and abroad.

But I think that we shall not bear fruit as we should unless we endeavor to bring converts to Jesus. Dear mistress, seek to win the soul of your little maid! Good master, employing so many hands, get them together, sometimes, and talk to them about your Saviorand pray that He may be their Savior, too. Can you do it? There ought not to be one barren member of this Church. Everyone ought to be able to feel that when he comes before God at the last, he shall be able to say, Here am I and the children You have given me. For this let us live! For this let us labor! If we do not, we cannot be Christs disciples.

I remember one who never did anything for Christ and when somebody spoke to him about his lack of fruit-bearing, he said that he bore inside fruit. I never heard that idea before, so I turned it over in my mind and, the next time I met him, I said to him, Are you still bearing inside fruit? He answered, Yes. Well, I said, we shall never get at it till you are cut down. Fruit is evidently intended to be an outside thing that is borne for the benefit of others! So, in this respect, Brothers and Sisters, see to it that you are fruitful by rendering all possible service to our Lord and Master.

The real application of my four texts is thisAre you, dear Friends, Christs disciples? Let that question be passed around and let these four marks help us to judge ourselvesare we distinguished from those who are not Christs disciples by our wholeheartedness, continuance, brotherly love and fruit-bearing? May all these things be in us and abound. And if we have none of them, may we apply to Christ for them! Lie at His feet. Confess your sin and then look up, believe in Him and live forevermore! The Lord bless you, dear Friends, for Jesus sake! Amen.

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PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #565 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

THE GREAT LIBERATOR   
NO. 565

**DELIVERED ON SUNDAY MORNING, APRIL 17, 1864, BY THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**If the Son therefore shall make you free, you shall be free, indeed. John 8:36.**

BLESSED is that word free, and blessed is he who spends himself to make men so. You did well to crowd your streets and to welcome with your joyous acclamations the man who has broken the yoke from off the neck of the oppressed. Many sons of Italy have done valiantly, but he excels them all and deserves the love of all the good and brave. Political slavery is an intolerable evil. To live, to think, to act, to speak at the permission of another! Better have no life at all! To depend for my existence upon a despots will is death itself. Craven spirits may wear the dog collar which their master puts upon them and fawn at his feet for the bones of his table, but men who are worthy of the name had rather feed the vultures on the battlefield.

The burden of civil bondage is too heavy for bold spirits to bear with patience and therefore they fret and murmur beneath it. This murmuring the tyrant loves not and therefore he throws the sufferers into his dungeons and bids them wear out their days in captivity. Blessed is he who hurls down the despot, bursts the doors of his dungeons and gives true men their rights. We have never felt, and therefore we know not the bitterness of bondage. Our emancipators have gone to the world of spirits, bequeathing us an heirloom of liberty for which we should love their names and reverence their God.

If they could have lived on till now, how we should honor them! But as they are gone, we do well to applaud our illustrious guest as if we saw in him the spirit of all our glorious liberators worthily enshrined. Political liberty allows scope for so much of all that is good and ennobling and its opposite involves so much that is debasing, that the mightiest nation destitute of it is poor, indeed, and the poorest of all people, if they are but free, are truly rich. But, my Brethren, men may have political liberty to the very fullest extent and yet be slaves, for there is such a thing as religious bondage. He who cringes before a priesthe who dreads his anathema, or who creeps at his feet to receive his blessingis an abject slave!

He may call himself a free man, but his soul is in vile bondage if superstition makes him wear the chain. To be afraid of the mutterings of a man like myselfto bow before a piece of wood or a yard of painted canvasto reverence a morsel of bread or a rotten bonethis is mental slavery, indeed! They call the Negro a slave in the Southern Confederacy, but men who prostrate their reason before the throne of superstition are slaves through and through. To yield obedience to our Lord, to offer prayer to God Most High is perfect freedom! But to confess my heart out to a mortal with a shaven crownto trust my family secrets and my wifes character

to the commands of a man who may be all the while wallowing in debauchery is worse than the worst form of serfdom.

I would sooner serve the most cruel Sultan who ever crushed humanity beneath his iron heel than bow before the Pope or any other priest of mans making. The tyranny of priest-craft is the worst of ills. You may cut through the bonds of despots with a sword, but the sword of the Lord Himself is needed here. The Truth of God must file these fetters and the Holy Spirit must open these dungeons! You may escape from prison, but superstition hangs round a man and with its deadly influence keeps him ever in its dark and gloomy cell.

Skepticism, which proposes to snap the chains of superstition only supplants a blind belief with an unhallowed credulity and leaves the victim as oppressed as ever. Jesus the Son, alone, can make men truly free! Happy are they whom He has delivered from superstition. Blessed are our eyes that this day we see the light of Gospel liberty and are no longer immured in Popish darkness! Let us remember our privileges and bless God with a loud voice that the darkness is past and the true Light shines since the name of Jesus, the preaching of His Word, and the power of His Truth have, in this respect, in a high degreemade our nation free!

Yet a man may be delivered from the bond of superstition and be still a serf, for he who is not ruled by a priest may still be controlled by the devil or by his own lusts which are much the same. Our carnal desires and inclinations are domineering lords enough, as those know who follow out their commands. A man may say, I feel not supernatural terrors. I know no superstitious horrors, and then, folding his arms, he may boast that he is free. But he may all the while be a slave to his own evil heart. He may be grinding at the mill of avarice, rotting in the reeking dungeon of sensuality, dragged along by the chains of maddened anger, or borne down by the yoke of fashionable custom.

He is the free man who is master of himself through the Grace of God. He who serves his own passions is the slave of the worst of despots. Talk to me not of dark dungeons beneath the sea level! Speak not to me of pits in which men have been entombed and forgotten! Tell me not of heavy chains, nor even of racks and the consuming fire. The slave of sin and Satan, sooner or later, knows greater horrors than thesehis doom is more terrible because it is eternaland his slavery more hopeless because it is one into which he willingly commits himself.

Perhaps there are those present who claim liberty for themselves and say that they are able to control their passions and have never given away to impure desires. Yes, a man may get as far as that in a modified sense and yet not be free. Perhaps I address those who, knowing the right, have struggled for it against the wrong. You have reformed yourselves from follies into which you had fallen. You have, by diligence, brought the flesh somewhat under control in its outward manifestations of sin, and now your life is moral, your conduct is respectable, your reputation high. Still, for all that it may be that you are conscious that you are not free.

Your old sins haunt you, your former corruptions perplex you. You have not found peace for you have not obtained forgiveness. You have buried your sins beneath the earth for years, but conscience has given them a resurrection and the ghosts of your past transgressions haunt you. You can scarcely sleep at night because of the recollection of the wrath of God which you deserve. And by day there is a gall put into your sweetest draughts because you know that you have sinned against Heaven and that Heaven must visit with vengeance your transgression. You have not yet come to the full liberty of the children of God, as you will do if you cast yourselves into the hands of Jesus who looses the captives.

If the Son therefore shall make you free, you shall be free, indeed free as the mere political liberator cannot make youfree as he cannot make you who merely delivers you from superstition! Free as reformation cannot make you. Free as God alone can make you by His free Spirit. If the Son therefore shall make you free, you shall be free, indeed.

Now this morning may the Lord give His servant help from on high while I try to talk with you. To those who feel today their slavery, my message may be profitable. Our first point is that to those who are the bond slaves of Satan, liberty is possible. The text would not mock us with a dreamit says, If the Son therefore shall make you free. All who are slaves shall not be set free, but there is the possibility of liberty implied in the text. Blessed if. It is like the prison window through the stony wall it lets in enough sunshine for us to read the word, hope. If the Son therefore shall make you free.

Secondly, there is a false freedom. You see that in the textYou shall be free, indeed. There were some who professed to be free, but were not so. The Greek is, You shall be free really, for there are some who are free only in the name and in the shadow of freedom, but who are not free as to the substance. Then thirdly, real freedom must come to us from the Son, that glorious Son of God, who, being free and giving Himself to us, gives us freedom. And then we shall close by putting a few personal questions as to whether the Son has made us free, or whether we still remain slaves.

I. First then, dear Friends, our text rings a sweet silver bell of hope in the ear of those who are imprisoned by their sin. FREEDOM IS POSSIBLEthe word if implies it. The Son of God can make the prisoner free. No matter who you are, nor what you are, nor how many years you may have remained the slaves of Satanthe Son, the glorious Liberatorcan make you free. He is able also to save them to the uttermost, who come unto God by Him.

Perhaps that which weighs upon you most heavily is a sense of your past guilt. I have offended GodI have offended often, willfully, atrociously, with many aggravations. On such-and-such a day I offended Him in the foulest manner and with deliberation. On other days I have run greedily in a course of vice. Nothing has restrained me from disobedience and nothing has impelled me to the service of God. All that His Word says against me I deserve. And every threat which His Book utters is justly due to me and may well be fulfilled. Is there a possibility that I can escape from guilt? Can so foul a sinner as I am be made clean? I know that the leopard cannot lose its spots, nor the Ethiopian change his skin by his

own efforts. Is there a Divine power which can take away my spots and change my nature?

Sinner, there is! No sin which you have committed need shut you out of Heaven. However damnable your iniquities may have been, there is forgiveness with God that He may be feared. You may have gone to the very verge of perdition, but the arm of Gods Grace is long enough to reach you. You may sit today with your tongue padlocked with blasphemy, your hands fast bound by acts of atrocious violence, your heart fettered with corruption, your feet chained fast to the Satanic blocks of unbeliefyour whole self locked up in the bondage of corruptionbut there is One so mighty to save that He can set even you, free! All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men.

The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. In the matter of guilt, then, there is the possibility of freedom. But can I be freed from the punishment of sin? says another. God is just: He must punish sin. It is not possible that the Judge of all the earth should allow such a rebel as I am to escape. Shall I go Scot free? Shall I have the same reward with the perfectly righteous? After years of unbelief am I still to be treated as though I had always been a willing and loving child? This is not justI must be punished.

Sinner, there is no need that you should be cast into Hell. No, you shall not be, if your trust is placed in the blood shed on Calvary. There is an imperative need that sin should be punished, but there is no need that it should be punished in your person. The stern laws of Justice demand that sin should meet with satisfaction, but there is no Law which demands that it should receive satisfaction from you, for if you believe, Christ has given satisfaction for you. If you trust Jesus Christ to save you, be assured that Christ was punished in your place, and suffered the whole of Divine wrath, so that there is no fear of your being cast into Hell.

If you believe, you cannot be punished, for there is no charge against youyour sins having been laid on Christ. And there can be no punishment exacted from you, for Christ has already discharged the whole. Gods justice cannot demand two executions for the same offense. O, let not the flames of Hell alarm you, Sinner! Let not Satan provoke you to despair by thoughts of the worm that never dies and of the fire that never can be quenched. You need not go therethere is a possibility of deliverance for you. And though your heart says, Never, never, shall I escape, trust not your heart! God is greater than your heart and knows all things.

Believe His testimony and fly to the great Deliverer for liberty! Freedom, then, from punishment is possible through Christ. I think I hear one say, Ah, but if I were saved from past sin and from all the punishment of it, yet still I should submit to the power of sin again. I have a wolf within my heart hungering after sin which will not be satisfied, though it is glutted with evil. The insatiable horseleech of my lust ever cries, Give, give! Can I be delivered from it? I have been bound with many resolutions, but sin, like Samson, has snapped them as though they were but green twigs. I have been shut up in many professions, as though I was now, once and for all, a prisoner to morality. But I have taken up posts and bars and every other restraint which kept me in and I have gone back to my old uncleanness. Can I, can I be saved from all these propensities, and all this inbred corruption?

My dear Friend, there is a hope for you that you may be. If you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, that same blood by which sin is pardoned enables man to overcome sin. They in Heaven washed their robes and made them white in His blood. But they have another note in their songthey overcame through the blood of the Lamb. Not only were they delivered from guilt, but from the power of sin. I do not tell you that in this life Christ Himself will make you perfectly free from indwelling sinthere will always be some corruption left in you to struggle withsome Canaanite still in the land to exercise your faith and to teach you the value of a Savior. But the neck of sin shall be under your footGod shall lead captive the great Adonibezek of your lust and you shall cut off his thumbs so that he cannot handle weapons of war.

If the enemy cannot be destroyed, at least his head shall be broken and he shall never have reigning power over youyou shall be free from sin, to live no longer in it. Oh, that blessed word if! How it sparkles! It may seem but a little starmay it herald the dawning of the Sun of Righteousness within youIf the Son therefore shall make you free.

Oh, says one, that is a great if, indeed. It cannot be! My guilt pardoned, my punishment remitted, and my nature changed? How can it be? Dear Friend, it

may be, and I trust it will be this morning, for this if comforts the preacher with a hope of success in delivering the Word. And may it give some hope to the hearers, that perhaps you may be made free yourselves. But I think I hear another exclaim, Sir, I am in bondage through fear of death. Go where I may, enjoying no assurance of acceptance in Christ, I am afraid to die. I know that I must one of these days close these eyes in the slumbers of the grave, but oh, it is a dread thought to me that I must stand before my God and pass the solemn test. I cannot look into the sepulcher without feeling that it is a cold, damp place. I cannot think of eternity without remembering the terrors which cluster round it to a sinner, where their worm dies not and where their fire is not quenched.

Ah, but my dear Friend, if the Son makes you free, He will deliver you from the fear of death. When sin is pardoned then the Law is satisfied and when the Law is satisfied then death becomes a friend. The strength of sin is the Lawthe Law is fulfilledthe strength of sin is broken. The sting of death is sinsin is pardoneddeath has a sting no longer. If you believe in Christ you shall never die in that sense in which you dread death. You shall fall asleep but you shall never die. That death of which you think is not the Christians portionit belongs to the ungodly. In it you shall have no share, if you trust the Savior. Borne on angels wings to Heavenup from calamity, imperfection, temptation and trial shall you mountflitting with the wings of a dove far above the clouds of sorrow! Leaving this dusky globe behind you, you shall enter into the splendors of immortality. You shall not die, but wake out of this dying world into a life of Glory! Come, Soul! If you trust in Christ, this if shall be no if, but a certainty todaythe Son shall make you free, indeed. I do not think I can bring out the full value of this liberty by merely speaking of the evils which we are delivered from. You know, Brethren, freedom consists not only in a negative but in a positivewe are not only free from, but we are free to. We hear of persons receiving the freedom of a city. This implies that certain privileges are bestowed. Now, if the Son therefore shall make you free, you shall be free, indeed, in the sense of privilegeyou shall be free to call yourself Gods child. You shall be free to say, Abba, Father, without rebuke. You shall be free to claim the protection of that Fathers House and the provision of His bounty. You shall be free to come to His knees with all your trials and tell Him all your griefs.

You shall be free to plead His promises and to receive the fulfillment of them, too. You shall be free to sit at His table, not as a servant is permitted sometimes to sit down when the feast is over to eat the leftovers, but you shall sit there as a well-beloved son, to eat the fatted calf while your Father with you, eats, drinks and is merry. You shall be free to enter into the Church on earth, the mother of us all. Free to all her ordinances. Free to share in all those gifts which Christ has given to his spouse. And when you die, you shall be free to enter into the rest which remains for the people of God. Free to partake of the New Jerusalem which is above. Free to use her harps of gold and to her streets of joy. Free to feast in her great banquet which lasts forever. Free access to the heart of God, to the throne of Christ and to the blessedness of eternity!

Oh, how good it is to think that there is a possibility of a freedom to such privileges as these and a possibility of it to the vilest of the vile! For some who were grossly guilty, some who had gone far astray have nevertheless enjoyed the fullness of the blessing of the Gospel of Peace. Look at Paul! No man enters more into the mystery of the Gospel than he. He had freedom to do sohe could comprehend with all saints what are the heights and depths, and know the love of Christ which passes knowledge and yet it is he, it is he who once foamed out threats, who sucked the blood of the saints! It is he who dyed his hands up to the very elbows in murderous gore. It is he who hated Christ! It is he who was a persecutor and injurious and yet is he free from evil and he is free to all the privileges of the chosen of God!

And why not you? And why not you? Woman, tottering and trembling, why should not, why should not the Son make you free? Man, tossed about with many doubts, why should not the great Liberator appear to you? Can there be a reason why not? You have not read the rolls of predestination and discovered that your name has been left out. It has not been revealed that for you there is no Atonement, but it is revealed to you that whoever believes on Him is not condemned. And this is the testimony which comes to youO that you would receive it!He that believes on the Lord Jesus Christ has everlasting life. O that you would be bold and trust Christ this morning and the if which is in our text shall become a blessed certainty to you! So then there is a possibility for freedom. We will pause awhile and then warn you against false freedom.   
II. BEWARE OF FALSE LIBERTY. Every good thing is imitated by Satan who is the master of counterfeits and therefore, libertya word fit to be used in Heaven and almost too good for fallen earthhas been used for the very basest of purposes and men have misnamed the devils offspring by this angelic title. We have in spiritual matters things called liberty which are not liberty. There is Antinomian libertyGod deliver us from that! A man says, I am not under the Law of God, therefore I will live as I like. A most blessed Truth of God followed by a most atrocious inference.

The Christian is not under the Law, but under Gracethat is a very precious factit is much better to serve God because we love Him, than because we are afraid of His wrath. To be under the Law is to give God the service of a slave who fears the lash. But to be under Grace is to serve God out of pure love to Him. Oh, to be a child and to give the obedience of a child and not the homage of a serf! But the Antinomian says, I am not under the Law, therefore will I live and fulfill my own lusts and pleasures.

Paul says of those who argue thus, their damnation is just. We have had the pain of knowing some who have said, I am Gods electChrist shed His blood for meI shall never perish! And then they have gone to the ale-house, they have sung the drunkards song and have even used the drunkards oath. What is this, dear Friends, but a strong delusion to believe a lie? They who can do this must surely have been some time in Satans oven, to be baked so hard. Why, these must have had their consciences taken out of them! Are they not turned to something worse than brutes? The dog does not say, My master feeds me and he will not destroy me, but is fond of me, therefore will I snarl at him or rend him?

Even the ass does not say, My master gives me fodder, therefore will I dash my heels into his face. The ox knows its owner and the ass his masters crib, but these men only know God to provoke Him and they profess that His love to them gives them a liberty to rebel against His will! God deliver you from any such freedom as this! Be not legalists, but love the Law of God and in it make your delight. Abhor all idea of being saved by good works, but O, be as full of good works as if you were to be saved by them!

Walk in holiness as if your own walking would make you enter into Heaven and then rest on Christ, knowing that nothing of your own can ever open the gate of the Celestial City. Eschew and abhor anything like Antinomianism. Do not be afraid of high doctrine. Men sometimes mislabel good sound Calvinism as Antinomianism. Do not be afraid of thatdo not be alarmed at the ugly word Antinomianism if it does not exist! But the thing itselfflee from it as from a serpent! Shake off the venomous beast into the fire as Paul did the viper which he found among the firewood. When you are gathering up the doctrines of Grace to cheer and comfort you, this deadly viper gets into the midst and when the fire begins to burn, he comes out of the heat and fastens upon you. Shake him off into the fire of Divine Love and there let the monster be consumed!

My Brethren, if we are loved of God with an everlasting love and are no more under the Law but free from its curse, let us serve God with all our hearts gratitude to Him. Let us say, I am Your servant. I am Your servant and the son of Your handmaidYou have loosed my bonds. Let the loosing of our bonds be an argument for service. Then again, Beloved,

there is another kind of freedom of which we must all be awareit is a notional professional freedom. Free? Yes, certainly we are. We are the people of God, say some. Not that they have ever passed from death unto life. Not that vital godliness is a matter they understand.

No. We always went to Church, or Chapel. We have never stopped going in our lives. We are the most regular of religious people and we were baptized, and we go to the sacrament and what is there that we do not do? Who convicts us of any sin? If we are not going to the Celestial City, who can be? Surely, surely, we enjoy much of the things of God! We sit in Gods House and we feel a pleasure when we listen to the Truth of God. Sacred song bears us on high as well as other men. We sit as Gods people sit and we hear as Gods people hearsurely we are free!

Ah, but dear Friends, a man may think himself free and still be a slave. You know there are many in this world who dream themselves to be what they are not. And you have a faculty of dreaming in the same manner. Christ must have come to you and shown you your slavery and broken your heart on account of it, or else you are not free. And you must have looked to the wounds of Jesus as the only gates of your escape and have seen in His hands the only power which could snap your fetters or else, though you have professed and re-professed, you are as much slaves of Satan as though you were in the Pit itself!

Beware, I pray you, of hereditary religion! A man cannot hand down his godliness as he does his goods. And I cannot receive Grace as I may receive lands, or gold, or silver. You must be born again. There must be the going up out of Egypt, the leaving the flesh pots and the brick kilns, and advancing through the Red Sea of Atonement into the wilderness and afterwards into the promised rest. Have you passed from death unto life? If not, beware of having a mere notional, professional liberty!

There are many, too, who have the liberty of natural self-righteousness and of the power of the flesh. They have fanciful, unfounded hopes of Heaven. They have never wronged anybody. They have never done any mischief in the world. They are amiable. They are generous to the poor. They are this, they are that, they are the other! Therefore they feel themselves to be free. They never feel their own inability. They can always pray alike and always sing alike. They have no changes. They are not emptied from vessel to vessel. Their confidence never wavers. They believe themselves all right and abide in their confidence.

They do not stop to examinetheir delusion is too strong and their comfort is much too precious for them to wish to mar it by looking to its foundationso they go on, on, onsound asleep till one of these days, falling over the awful precipice of ruin, they will wake up where waking will be too late! We know there are some such. They are in Gods House, but they are not Gods sons! You remember the case of Ishmael. It is to that which our Lord seems to allude here. Ishmael was a son of Abraham according to the flesh, but he never was free. His mother being a bondwoman, he was a slave.

He might call himself Abrahams son if he could, but being only after the flesh he was still a slave, for it was not in the power of Abraham, in the power of the flesh, to beget anything but bondage. And Ishmael at his best was still the son of the bondwoman. Yet you see he sits at the table, he eats and drinks just as merrily as the child of the promise. No, in some things he is stronger than Isaache has the advantage of age and I dare say plumes himself on being heir. Ah, says he, I am the elder one of the family. At last he mocked Isaacwhen the boys were at their sports he was violent towards his younger brother, even as many Pharisees are very cruel to true Believers.

What came of it? Why, the servant abides not in the house forever, but the son abides forever, and so the day came in which Sarah said, Cast out the bondwoman and her son, and away went Ishmael. He might cling to his father and say, I am your son. You must go, Sir, you are a slave. You were born after the flesh and therefore you take from your mother your state and condition and not from your father. Your mother was a bond slave and so are you and you must go. The privileges of the childrens house are not for you. You must go into the wilderness. You cannot abide here. But Isaac, though feeble and tempted and tried and vexed, is never sent out of his fathers houseneverhe abides forever.

This is the position of many. They are very good people in their way. They do their best, but what is their best? It is the offspring of the flesh. And that which is born of the flesh is flesh, Consequently their best endeavors only make them slaves in the house, not sons. Only he who is born by faith according to the promise is the free Isaac and abides in the house. The day will come when God will ask every member of the Christian Church and all who profess religion, Are you children by faith in the promise or not? And if you are only children according to the flesh He will send you back again into the wildernessto eternal ruin you must go unless the Spirit of God has given you the spirit of freedom.

There was a custom, observed among the Greeks and Romans that when a man died, if he left slaves, they went as a heritage to the elder son and if the elder son said, Some of these are my own Brethren, though they are slaves, I therefore pronounced them free, they would be free. Emancipation was not always allowed in either Greek or Roman statesa man might not always set a slave free without giving a good reason. But it was always held to be a valid reason if the son, coming into a heritage of slaves, chose to set them free. No question was asked if the son made them free. The law did not step in.

So, dear Friends, if the Son shall make us free, we shall be free, indeed. If Jesus Christ, the great Heir according to the promise, the great Mediator whom God has created Heir of all things, by whom also He made the worldsif He shall say to us who are as Ishmael, I make you free, then are we free, indeed! And neither Law, Justice, Heaven or Hell can bring any argument against us why we should not be free. But do beware of all imaginary freedoms and shun them as you would poison! And God give you Divine Grace to enjoy the glorious liberty of the children of God! III. TRUE FREEDOM COMES TO US THROUGH HIM WHO IS, IN THE

HIGHEST SENSE, THE SON. No man gets free except as he comes to Christ and takes Him to be his All in All. You may rivet on your fetters by going to the Law, to your own good works, to your willings and your praying and your doings, but you will never be free until you come to Christ. Mark you, Man, if you will come to Christ you shall be free this moment from every sort of bondage. But if you will go here and there, and try this and that and the other, you shall find all your trying will end in disappointment and you shall lie down in sorrow and in shamefor none but Jesusnone but Jesuscan make us free, indeed.

Real liberty comes from Him only. Let us think awhile of this real liberty. Remember it is a liberty righteously bestowed. Christ has a right to make men free. If I should set a slave free who belongs to his master, he might run for a timebut since I had not the power to give him a legal emancipationhe would be dragged back again. But the Son, who is heir of all things, has a right to make him free whom He wills to make free. The Law is on Christs side. Christ has such power in Heaven and earth committed to Him that if He says to the sinner, You are free, free he is before high Heaven.

Before Gods great bar you can plead the word of Jesus and you shall be delivered! Think, too, how dearly this freedom was purchased. Christ speaks it by His power, but He still bought it by His blood. He makes you free, Sinner, but it is by His own bonds. You go free because He bore your burden for you. See Him bear His agonyCrushed beneath the millstone of the Law till all His head, His hair, His garments were bloody. See Him yonder, dragged to Pilates hall, bound, whipped like a common felon, scourged like a murderer and dragged away by hellhounds through the streets. Look at Him fastened by those cruel fetters which went through His flesh to the accursed wood. See Him yielding up His liberty to the dungeon of death.

There the Mighty One sleeps in Joseph of Arimatheas tomb. Dearly did He purchase with His own bondage the liberty which He so freely gives. But, though dearly purchased, let us take up that keynoteHe freely gives it! Jesus asks nothing of us as a preparation for this liberty. He finds us sitting in sackcloth and ashes and bids us put on the beautiful array of freedom. He discovers us in a darkness which may be felt, sitting in the valley of the shadow of death and He brings the true Light in His hand and turns our midnight into blazing noon and all without our help, without our merit, and at first without our will.

Christ saves sinners just as they are! Christ died not for the righteous, but for the ungodly! His message is Grace, pure Grace, undiluted by a single condition or requisition which God might make of man. Just as you are, trust your soul with Christ and though there is in you no speck of anything that is good, He will save you and give you perfect liberty. Dearly has He bought it, but freely does He give iteven the faith by which we receive is the gift of God. It is a liberty which may be instantaneously received. The captive goes first through one door and then another and perhaps a hundred keys must grate in the wards of the lock before he feels the cool fresh air gladdening his brow.

But it is not so with the man who believes! The moment you believe, you are free! You may have been chained at a thousand points, but the instant you believe in Christ you are unfettered and free as the bird of the air. Not more free is the eagle which mounts to his rocky nest and afterwards outsoars the cloudseven he, the bird of Godis not more unfettered than the soul which Christ has delivered! Cut are the cords and in an instant you are clear of all and upward you mount to God! You may have come in here a slave and you may go out free!

Gods Grace can, in a moment, give you the condition of freedom and the nature of it. He can make you say, Abba, Father, with your whole heart, though up to this day you may have been of your father the devil, and his works you have done. In an instant is it worked! We are told in tropical lands that the sun seems to leap up from under the horizon and the dead of night is suddenly turned into the luster of dayso on a sudden does Gods Grace often dawn upon the darkness of sinful hearts. You have seen, perhaps, at times after showers of rain have fallen upon the earth, how land which seemed all dry and barren was suddenly covered with green grass, with here and there a lily full in bloom. And so a heart which has been like a desert, when once the shower of Jesus Grace falls on it, blossoms like the garden of the Lord and yields sweet perfume.

And that in a moment! You who have given yourselves up in despair you who have written your own condemnation! You who have made a league with death and a covenant with Hell and said, There is no hope, therefore will we go after our iniquities, I charge you, hear me, when I declare that my Lord and Master, who has broken my chains and set

me free, can break yours, tooand that with one blow! Mark, that if this is done, it is done forever. When Christ sets free, no chains can bind again. Let the Master say to me, Captive, I have delivered you, and it is done!

Come on, come on, you Fiends of the Pit! Mightier is He who is for us than all they who are against us. Come on, come on, temptations of the worldbut if the Lord is on our side, whom shall we fear? If He is our defense, who shall be our destruction? Come on, come on, you foul corruptions, come on you machinations and temptations of my own deceitful heartbut He who has begun the good work in me will carry it on and perfect it to the end.

Gather, gather, gather all your hosts together, you who are the foes of God and the enemies of man, and come at once with concentrated fury and with hellish might against my spiritbut if God acquitswho is he that condemns? Who shall separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord? The black stream of death shall never wash out the mark of Christian liberty! That skeleton monarch bears no yoke which he can put upon a Believers neck. We will shout victory when we are breast-deep amidst the last billows and grapple with the king upon the pale horsewe will throw the rider and win the victory in the last struggle, according as it is written, Thanks be unto God which gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Sparta and Greece refused to wear the yoke of Persia and broke the proud kings pomp. But we are free in a nobler sense! We refuse the yoke of Satan and will overcome his power as Christ overcame it in the days gone by. Let those who will, bend and crouch at the foot of the worlds monarch! But as for those whom God has made free, they claim to think, to believe, to act, and to be as their Divine instinct commands them and the Spirit of God enables themWhere the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. If the Son therefore shall make you free, you shall be free, indeed.

IV. And now we put round the QUESTION, are we free, then, this morning? Are we free? I will not answer it for you, nor need I just now answer for myself, but I would beseech you to make a searching enquiry into it. If you are free, then remember that you have changed your lodging place, for the slave and the son sleep not in the same room of the house. The things which satisfied you when a slave will not satisfy you NOW.

You wear a garment which a slave may never wear and you feel an instinct within which the slave can never feel. There is an Abba, Father, cry in you which was not there once. Is it so? Is it so? If you are free you lie not as you used to do. You go not to the slaves workyou have not now to toil and sweat to earn the wages of sin which is death. But now, as a son serves his father, you do a sons work and you expect to receive a sons rewardfor the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord!

One thing I know, if you are free then you are thinking about setting others free. And if you have no zeal for the emancipation of other men you are a slave yourself. If you are free you hate all sorts of chains, all sorts of sin and you will never willingly put on the fetters again. You live each day crying unto Him who made you free at first, to hold you up that you fall not into the snare. If you are free, this is not the world for you! This is the land of slaves. This is the world of bondage. If you are free, your heart has gone to Heaven, the land of the free. If you are free today, your spirit is longing for the time when you shall see the great Liberator face to face!

If you are free, you will bide your time until He calls you. But when He says, Friend, come up here, you will fearlessly mount to the upper spheresand death and sin shall be no hindrance to your advent to His Glory! I would we were all free! But if we are not, the next best thing I would is that those of us who are not free would fret under the fetterfor when the fetters are felt, they shall be broken! When the iron enters into the soul it shall be snapped. When you long for liberty you shall have it! When you seek for it as for hidden treasure and pant for it as the stag for the water brook, God will not deny you! Seek and you shall find. Knock and it shall be opened. Ask and it shall be given you.

God lead you to seek and knock and ask now, for Christs sake. Amen. Adapted from The C.H. Spurgeon Collection, Version 1.0, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307  
Sermon #2584 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

PLACE FOR THE WORD   
NO. 2584

INTENDED   
FOR READING ON LORDS-DAY, AUGUST 21, 1898.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, APRIL 8, 1883.

**My Word has no place in you.   
John 8:37.**

This was very plain speaking on the part of the Lord Jesus Christ. He could not only read the thoughts of these Jews, but He could also tell the source of them. He not only knew their feelings towards Himself, even before they expressed them, but He also knew why they had such feelings. Our Lord is not here, now, in bodily Presence, but He is here by His Spirit. He knows those who have received His Word, and He looks with gracious approval upon them. If you have given it entrance into your heart, thank Him for it and take care that you retain itand that you permit it to influence your whole life. Let His Word be in you as salt to preserve you and as light first shining into youand then, streaming from youlet it make your life a blessing to all those who are around you! My Master is glad as He looks upon everyone here who has received His Word. Precious is that coffer which holds the priceless treasure of the Word of Christ. Your body is precious to Him, your soul is precious to Him when He can see that sacred deposit of His own Word abiding within you!

But there are some here, I fearno, in all honesty I must say that there are some here in whom the Word of God is not to be found. To them Christ says, My Word has no place in you. Jesus knows your condition, my dear Hearer, if that is your case. He knows how often you have heard that Word and He knows what struggles it has cost you to keep that Word from entering your heart! He knows with what determination you have refused to receive that Truth of God which has come from God to you. I would like, if I could, to talk very simply and in a very friendly and homely manner to every person here who has not received Gods Word. And I would wish to speak so that I should not be understood to be preaching to this great mass of people so much as to be talking to individuals, one by one, lovingly anxious that any here who have not Christs Word in them may not go out of this building until it has a place in their hearts.

I. I will begin by asking this questionWHAT PLACE OUGHT THE WORD OF GOD HAVE IN MENS HEARTS? Jesus said to these Jews, My Word has no place in you. What place ought the Word of God have in our hearts?

First, it ought to have an inside place. Many persons will give it an outside place. The Word of God, says oneyes, of course I have it in my house. The Word of Godif you come home with me, you will find that I have a splendid copy of the Bible in my best room, well bound and capitally illustrated! Another says, I have a Bible in almost every room of my house. I think there is one in every room, I like to see it there. Yes, that is very proper and right, but still, the place for Gods Word is not an outside place, but an inside place! It is infinitely better to have it hidden in your heart than it is to have many copies of it laid among the furniture of your house. It may be that your having the Word of God so plentifully at home may increase your damnation rather than lead to your salvation! You had the Lamp of Life, but you made a dark lantern of ityou shut in the light and never used it for any practical purpose. My dear Hearers, you who pay an outward reverence to that Word and say that it is undoubtedly Inspired, and praise and extol itif, at the same time, believing it to be true, you do not yield yourself up to its power, may God have mercy upon you and lead you to repent of your sin! The proper place for the Word is inside, in your hearthave you got it hidden there?

Next, it ought to have a place of high honor. Gods Word in a man ought to be in the best part of that man, not merely in the store room of his memory, but in the drawing room of his enjoyments, in the parlor where it will talk with him. If the human mind is compared to a palace, the proper place for Christs Word is on the throne! All the writings of men put together cannot equal in value one single chapter of the Bible! Their words, at best, are but gold-leaf. But Gods Word is bullion! Here you have pearls that are altogether priceless, such as can never be found elsewhere. If the Word of Christ dwells in you, let it dwell in you richly let it be honored and reverenced beyond all the words of menhowever excellent those words may be.

Give the Word of Christ an inside place and a place of honor. Next, give it a place of trust. Let it cover you as the hen covers her chickens with her wings. Let it surround you as the ramparts surround the city and protect it from the invader. Give yourself up to Gods Truth as one trusts himself in a lifeboat, hoping to be safely landed. Have no confidence but in the Word of the Master. If you stand partly on Gods Word and partly on mans word, you will have one foot on a rock and the other foot upon quicksandand that one foot upon the quicksand will be your ruin! Trust you in the Lord forever, for His Word is faithful, true and steadfast. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but His Word shall never pass away! Give, then, to that Word, all your confidence! Repose upon it for it is Infallible and unchangeable.   
Further, if the Word of God is in you, give it a place of rule. Let it be the master of your thoughts, ruling your understandingthe master of your affections, curbing your passions and exciting holy desires in you. Let it be the master of your words. Let all sinful and even all

idle words be banished from your lips! Let your speech be seasoned with the salt of Revelation. Let the Word of the Lord be the master of your action. Whatever He says to you, do it. If Christ forbids you to do anything, let it be avoided with all the energy of your spirit. Put the Scripture, the Inspired Wordput Christ, the Incarnate Word, Himself, upon the throne of your whole being and surrender yourself to Him, without attempting to make any terms or conditions!   
The Word of God ought also to have in us a place of love. O how love I Your Law, said David. Gods Word is never truly known till it is loved. I hate vain thoughts, but Your Law do I love, said David. He esteemed it more than gold, yes, than much fine gold. In religion, to love is to know I wish it were always true that to know is to love. When we love the Word and it saturates our whole being so that we cannot relinquish it, but take an intense delight in it, and have a fervent affection for every part of it then it is that we put the Word of God into the place it ought to occupy not in the attic of the brain, but in the parlor of the heart, and there let it take up its permanent abode!   
That last remark suggests that the Word of Christ ought to have a permanent place in usit ought never to be forgotten. We should not be followers of Christ, today, and followers of somebody else, tomorrow. No! Let the Word that Christ has spoken have an eternal effect upon our immortal nature and a perpetual abiding place within our heart. God grant that it may be so intertwined with the very warp and woof of our being that it would be impossible to take it from us without destroying our very selves! May our life prove that the Living Word is within us, quickening us and causing us to live with the life of God!   
Now, dear Friends, it is for a special reason that I have insisted upon this point, that the Word of God should have its rightful place in us. I am no Prophet, nor the son of a Prophet, yet I perceive that there is coming upon the world a time of most unusual trial. I believe that within the next few years we shall hear of all sorts of fanaticism and folly such as you have hardly imagined. There will probably arise false christs and false prophets of every kindand you will be bid to believe in this, and to follow that, and to obey the other. I charge you, by the living God, have no master but Christ and have no book but the Bible to be your Infallible Guide! Now, soldiers, the watchword for today is, Stand fast. You who are but babes must grow, or else you will be swept off your feet in the cyclones of excitement that have already begun! Be no longer children, leaping over the hedge to seek for every nest that silly birds may build. Keep to the Kings Highway and follow Christ! And he that comes to you, though he seems a saint, transparent as crystal and bright as the sun, turn from him if he speaks to you any other thing than this Word of Christ, this permanent, perpetual Word which cannot be shaped or changed! Stand on this solid Rock and when the hurly-burly is over and when brains shall cease to swim, you will have cause to rejoice in your steadfastness! There are swift currents, now, that strain every ship and compel the mariner to put on all steam even to hold his own against themand blessed shall he be who is not carried away by them. Blessed shall be the brave sentinel of Christ who stood still in his watchtower though the morning was long in coming, and who watched through the dreary night with steadfast expectation that it would comeand with this resolve that whether it did come or did not comehe would stand where His Master put him!   
As for me, I care not what men invent, or what they denythe Truth which I have learned from the Scriptures, by the teaching of the Holy Spiritis the Truth of God by which I shall stand so long as there is breath in my body! And with Luther I say I can do no other. To this I must stand! Let those who will do otherwise, follow after novelties till they weary of them.   
This much have I spoken concerning the place which Gods Word ought to have in every mans heart.   
II. Now give me your heart, Friend. Let me have a good grip of it while I try to answer a second questionWHY HAS THAT WORD NO PLACE IN MANY HEARTS?   
Oh! says one, I am so very busy that I cannot admit it. My dear Friend, I hope you will alter that answer. I heard, some time ago, of one who, when anyone spoke to him about religion, always used to reply, You see, I am so very busy that I cannot attend to it. It happened, one morning, that he saw in the paper that a fellow-tradesman had suddenly died and, as he read the paragraph, he said to his wife, I dont know how old So-and-So found time to die! I have such a deal to do that I could not afford time to die. He staggered as he went out of the room and fell across the threshold dead within five minutes after having uttered that wicked speech! I have no doubt that the same thing has happened elsewhere. You may fancy that you are too busy to think of the affairs of your soul, yet you may be taken away, all of a sudden, from the midst of your occupations and then what will those gains benefit you? It may be printed in The Illustrated London News that you died worth so many thousands of pounds, but will it not be a great lie? When a rich man dies, what is he worth? He has, perhaps, a lead coffin, or the undertaker may use more expensive wood than for a poor man. Granted there might be a greater display at the funeral and, very often, there is more squabbling with his family over what he has left!   
I have often thought that the poor mans funeral has much more sorrow in it, much more that could be desired and spoken of with pleasure than the funeral of the man who seeks to be immensely rich. You know what happens when poor Hedge dies. His wife weeps, for he was the mainstay of the household, the bread-winner of the family. The poor woman wonders how he is to be buried. Well, there is his daughter, Maryshe is a domestic and she gets about 15 pounds a year for wages. She has not much to spare, but she makes up her mind that her father shall not be buried by the parish, so she finds a little of the money that is needed. There is the eldest son. He has eight children of his own and he has only the wages of an agricultural laborerbut he pinches so that he may subscribe his sovereign towards the expense. They all feel what they givethey are made to feel itand they all sincerely mourn and lament. And though there is not a sixpence to divide between them, yet with what honor and with what love they lay their father in the silent tomb!   
On the other hand, you know how it often is with rich peoplethe best part of the funeral is when the will is read. And I have more than once heard some such remark as thisThat man was very much like a hog no good to anybody while he lived, but he will make some fine sides of bacon when he is cut up. Is it worth while for a man to fling his soul away merely that he may get so much together that he cannot use, and which will very likely be misused by those who inherit it? I say that the game is not worth the candle. My dear Friend, if this is the game you have been playing, give it up at once, and say, I must have time. I will have time, come what may, to seek the salvation of my soul, for above all else I want to make sure of life eternal. You will not again say that you are too busy to receive Christs Word, will you?   
Another says, You ask me why the Word of Christ is not abiding in me? I think it is because. No, you would not like to say it, so I will say it for youit is because there is no particular novelty about it. You like a brand-new gospel, do you not? Well, there are plenty of people, nowadays, who supply that worthless article. We get a new sect about every month and some new-fashioned gospel invented almost every week! Away they go after something fresh. First, North, then, South. Then, East, then, West. Hurrah! We have found the very thing! Sound the timbrels, beat the drums, blow the trumpets! Just so, but the Kingdom of God comes not with observation. Remember what was written concerning Christ hundreds of years before He came to earth? He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause His voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall He not break, and the smoking flax shall He not quench: He shall bring forth judgment unto truth. If the gospel that men teach is new, it is not true, for there is nothing that can be new and true! The Truth of God is old as the everlasting hills. Therefore, dear Friends, be not touched with that Athenian madness of always seeking after some new thing! Did you ever hear of new gold? To all intents and purposes, all gold that is worth having is old. Men can make what they call pearls, sapphires and diamondsbut they are paste gems and utterly valueless. It is just the same with the doctrines made by menthey are not according to the eternal Word of God and, therefore, they are not worth a penny a cartload! Do not be so foolish as to reject Christs Word because it is ancientthat is the very reason why you should receive it and retain it in your memory and in your heart.   
Shall I suggest that there are some who do not receive Christs Word because they are listening to mans word? If you know anybody who is equal to my Master, hear him! If you know anybody who is superior to Christ, hear him! As for me, He is the one and the only Teacher of the Truth of God and at His feet I reverently and humbly sit. All other teachers whom I have ever heard of, or met with, so far as they speak as He does, are worthy of attention. But whenever their teaching differs from His, on that point they are worthy of no regard whatever! Did you say that such-and-such a thing is believed by you because you found it in Calvins Institutes? I am a Calvinist and a lover of that grand mans memory and doctrinebut I believe nothing merely because Calvin taught itbut because I have found his teaching in the Word of God. Oh, but the Prayer Book says such-and-such! It may do so, but, I pray you, believe nothing because it is there unless it can also be found in Holy Scripture! But such-and-such things were in the Minutes of Mr. Wesleys Conference. If they are according to Scripture, let them stand! But if they are not, who was Mr. Wesley that we should receive his teaching? Oh, but the archbishops have said it! And what are all the archbishops piled together from the days of the first archbishop until now, wherein they have differed from the Word of God? No, my Friend, do not fill your brain with other peoples teachingif you would be right, turn all else out and come and sayThe Word of Christ for me! The Word of Christ for me! If I have any influence over you and if you are ever inclined to believe a thing simply because I say it, I charge you, throw away such superstition and test all that I say by the Word of God. The real weight of truth consists not in what one man says, or in what another man saysthe weight, the power, the substance lies in what Christ has saidthat, and that alone, is the Truth of God.

I think I hear another say, I have not received Christs Word for it seems to me to be too spiritual, too holy. We can never deny that it is holy and spiritual, but, my Friend, think that matter over and withdraw those words you just uttered. Can anything be too spiritual to come from God, or too holy to bring us back to God? Let those characteristics of the Word of God charm you to Christ and not drive you away from Him!   
Oh, but, someone says, if I were to believe Christs Word, it would be very cold comfort to me, and it would rob me of many of my present enjoyments. Yes, if those enjoyments would rob you of your soul, but not else. There is no pleasure denied to me, as a Christian, except such pleasure as would be no pleasure to me as a Christian! The moment a mans mind takes in Christs Word and is saturated with Christs Spirit, he finds a pleasure only in that which is goodwhile that which is deluding, that which is degrading, that which is depraving, becomes a misery to him. Can anyone find comfort in Christs Word? Ask the sick who can lie on their beds and sing! Is there comfort in Christs Word? Ask the aged who, tottering on their staff in the midst of many infirmities, are taught a holy patience! Ask the dying who, as they gasp out their life, yet shout of victory, their faces beaming with the light of the Glory which is opening up before them! If you want real joy, find it in Christs Word, and no longer say that it has no place in you!   
Let me give you a very special squeeze of the hand and whisper in your ear that I am afraid the reason why Gods Word has no place in your heart is that you are not very much in earnest. You are only like a butterflyyou have not come to real living yetyou are sporting, playing, trifling. Oh, that you might soon find life in earnest and think in earnest about eternity! Then, but not till then, will you seek to lay hold on Christ.   
May I also whisper to you very softly and ask, Is not the reason why you have not received Christs Word because you have some favorite sin? I have known men who could not be Christians and they argued very plausibly about the matter, but the real hindrance was that they had another house besides their own. I have known some men who could not believe in Jesus Christ for one very sufficient reasonnamely, that they believed too much in the bottle. You know that a man cannot be a Believer in the Savior when he is devotedly attached to the god Bacchus! And I have known some to get very much enraged against the Truth of God and the one who preached it when the reason has been that their mode of conducting business did not square with the Gospel. Their yard measure was short of 36 inchesand when they began to count up to a hundred, it was very difficult for them to get beyond eighty-five! A dozen did not mean twelve, and a grosswell, I do not know how grossly short their gross fell.   
There are all sorts of tricks of trade and a man who practices them says, Well, you know, I am not strait-laced. No, Sir, nobody ever thought that you were. Oh, but I am not going to be one of your precise people! No, I know you are not. We really would not malign you so much as to suppose that you were going to be precise, like the Puritans, for instance. You, also, are among those who like a broad theology. Yes, I know, you sometimes are unable to get home at night because the pavement is so narrow. I understand you perfectly well. It is for this reason that many do not receive Christs Wordbecause there is some pet sin of their own that they do not like to have interfered with and, therefore, Christ and His Word are shut out of their heart.   
Shall I tell you one thing more? Very possibly you do not receive Christs Word because you need to be made a new man before you will do so. The carnal man receives not the things that are of God. There is a hard slab of rock in your heart and when the good Seed falls upon it, the birds soon take it away. What you need, Friends, is to have that rock broken up, dissolved, changed into pliable earth. Can I do that for you? I was going to say, I wish I could, but I cannot. Only the Eternal Spirit, who can quicken the dead, can renew you in the spirit of your mind. Cry unto God that this great miracle may be workedyou will never receive the Word until it is. This is the message for you, You must be born again. Must, mark you. It is not mayyou mustyou must be born again, for until you are born again, this living and incorruptible Seed of the Word of God will never get into your hearts. May the Holy Spirit speedily work the miracle of regeneration in your spirit!   
III. I have finished when I have tried to answer very briefly my third questionIF YOU HAVE NOT THE WORD OF CHRIST IN YOU, WHAT WILL COME OF IT?   
Something came to the Jews because they rejected Christs Word. They sought to kill Christ because His Word had no place in them. I hope that will not happen to you, Friends, but I have witnessed it in others. I have seen the child of godly parents quench conscience and resist the Spirit. I have seen many a young man, full of fair promises, but refusing to be decided for Christ and, all of a sudden, I have found him a skeptic, seen him grow into an infidel and seen him develop into a blasphemer. I have known him to become a most violent antagonist to the Gospel. Is your servant a dog, says one, that he should do this thing? No, it may be that you are not a dog, but there is enough of the dog spirit in you to do it. If you are dog enough to turn away from Christ, you will yet be dog enough to howl at His heels. Beware of resisting the Spirit of God and trifling with conscience, for there is nothing worse! A man may play on the edge of a precipice and he may do it safely for many a day, but one of these days he will make a fatal slip. Mind what you are doing, I pray you! Never let it be said of you, as Christ said to these Jews, You seek to kill Me because My Word has no place in you.   
Or, if that shall not be the case with you, I will tell you what may happen. Christ may cease speaking to you. I shall not leave off going to Chapel, says one. No, perhaps not, but the Gospel may no longer have any voice to you. Possibly it has already less power over you than it once hadyou used to shiver in your shoes when you heard the Truth of God! You have gone out of this place trembling under the Wordbut you do not do so now. I hope it is not because I do not preach as earnestly as I did, but if I do preach as earnestly and as faithfully as ever, then what is happening to you? Why, you are getting deaf ears and a callous, hardened heartand these are the commencement of that most awful of all conditions into which men slide when God says to His messengers, Go and tell this people, Hear you, indeed, but understand not; and see you, indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed. It is a terrible thing when even the Gospel becomes the savor of death unto death to those who would not permit it to be the savor of life unto life to them! Before Christ packs up His wares and goes His way because you would not have His goods, ask Him to let you buy them of Him. His terms will not hurt youHe sells His precious things without money and without price. Urgently require at His hands that before He turns His back on you, you may yield to Him and be saved!   
And, remember, once more, that if the Word of God has no place in us, it will exist somewhere. Down came the Word of God to a man, the other night, and it knocked very hard at his heart, but the door was shut. The Word knocked again, and again, and again. Still the door was shut and the Word went back to Him who sent it and it stayed there. How many times have you heard the Gospel, my Friend? Could you count up the number of faithful sermons that have been preached in your hearing? Do you know how many earnest entreaties from friends have been addressed to you in vain? You shut them out, but they all went back and there they areat the Throne of God! And when you come there, at last, and your trial takes place, you will be surprised to find all those messages and messengers present at the last grand assize to bear witness against you! Oh, let it not be so, I pray you! Will you not believe in Jesus Christ even now? Will you not turn to Him and live this very hour? Will you not leave your sins and trust the Savior? Will you not go to Him and, with a broken heart, confess that you need Him? He may be found of those who seek Him! Then, will you not seek Him now? If not, remember this scenethese crowded galleries, this area, these thousands of eyesI call upon all to witness against you, in that day, that this night I preached Christ to you and bade you liveand if you will not, if you prefer moral and eternal suicideI call this building, every beam and every stone in it, and every person here to witness that I have told you of the way of salvation, and implored you to run in it! They shall be swift witnesses against you to condemn you if you will not repent! Turn you, turn you, why will you die? Trust the Savior! Trust Him, now, and live forever! God grant that it may be so, for our Lord Jesus Christs sake! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **JOHN 8:28-59.**

Verse 28. Then said Jesus unto them.That is, to the Jews who were questioning and opposing Him.   
28. When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then shall you know that I am He, and that I do nothing of Myself; but as My Father has taught Me, I speak these things. Blessed be God, there were many, after the crucifixion of Christ, who did believe in Him! Yet, alas, in others, the blindness of heart continued and they would not see the Messiah in Him who was crucified. We, who believe in the uplifted Savior, can see the Father in the Son and, to us, faith has become a most blessed thingand we know that He does nothing of Himself and, that as the Father has taught Him, so He speaks.

29*.* And He that sent Me is with Me. I commend that short sentence to all my Masters servants, for there is great comfort in it. Your Lord could say this and so can you if you are truly employed in His serviceHe that sent me is with me.   
29. The Father has not left Me alone. There is another precious motto for you. Jesus could truly say, The Father has not left Me alone and, as He did not leave His only-begotten and well-beloved Son, so He will not leave any of His children.   
29. For I do always those things that please Him. Let us labor earnestly to be able to say that! If there is anything which would not please God, let us have nothing to do with it. If it would not please God, it ought not to please us. Blessed shall that servant of the Lord be who can sincerely say, I do always those things that please Him.   
30-32. As He spoke these words, many believed on Him. Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on Him, If you continue in My word, then are you My disciples indeed; and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. There is such a thing as a temporary faithbeware of it, I beseech you. Men appear to believe in Christ for a little while, like that Seed which was sown upon the rock, which speedily sprang up and, just as quickly, withered away. God-given faith is not temporary, but permanent. If you continue in My Word, then are you My disciples indeed. God gives us the faith which is able to endure the fire of persecution and which continues steadfast even when exposed to the evil example of an ungodly world. He that endures to the end shall be saved. But temporary faith brings only delusion and ends in destruction.   
33, 34. They answered Him, We are Abrahams seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how say You, You shall be made free? Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whoever commits sin is the servant of sin. Depend upon it, acts of sin breed habits of sin, and habits are like the chains which slaves wear. How many there are who are bound to their lusts with many shackles and fetters! Once they seemed to enjoy the sin and to hold it in subjection, but now it has bound them and they cannot escape from it.   
35, 36. And the servant abides not in the house forever: but the Son abides always. If the Son, therefore, shall make you free, you shall be free indeed. If He sets you free from sin, you will never go back to its slavery! There is no emancipation like that which Jesus brings, for it is eternal! When He snaps the fetter, He sets the Believer free forever.   
37, 38. 1 know that you are Abrahams seed; but you seek to kill Me because My word has no place in you. I speak that which I have seen with My Father: and you do that which you have seen with your father. It is a common characteristic of children to tell what they see. What they witness at home, they are sure to tell abroad. If you are a child of God, you will act and speak like your Father does. And if you are a child of the devil, you will act and speak like he. Our parentage may be discovered by our acts and our wordsI speak that which I have seen with My Father: and you do that which you have seen with your father.   
39. They answered and said unto Him, Abraham is our father. Jesus said unto them, If you were Abrahams children, you would do the works of Abraham. That is, if you were the true spiritual children of faithful Abraham, you would act as he did.   
40-42. But now you seek to kill Me, a Man that has told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham. You do the deeds of your father. Then said they to Him, We are not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God. Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, you would love Me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of Myself, but He sent Me. If any man has a right idea of God and really loves God, if he will study the Character of Christ, he will see that Christ is the very image of God in human fleshand he will fall in love with Christ. That result is inevitable! Men form wrong ideas of God and then, when they read the life of Christ, they see no likeness between the Christ and their conception of Godnor is there any! But if they would take their idea of God from Gods own Word, then they would see that in the Person of the Man of Nazareth, the Divine Character truly shines out, though it is toned down so as to meet the human eyes without the excessive glare that would blind them. But it is the same Light of Light, the same Love of Love, the Glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, for in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. He is the express Image of God and he who truly knows God will know that Christ is also God, for Father and Son are One.   
43-47. Why do you not understand My speech? Even because you cannot hear My word. You are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father you will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it. And because I tell you the truth, you believe Me not. Which of you convicts Me of sin! And if say the truth, why do you not believe Me? He that is of God hears Gods Words: you therefore hear them not, because you are not of God. What a wonderful Character was the Character of Christ! We get a strange light cast upon it as we read this dialog in which He endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself. My Brothers and Sisters, in Christ there is all the tenderness of a woman, but do not think that He is effeminate, far from it! What masculine force, what vigor, what power there is in Him! There are some people who, if we speak plainly against error, tell us that we are uncharitable and that we have not the spirit of Christ. Is it so? Did there ever fall from any lips more burning words than those which we find here, when He is brought into conflict with His foes? The fact is, He is meek and lowly, but He is most courageous! He is genial and kind, but He is honest and true! He speaks with suavity and gentleness, but, at the same time, there is great force about every expression that He uses. He does not mince matters when He is dealing with sin! There is no velvet on His lipsHe utters no honeyed phrases. Naked Truths of God flash like a scimitar from its scabbard when He has to deal with those who oppose it! Because I tell you the truth, you believe Me not. Which of you convicts Me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do you not believe Me? He that is of God hears Gods Words: you, therefore, hear them not, because you are not of God.   
48. Then answered the Jews, and said unto Him, Say we not well that You are a Samaritan, and have a devil? You know this form of answer. It is an old trick, when there is no caseabuse the plaintiff! So, when there is no answer to what Christ has said, call Him a Samaritan and say that He has a devil.   
49-51. Jesus answered, I have not a devil; but I honor My Father, and you dishonor Me. And I seek not My own glory: there is One that seeks and judges. Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keeps My saying, he shall never see death. What glorious Gospel brilliance Christ suddenly flashes upon these men! He promises even to them that if they will keep His saying, they shall live forever, they shall be partakers of an eternal, unquenchable life! It might have seemed to us to be like casting pearls before swine to proclaim that great Truth of God to such hearersbut our Masters infinite wisdom does not permit us to think so.   
52-56. Then said the Jews unto Him, Now we know that You have a devil. Abraham is dead, and the Prophets; and You say, If a man keeps My saying, he shall never taste of death. Are You greater than our father Abraham, who is dead? And the Prophets are dead: whom do You make Yourself out to be? Jesus answered, If I honor Myself, My honor is nothing: it is My Father that honors Me; of whom you say, that He is your God: yet you have not known Him, but I know Him: and if I should say, I know Him not, I should be a liar like you: but I know Him, and keep His saying. Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day: and He saw it, and was glad. He will not answer their questions, for they do not ask that they may learn. They ask that they may quibble. So He multiplies His riddles. He lets the light blind them yet more! Now He speaks, not so much of the undying life of Believers, as of His own eternal Existence, long before the Prophets and Abraham of whom they had spoken.   
57, 58. Then said the Jews unto Him, You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham? Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I Am. Before there was any Abraham, there was this glorious Christ of ours existing as the Eternal I AM, in all the infinity of His Glory! Now comes a thoroughly characteristic Jewish answer.   
59. Then took they up stones to cast at Him: but Jesus hid Himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them and so passed by. They believed that He claimed to be God, as He certainly did, and, therefore, they tried to stone Him. And there is no foothold for those who say that Christ was a very good Man, but only a Man. If He was not the Son of God, He was not a good Man, for no good man would have left upon his followers, and upon his foes, too, the impression that he claimed to be God if he were not! And no good man could have claimed to be God if he were not really so. Rank Jesus Christ either among the grossest of impostors, or else as the Son of Godone or the other! There is no halting-piece between the two. Blessed be Your name, O Son of Mary, You are also the Son of the Highest and, as such, we worship and adore You!

HYMNS FROM OUR OWN HYMN BOOK 166, 434, 478.   
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**UNIVERSAL FATHERHOODA LIE!   
NO. 2560**

**A SERMON   
INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS-DAY, MARCH 13, 1898.**

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON THURSDAY EVENING, FEBRUARY 1, 1883.

**I speak that which I have seen with My Father: and you do that which you have seen with your father.   
John 8:38.**

THESE were the words of Christ to those who beset Him round about with angry eyes and cruel tongues. Our Lord declared that He had been with His Father before He spoke with those wicked Jews. And, indeed, He had been, for He was with the Father before the worlds were formed. He saw all that the Father did and He helped in doing itWithout Him was not anything made that was made. He was the Fathers eternal delight. The relationship of father and son among man implies that one exists before the other, but it is not so implied in the relationship of the eternal Father and Son. We know not how to explain this great mystery, for the terms Father and Son are only the nearest approximation that can be given to our poor understandings of the relationship which exists between them. Yet is the Father eternal and the Son eternalthe Son coequal and coeternal with the Father. Our Lord had an existence before He was born of MaryHe had an everlasting existence. His goings forth were from of old, even from eternity. Though He is unto us the Child born and the Son given, yet He is equally, the Everlasting Father, who was and is and ever shall be One with the eternal God.

We learn, from what Christ said, that He knows all the Fathers mind. He understands the very essence of the Godhead. He is acquainted with the purposes that are kept secret from men and angels. As God, He knows what none of us can know till the day shall declare it and there is nothing in the Fathers heart that is hidden from Him. As the Son of Man, He knew not all things, for He grew up as a child and increased in knowledge. And He said, Of that day and that hour knows no man, no, not the angels which are in Heaven, neither the Son, but the Father. But as Divine, He is acquainted with all the Fathers heart, mind, will, desire, purpose and plan. The very heart of God is read by His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who dwells in it and is One with Him.

We ought to be very grateful that the Son of God has come into the world and told us all that we need to know concerning the Father. I speak, He says, that which I have seen with My Father. First He saw it all with such an eye as no one else hasand then He came here and spoke of it all, or as much of it as it was possible and wise for man to receive. Let us rejoice in the preaching of Christ, because He testified what He had seen. What He said was no theory, no guess-workHe revealed facts and that which He has told us concerning God is stamped with the solemn seal of Infallible Truth, for Christ cannot err or make mistakes. He has told us what He has seen and testified what He has known. Oh, for Divine Grace to receive His witness! He that does receive it shall live foreverHe that rejects it shall die the death that never dies!

Then, at the back of this follows another very consolatory thought that if Christs teaching is, indeed, the revelation of what He has seen with the Father, then we are quite certain, since God is never inconsistent with Himself, that there is nothing in the secret purpose and design of God which is contrary to the Gospel which Christ has revealed. When I read, therefore, Whoever will, let him take the water of life freely, I need not fear lest any doctrine of election or predestination will be in conflict with that invitation! If I hear Christ say, He that believes on Me has everlasting life, I may be quite sure that it is so. There is nothing in the sealed Book of the Divine Decrees that is contrary to the open Book of Divine Revelation. There is no passage in the mysterious roll of destiny that, rightly understood, can conflict in any degree with any part of the Volume which the Spirit of God has given us. This ought to make us very glad. I may sit down and pore over the tremendous mysteries of fixed fate, foreknowledge, predestination and the like until I confuse my mind and make my spirit heavy with a thousand gloomy thoughts about things I cannot understandbut what a mercy it is to say, He has said, He that believes and is baptized shall be saved. God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. It cannot be that God is keeping back in His mind something that is contrary to what He has spokenGod is not a man, that He should lie; neither the son of man, that He should repent: has He said, and shall He not do it? Or has He spoken and shall He not make it good? I rejoice to know that neither has Christ seen wrongly, nor is there anything which He has seen which would conflict with what He has said to us!

I want you, dear Friends, to look at the text and to notice two or three things that come out, as it were, incidentally. The first is that the doctrine of the universal fatherhood of God is a lie. That is clear enough from this passage, I speak that which I have seen with My Father: and you do that which you have seen with your father. Then, there are two fathers, and there are two sets of childrenthere is a Father whom Christ calls, My Father. And there is another father whom He calls, in speaking to the Jews who hated Him, your father. The prayer beginning, Our Father, which are in Heaven, was never meant to be used by everybody. In the mouth of the ungodly, it is altogether out of place, for God is not their Father. You must be born again before you can be the children of God. The Scripture statement is clear and distinctAs many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name. We are constantly spoken of as being begotten again, regenerated and adopted by Godall of which is a farce and a nullity if men are by creation and by their first natural birth, the children of God. It is not so! We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies in the Wicked One. Behold, what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of Godand the distinction is set forth between us who have received this manner of love and the multitude who are still the seed of the Wicked One. This truth needs to be proclaimed very forcibly and the axe must be laid to the root of that deadly upas tree of universal fatherhood, for all manner of mischief will result if unconverted men are led to believe that they are already the sons of God. They are not so until they have been Divinely translated out of the kingdom of Satan into the Kingdom of Gods dear Son.

Another fact that is incidentally taught us here is that there is a devil. A great many of the devils servants are so disrespectful to their lord that they even deny his existence and Satan, himself, is so self-denying in this respect that he denies his own existence and sets other people to do the same. Men squeezed the Lords prayer very hard when they made it read, Deliver us from evil, for it is pretty clear that it ought to be, Deliver us from the Evil One. There is a distinct enunciation of a great master-power of evil, a dread personality, the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now works in the children of disobedience: among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others, until Grace brought us out from that terrible state! They who have started on the road to Heaven know that there is a devil, for they have had many an evil thought that came not from themselves or from their fellow menstrange, dark, mysterious thoughts which have rushed upon them from the infernal regions and nowhere else!

And those who have stood foot to foot with Apollyon, as Christian did, know full well that he is neither a myth nor a dream, but an awful and powerful adversary from whom may God deliver us from day to day! Even His errand boys, his imps, are terrible enough, for Paul was hard put to it when he was vexed by a messenger of Satan who buffeted him. But as for Satan, himself, when he comes to fight with a soul, woe to that man unless he has the almighty power of God to enable him to bear up in the day of battle! Our Lord Jesus Christ here speaks of Satan as being just as real as the Father isI speak that which I have seen with My Father: and you do that which you have seen with your father. Then He says, in the 44th verse, You are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father you will do. I quite expect, one of these days, to meet a man who will tell me that I have neither eyes, nor ears, nor head, nor body, nor soul, nor anything else! Sometimes I have said to myself, Surely, the course of doubting can go no further! Men have reached the uttermost absurdity of unbelief. But, Brothers and Sisters, we know, to our joy, that there is a Father in Heaventhe God and Father of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and, sometimes, we also know to our terror that there is another father of another family, against whom we fight in full assurance of victory, rejoicing that the God of peace shall bruise Satan under our feet shortly.

Still, those are not the main Truths of God I want to bring out of the text. Let them be laid by to be thought upon, but think, now, of this Truththat nature is the root of character. That is the doctrine taught in this textthat conduct is the result of nature, for Christ says, I speak that which I have seen with My Father. And to His enemies He says, You do that which you have seen with your father. A child talks according to his nature. Has he good training at home? Does he live with godly parents? Hear him prattle and you will soon find out where he came from. Listen to another child who has lived in very different circumstancesone who has been brought up amid evil of every kind. As you hear

him talk, you learn from what kind of family he came. It is the real nature of a person which produces the conversation and the conduct. It is not good actions that make a good manit is the good man who does the good actions. It is not the sweet apples that make the tree sweet, but it is the sweetness of the sap, the excellence of the tree, which produces the good apples. So, you see, there is a great deal more to be done than to alter your talk and your actions! Our very nature has to be changed! That is the Truth of God I want to bring out before I close my discourse.

I. Note, first, that OUR BLESSED LORD PROVED HIS OWN PARENTAGE BY WHAT HE SAID. I speak that which I have seen with My Father.

Though I cannot put my thoughts into words as I would like, it seems so beautiful to me that our Lord Jesus Christ should be called the Holy Child Jesus and that all His life-teaching should be, as it were, a child telling what He has seen at home. You have sometimes heard a pretty little guileless child telling out all that it has seen while with its father and motherdisclosing even the innermost secrets of the family with naiveté and sweetness. And you have, perhaps, laughed heartily as you have seen how everything has been laid bare by that little talkers tongue. Now transfer that idea, on a sublime scale, to Christ. He comes, as the Holy Child Jesus, not to tell us of the grandeur of God, but as though He condescends to take upon Himself our child-nature in its immaturity. He tells us, as a child, what He has seen with the Father! It is such a blessed way of letting us know the secrets of Gods heart for the OnlyBegotten, the Well-Beloved, to come and tell us, who are made by Grace the younger members of the family, all that He has seen with the Father.

When we listen to Christ, we say at once that He speaks to us words of love. Never man spoke like this Man. He was Tenderness, itself. He spoke so winsomely and His words were so full of affection that, the common people heard Him gladly. Yes, and even the publicans and sinners drew near to Him to hear Him! The first words of hope they ever heard fell from His dear lips. The teachers of the Law were chilly and cold, and they froze up every thought of joy in the poor sinners soul, but the words of Christ were warm with brotherly affection, for He spoke of what He had seen with the Father! What had He seen with the Father but lovelove unutterable, love illimitable, love that endures forever, for God is Love!

Yet did Christ also speak words of justice. God is not so much Love that any true attribute which ought to be found in a perfect Character is absent and, therefore, God is Just. True Christianity is never dubious about the justice of God. The Lord abhors sin, He cannot endure it. He will by no means clear the guilty. The tone of the chapter I have read to you [see Exposition at end of sermon] seems severe and so it should be when spoken to hypocrites like those scribes and Pharisees. Do you expect God to treat them with anything but severity? When our Lord Jesus Christ declares that the wicked shall be cast into Hell, where their worm dies not, and the fire is not quenched. When He says, these shall go away into everlasting punishment, you see the sternness of Divine Justice! Turn back to the Old Testament and see whether this is not the Jehovah who was the God of Abraham, of Isaac and of Jacobthe righteous God who burned up Sodom and Gomorrah and destroyed Pharaoh and his hosts in the Red Sea. I confess that I have been as ready to tremble at the words of Jesus as at the tempest, fire and smoke of Sinais burning hill, for Love, when it speaks terrible things, makes them more awful because of love! Nothing causes the darkness of the tempest to stand out so terribly as that one bright flash of lightning that makes it afterwards seem darker than before. And when, in the gentle words of Christ, we see the gleam of Gods wondrous love, we feel confounded before the terror of many of His warnings because He speaks that which He has seen with His FatherHe keeps back nothing. He proclaims the God of Love, but He proclaims that God who shall come and shall not keep silent and who shall judge the nations in righteousnessand smite the wicked with a rod of iron!

Yet notice always about our blessed Master this trait in the character of His speech, that He always speaks words of Truth. To Christs sermons there need never be appended any list of errata. He has neither left anything out, nor left anything in by mistake. Nearly 19 centuries have tried and tested the teachings of Jesus and perhaps this century, with all its unbelief, does the Character of Christ more honor than any century that has gone before it! And certainly the influence of Christ is felt, today, in places of which people little dream. I heard one say that when our soldiers, in the fight in Egypt, stopped to put water to the lips of the thirsty enemies whom a century ago our troops would have slain at once, it was because the Christ was shadowing them! They felt His influence, though possibly most of them were not Christians at all. Everywhere the Christ is putting down barbarism in some form or other and helping to amend the character of menthey are girded by Him though they have not known Him! He has never had to alter or to revise His teaching, though our explanation of the teaching has had to be corrected. There have been prophets and teachers, not sent of God, who, to establish a system of doctrine, or a sect or denomination, have had to keep back or to exaggerate something or other, but it was not so with ChristHe spoke the Truth of God, the whole Truth and nothing but the Truth of God, for He had been with the Father, and as a child He told out what He had seen in the Fathers House.

Thus I might keep on bringing out various points about our Lords teaching, but I will only mention one other. And that is, the supreme holiness of the words of Christ. Jesus Christ, with all His gentleness and love, never tolerates sin. That narrative in this chapter, in which He said to the adulteress, Neither do I condemn you, has never made any other woman commit adultery and it has never helped a single conscience to find delight in unhallowed lust. No, the brightness of that glorious tenderness is as the shining of a crystal! It is so pure in its tenderness that while it is gentle with the sinnerand may we always be soyet it is all the more severe with the sin from its very gentleness! Christ never helps us to be selfish, or to excuse ourselves, or to be hypocritical, covering up our sin with a cloak of godliness. No, but His teaching is pure, transparent righteousness from beginning to end. And we feel as if we could bow down before Him and worship Him with the same adoration with which the cherubim and seraphim salute the Father and say to Christ, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God and Savior, our very hearts do worship You! The teaching of Jesus is thus holy because He speaks the things which He has seen with His Father.

II. Now I go to my second head which is that, like their Lord, CHRISTS PEOPLE SHOULD ALSO DISPLAY THEIR PARENTAGE. They should speak what they have seen with their father and brothers and sisters. You and I are not the children of God if it is not so with us. We begin to suspect the parentage of any who have no resemblance to their reputed parentsno family trait or feature whatever! And certainly in spiritual things, he who is in no respect like Christ, may begin to suspect that he is not a true-born child of God, but merely bears the name, and has not come by supernatural descent from the Most High.

Notice, first, that children of God have, in a measure, the Nature of their Father. We are not full-grown yet, some of us are very tiny babes, and it is not always easy to detect the Fathers likeness in His infants. That likeness comes out as the child grows and as the man appears. We are struck, sometimes, with the similarity between father and son, though we could scarcely trace it while the boy was but little. It is so with us in relation to our Heavenly Father. In regeneration, the Nature of God is imparted to usnot, of course, that high and incommunicable Essence of the Godhead which belongs to God, alonebut the Character and disposition of God become ours. Did not the Apostle Peter write, Simon Peter, a servant and an Apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Savior Jesus Christ: Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, according as His Divine power has given unto us all things that pertain unto life and Godliness, through the knowledge of Him that has called us to glory and virtue: whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these you might be partakers of the Divine Nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust?

The Spirit of God, in regeneration, creates in man a third principle which, I believe, was not there before. He is only body and soul until this miracle is worked, but then he becomes body, soul and spirithe rises into a higher sphere and enters into another world into which he could not have come before. The natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. The first man, Adam, was made a living soul and we are made in his likeness. The last Adam was made a quickening Spiritand when we, by being born again, receive His likeness, we then participate in that quickening and rise into the Nature and Image of God! There is a living and incorruptible seed which lives and abides forever and which becomes our life in that day when, by the power of the Spirit of the eternal God, we are begotten again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. This is a deep mystery and blessed are they who need not merely talk of it, because every day they know its power! Now, where there is the Nature of God, there will be a likeness to God, and you and I must have a measure of likeness to our great Father, or else it cannot be right for us to say that we are born of Him.

Next, the children of God, when they are in a right state of heart, live with their Father. If you send your children away to school and they never come home to see you, they may grow up with very little of your characteristics, for they are apt to be impressed by those with whom they live. Those who are born of God live with God. Moses said, Lord, You have been our dwelling place in all generations. And the Apostle John wrote, Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. It is our delight to go to our Father and to speak with Him. We dwell in God, even as Christ said to His disciples, Abide in Me, and I in you. You cannot live with a man without growing more or less like he is and, certainly, no child of God can live with God and contemplate the Person and Character of Christ so as to abide in Him without becoming changed into His image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

Children have a natural gift of imitation, so God s children imitate their Father. Pauls words, in Ephesians 5:1, should read, Be you imitators of God, as dear children. It is very curious to see how children will imitate their parents. Was there ever a preacher whose boy did not stand on a chair and try to preach? Was there ever a man who laid bricks, or used a saw, who has not caught his children doing the same sort of thing? Was there ever a girl who did not seem to know what she would come to in being a nurse of little children and, therefore, naturally took to nursing a doll? It is the habit of children to imitatethey cannot help it. Well now, if we are the children of God and if we dwell with God, the instinct of imitation will certainly manifest itself and we shall try to be doing, in our small way, those deeds of kindness and love, those acts of righteousness and holiness which God is doing! And it will be said of us in our measure, You do that which you have seen with your father.

Then, in addition, God s children tell what they hear. There is, in a child, the instinct is always to tell what it hears. I am afraid that I have not lost that instinct, myself, though I am no longer a child. I never like to be entrusted with anybodys secrets and I generally give people notice that if they want them published abroad, they have only to communicate them to me. It stops me from being bothered with a lot of things that will be sure to get known without my telling them! Children cannot keep a secret! It is no use to tell them to do so. If there is any family secret at all, the children must not only be put to bed at night, but they must be kept in bed all day, for, little pitchers have large ears, and they also have a great gift of running over! Children tell just the very thing that you do not want them to sayand say it just at the very time when you would rather they not have it said! So, the children of God must tell what they have seen of their Father. As soon as ever they have heard of the great Fathers love, something makes them want to run outside and find somebody to whom they can say, Did you ever hear this wonderful story? Perhaps that somebody has no sympathy with them, but he is bound to hear what they have to sayand then off they go to someone else to ask whether he ever heard this good news. Though they may be ridiculed and laughed at, yet these dear children of God will keep telling the blessed tale. The more a man has learned of Christ, the more, I believe, he will want to tell the endless and unreliable story of what he has seen with the Father!

I have known some professedly Christian people who hardly like to be spoken to about the things of God, but it ought not to be so. Let the dear children talk about their Lord as much as ever they likeat the street corners, if they please, or at the dinner table. Anywhere and everywhere, a good word for God ought never to be out of season. Surely, there is no place where a word about the precious Savior will be out of order! What if we do, sometimes, cast pearls before swine? We have so many of them that we can afford to let the wretched creatures munch one or twoand if they turn and tear us, we can endure even this in the hope that, afterwards, they may be sorry for it and God may tear and renew their hearts! Therefore, do not be bashful, you who know the Lord, but say with emphasis, I must speak that which I have seen with my Father.

III. Now I have to finish on the gloomy side of the subject, namely, that THE DEVILS FAMILY PARTAKE OF THE DEVILS NATURE and they are sure to speak that which they have seen with their father, too.

For instance, there are some who are very spiteful and speak with enmity, especially of Christian people. They cannot stand themthey have never a good word for them. They denounce their motives if they cannot find fault with their actions. I do not wonder that they do, because their father did a long while ago. One of his names is, the accuser of the brethren, and it was said to him of old, I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed. There is always that enmity and we expect to see it, so we are not surprised. But we are grieved for any of you who, by your speech, betray your hatred of the people of God and so reveal the fact that you are children of Satan. One said, I would like to kill all Christians. I hate them! I cannot endure them, especially if they are very earnest. I would have such fellows hung. Did not one say, the other day, of a certain minister, that he wished he had been killed in the accident? Yes, he did, and that is the feeling that some have toward those who are true Christians. What said the Jews concerning Paul? Away with such a fellow from the earth: for it is not fit that he should live. That is the way the devils children still talk, for they hear it at home with their father. Did Satan ever have a good word for our Father? No. Then he will never have a good word for His children. When, sometimes, he has spoken a true word, he has tried, with fiendish malice, to undermine the cause of Christ by praising it. But you remember how Paul and Silas would not let the devil praise them they stopped his mouth directly. The highest compliment the devil can pay to virtue, is to hate it. It is the unconscious homage that evil must pay to goodness to loathe it, even as Satan loathes all that is good and right.

Beside this, the devils children frequently speak untruths. There are some who lie in trade and some who lie in jestthey cal1 them, white lies. If this is the case with anybody here, do not deceive yourself, my Friend. You know who was a liar from the beginning and the father of liesand they who cannot or will not speak the Truth of God are the children of that ancient liarand they will have to go home to their father one of these days. They are not the children of God, for Gods children abhor a lie! When their word is once given, they will stand to it even to their own hurt. If you are not true, you have not been with the great Father of Truth and you must have learned falsehood from the great father of lies.

There are some, too, who are wic kedly proudproud of their person, proud of the rags they wear, proud of their abilities, proud of their station, proud of their ancestors, proud of I know not whattoo haughty, almost, to come near a commonplace person. Yes, they learned that of their father, for Lucifer is the very prince of pride! By that sin fell the angels. And in that sin live those who are like the fallen angels. I beseech you, fling away all pride! May God help you soon to be rid of it altogether!

Then there is another trait which is common enough in many persons and that is, self-will. They are not going to be ruled and governed and tied to their mothers apron strings. They will have their own way. If they suffer for it, they will do as they like and be their own master. Yes, and they learned that from their father, for that is the way he talked of old. Better, he said, to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven, according to Milton, and Milton has but put into words the spirit of that fallen one. He is rebellious, he cannot endure authority, he will not yield to Godthe word, obey, is one which he cannot stand. Oh, let those who are living in disobedience to God, in utter carelessness, as lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, self-seekers who never give a thought to what they owe to their Creator and their Lordlet them understand that all this betrays whose children they are and where they were brought up! Does anybody get angry at my speech and say, I will hear no more of it? That is like your father, too! And do you gnash your teeth and bite your tongues? That is like your father, tooYou do that which you have seen with your father.

What shall be the conclusion of my discourse? Why, my drear Friends, that it is of very little use for you to try and change your outward character, your language and so forth, first. What you need is for your nature to be changed. When the fountain is made sweet, the streams will be sweet, but, until the source is sweetened, that which comes out of it will still be impure. You must be born again. Do you ask, How can that be? Well, there is a very amazing connection between being born again and believing in the Lord Jesus Christ. Read the third chapter of Johns Gospel and note how our Lord not only said to Nicodemus, You must be born again, but He also said, As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up: that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life. Believe in Christ and you are born again! That act of faith is an indication that the new birth has taken place. The moment that God gives you the Grace to trust yourself with Christ, He has also renewed your nature! That act of trusting in Christ is like the first snowdrop that tells us that spring is near. Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you are a new person in Christ. Then live with your Father and go out and tell all what you have seen with your Father, and God bless you, for Christs sake! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C.H. SPURGEON: JOHN 8:12-39

Verses 12, 13. Then spoke Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: He that follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. The PhariseesThese wasps were always stinging Him! When He drove them away once, they quickly returned to attack Him again, The Pharisees

13-15. Therefore said unto Him, You bear record of Yourself; Your record is not true. Jesus answered and said unto them; Though I bear record of Myself, yet My record is true: for I know from where I came, and where I go; but you cannot tell from where I come, and where I go. You judge after the flesh; I judge no man. He did not come for that purpose the first time. He will come, a second time, to judge all mankind.

16. And yet if I judge, My judgment is true: for I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent Me. You see, Brothers and Sisters, how our Lord Jesus claimed to be God, for He put Himself here in such a connection with God as would be quite inconsistent for any mere man. This is what Paul meant when He said that Christ thought it not robbery to be equal with God, He thought it not a prize to be grasped, for it was already His.

17, 18. It is also written in your Law that the testimony of two men is true. I am One that bear witness of Myself, and the Father that sent Me bears witness of Me. He did that by the miracles which Christ worked and they proved that He was, indeed, sent of God.

19. Then said they unto Him, Where is Your Father? Jesus answered, You neither know Me, nor My Father: if you had known Me, you should have known My Father also. They thought they knew His reputed father, Joseph. They thought they also knew all about Christ, the carpenters Son, but there is more in Christ than carnal eyes can ever see. There is more in Christ than the most enlightened understanding, if it is but natural understanding, can ever perceive. These blind bats, the Pharisees, neither knew Christ nor the Father. If they had known Him, they would have known the Father, for Christ is the brightness of His Glory and the express Image of His Person.

20 *.* These words spoke Jesus in the treasury, as He taught in the Temple: and no man laid hands on Him; for His hour was not yet come. Like our Lord, every child of God is immortal till his work is done. This ought to divest us of every kind of fear. The enemy cannot lay hands upon a Christian until his Lord wills itand when his hour has come, then it behooves not the child of God to resist the Fathers will.

21. Then said Jesus again unto them, I go My way and you shall seek Me, and shall die in your sins: where I go, you cannot come. Oh, what a terrible sentence is that! I pray that the Lord may never say that to any of us, Where I go, you cannot come. That would be the death-knell of all our hopes and would make our life one long banishment. Blessed be His name! We who have sought Him and have found Him, by His Grace, know that. We shal1 not die in our sins and where He has gone, we shall also go!

22, 23. Then said the Jews, Will He kill Himself? because He says, Where I go, you cannot come. And He said unto them, You are from beneath; I am from above. You are of a groveling nature. Your thoughts rise out of the abyss where every evil dwells.

23, 24. You are of this world; I am not of this world. I said therefore, of you, that you shall die in your sins: for if you believe not that I am He, you shall die in your sins. If you have no faith in Christ as the Son of God, you shall die in your sins. What an awful thing it will be to die in your sins! What cerements for your eternal burial! What a robe of fire in which to lie down for your long sleep and then to find no sleep because of it! You shall die in your sins. I would like this short, stern sentence to ring in the ears of every unbeliever. These are not my words, but Christs own Wordsthe Words of the most loving and tender SaviorIf you believe not that I am He, you shall die in your sins.

25-29. Then said they unto Him, Who are You? And Jesus said unto them, Even the same that I said unto you from the beginning. I have many things to say and to judge of you: but He that sent Me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of Him. They understood not that He spoke to them of the Father. Then said Jesus unto them, When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then shall you know that I am He, and that I do nothing of Myself; but as My Father has taught Me, I speak these things. And He that sent Me is with Me. This made Christs life so calm, so deeply joyous amid all its sorrowHe that sent Me is with Me. Servant of God, can you say the same? If so, it is your joy, your confidence, your strength! God grant that we may, each one of us, realize that blessed Presence of our Lord!

29. The Father has not left Me alone, for I always do those things that please Him. Christ could truly say that. Oh, that it might be true of us, too!

30, 31. As He spoke these words, many believed on Him, Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on Him, If you continue in My Word, then are you My disciples indeed. If you became My disciples because of what I said, will you believe what I shall yet say? Are you prepared to take in still further revelations and to receive whatever I shall teach you? If so, then are you My disciples indeed

32. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. Some who heard this message of our Lord caught at itthey were always on the watch for anything to quibble at and contradict and, therefore

33, 34. They answered Him, We are Abrahams seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how say You, You shall be made free? Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whoever commits sin is the servant of sin. Or, the slave of sin. There is the test of your positionif you do the devils dirty work, you are his servant. If you delight in sin then you can hear your fetters clank if the ears of your conscience are but openWhoever commits sin is the servant of sin.

35-37. And the servant abides not in the house forever: but the Son abides always. If the Son, therefore, shall make you free, you shall be free, indeed. I know that you are Abrahams seed. I know what a boast you make of that.

37-39. But you seek to kill Me because My Word has no place in you. I speak that which I have seen with My Father: and you do that which you have seen with your father. They answered and said unto Him, Abraham is our father. Jesus had admitted that, as a matter of temporal descent, but He denied it as a matter of real fact.

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PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #1257 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

LOVE TO JESUS THE GREAT TEST   
NO. 1257

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, OCTOBER 3, 1875, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, you would love Me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of Myself, but He sent Me.   
John 8:42.**

THE order of salvation is, first, we believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and we obtain a change of heart as His gift, and then that renewed heart loves the Lord Jesus in whom it has believed. Faith leads the train of Divine Graces, not love. It would not be preaching the Gospel to say to men, Love Christ. Love to Jesus is an after growth. To preach the Gospel is to cry, Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved. The faith which saves is not, however, a mere credence of facts in which men feel no interest. It is a hearty trustfulness in Jesus for blessings of which we feel the need and it is, in every case, an operative faitha faith which worksand works by love. If you have, indeed, believed in the Lord Jesus Christ to the saving of your soul, then you are a child of God, for, to as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God.

If you are a son of God, you love your Father. And it is a rule that he that loves Him that begat loves Him, also, that is begotten of Him. So that true faith is the evidence of our sonship and sonship with God is attended with lovewhich love to the Father leads to the love of His Son, Jesus Christ. By this, then, shall you judge your faith this day, whether it is the faith of Gods elect or not. If it is a cold assent of the understanding, it will not save you. But if it is a warm allegiance of the heart, then it is, indeed, the faith which is of the operation of the Spirit of God.

I intend, this morning, to speak about our love to Christ. it may help you if I give you the outline, first, of what I have to say. Love to Christ is, in itself, essential. Secondly, love to Christ is the test of sonship, as the text informs us. And therefore, thirdly, love to Christ is a test which it is important for us to apply to ourselves at this time.

I. LOVE TO CHRIST IS, IN ITSELF, ESSENTIAL. There are some Graces in which a man may be deficient and though he may be the worse for that deficiency, still he may be a Christian. But love to Jesus is an essential Grace, a Grace of the heart, lying near the vitals of piety, so that the lack of it is fatal. You must love Jesus Christ if you are, indeed, alive unto God. Now observe, first, that the absence of love to Christ is the loss of one of the greatest of spiritual pleasures. We ought to pity, as well as to blame the man who does not love Jesus Christ. Alas, poor soul, into what a state has he fallen that he should not be able to love Him who is altogether lovely, nor to admire Him who is the Chief among ten thousand?

I met, not long ago, with a lady who had lost her taste and smella somewhat singular affliction. The fairest rose in the world cannot salute her nostrils with its pleasant perfume. The most dainty flavor that ever delighted mens palate has no charms for her. She is dead to those pleasures and I could not but sympathize with her in her loss. Yet, after all, this loss of pleasurable sensation is a trifleit will only last for a few yearsand when this brief life is over she will possess every desirable faculty.

But what a terrible thing to be unable to perceive the fragrance of the name of Jesus, which is as ointment poured forth! What sorrow is yours if you are unable to taste the sweet flavor of the bread of Heaven, or the richness of that wine on the lees well refined which makes the saints of God so glad! I had rather be blind, deaf and dumb and lose my taste and smell, than not love Christ! To be unable to appreciate HIM is the worst of disabilities, the most serious of calamities. It is not the loss of a single spiritual faculty, but it proves the death of the soul! It evidences the absence of all that can make existence worth the having, for he that has not the Son has not lifeand the wrath of God abides on him.

The absence of the love of Christ in the soul, again, is a sign of very grievous degradation. It is the mark of the animal that it cannot enter into intellectual pursuits. You may put before it the most delightful of studies, but the swine can never realize mental pleasure. It would be its degradation that it cannot, if, indeed, it had been originally intended for such pursuits. Man was made for the highest and most elevated enjoyment, the enjoyment of the Presence of God and the admiration of His infinite perfections. And when he loses this power to appreciate, admire and love his God, he sinks from his high calling to a level with the brutes.

If an angel could be lowered into a dog and yet could worship God and love Christ, he would scarcely have fallen at all, compared with the fatal descent of a man who is plunged into such a stupor of evil that he cannot perceive the loveliness of the Lord Jesus Christ! We greatly pity those poor creatures of our own race who are unable to reason, but what shall we think of those who cannot love, or rather cannot love where love should center? To the poor idiot you may read the most charming lines of Milton, but he cannot rise to a sense of sublimity. You may afterwards pour into his ears the pleasing sweetnesses of Wordsworth, or the fascinating allegories of Bunyan, but he smiles at you vacantly and you perceive that his imbecile mind is incapable of comprehension.

Sad it is that a human being should come down to thisand yet, not to love the Lord Jesus reveals a moral and spiritual imbecility far worse than mere mental incapacitybecause it is willful and involves a crime of the heart! Generally the non-appreciation of goodness is attended with an appetite for evil and, therefore, the ill is doubled. It was a great degradation for the king of Babylon when he left the diet of the royal table to roam the fields with the cattle and to eat grass like the oxen. It was not merely that his madness drove him from man, but it herded him with brutes! It not only took away his relish for bread but gave him a taste for grass!

It was a strange madness which drove a king to graze with beasts, but not more strange than that which makes men feed upon the ashes of this worlds sinful pleasures and turn aside from that which is truly bread. Oh, it is a worse insanity than that which is secluded within the walls of yonder Bedlam, this madness which can discover beauty in the painted face of the Jezebel of sin and is not charmed by the comeliness of Him whose brightness is the light of Heaven! Yet, O you saints of God, remember you were such not long ago! He came unto His own, and His own received Him not. We hid, as it were, our faces from Him. He was despised, and we esteemed Him not. Our foolish heart was darkened and we saw not Jesus, the Sun of Righteousness. Blessed be the Grace which has given us power to appreciate our Savior! May it increase more and more!

Let us pity, as well as blame, those who now are given over to the fast closing of their eyes that they cannot see my Lord, and the shutting of their ears that they cannot hear the music of His voice, and the deadening of their hearts that they cannot perceive the charms of His love. Alas for the degradation which is manifested in inability to love Jesus!

*That Holy One,   
Who came to earth for thee   
O basest thing beneath the sun,   
That He, by any mortal one,   
Forgotten ever should be.*

To be without love to Christ is a clear proof that the whole of our manhood is out of order. It would be impossible for us to be indifferent to the excellencies of Jesus if we were as God created us. And inasmuch as we do not love Him till Grace renews us, this proves how altogether diseased human nature has become. The understanding, were it well balanced, would judge that Christ is over all and before all and give to Him the preeminence in everything. But, being biased and thrown out of gear, the judgement puts Christ in the lowest place and pays its homage to the world, the flesh, or the devil, rather than to the King of kings!

The mind must be altogether debased and robbed of all nobility not to love One whose self-denying benevolence commands the admiring gratitude of all renewed spirits! Did our Lord descend from Heaven to earth to save His enemies? Being found on earth in fashion as a Man, did He endure every insult and every misery with the sole objective of blessing others? And did He, at last, endure pangs never to be describedand all for the sake of worthless man? Then not to love such a mirror of generous affection is to be mean in spirit and base at heart! Gratitude is no very stupendous virtue, but it is necessary to deliver us from being guilty of the meanest of all the vices, for ingratitude may justly be so described! Man despising Christ who died for man is a sight enough to make an angel mourn! Yes, seraphs might weep with wonder that a creature once so fair as man should have become so foul at heart!

God forgive the mind that can be so unjust, so perverted, so bewitched and besotted as to treat Jesus with indifference! Mans affections as well as his mind must have become terribly polluted, or he would at once love

Jesus. If the heart were what it should be, it would love the good, the right, the true, the beautiful. Nothing is more good, right, true, or beautiful than Jesus Christ, the Incarnate God, and that the heart does not instinctively love Him as soon as ever it perceives Him, is clear proof that it is poisoned at its fountain. It is given unto its idols and therefore it will not love the true God. If you needed, at this time, to prove mans fallen state, you might do so by a thousand arguments, but only one would be needed.

There, perhaps, was never a more powerful demonstration than that of the first chapter of Pauls Epistle to the Romans, which we dare not read in public. It is a chapter which contains the most terrible of indictments against our manhoodand every word of it true. But, Sirs, I take it that all the unnatural lusts into which men have fallen, though they are deeds which crimson the cheek of modesty, do not so thoroughly prove human nature to be corrupt as mans not loving Christ! A certain Divine on one occasion, wishing to display his rhetoric and bring down upon himself the admiration of his hearers, exclaimed, O Virtue, you are so fair and beautiful that if you should descend upon earth, all men would love you.

How greatly he erred! For Virtue did descend on earth, clothed in the most attractive form, the form of pure benevolence! And yet men received her not. Virtue came in the Person of our Lord Jesus, not dressed in the armor of Justice, but in the silken robes of Salvation, bedecked with charity and tenderness. But men refused her a habitation, denied her the common courtesies of life and, at last, condemned her to die! When man crucified Jesus, he did, as much as in him lay, destroy all goodness, truth and holiness. Then did he spit his worst venom upon everything that is lovely and of good repute, for he selected the most lovely and honored of all Beings to murder by his malice. Not to love Jesus Christ is, whatever your outward character may be, dear Friend, to angels and to all intelligent and purified spirits who are fit to judge, the most terrible symptom of your subjugation to a malignant spiritual disease which tyrannizes all your powers and causes you to be the opponent of your best Friend!

Not to love Jesus Christ is a sure token that we have no part nor lot in His salvation, for the first effect of receiving His salvation is to love Him. You remember our Lords parable of the two debtors. The one owed 500 pence and the other fifty. They were both freely forgiven their debts because they had nothing to pay. And the question asked, concerning them, was, Which of them will love him most? Now mark, the question was not, Which of them will love their generous benefactor? for it is taken for granted and who will deny it, that whether forgiven 50 pence or 500, they must love him who forgave them! It is inevitable that if you have been forgiven your sin, you should love Jesus Christ! And if you do not love Him, rest assured that in His precious blood you have no portionand His righteousness does not cover you. Solemn reflection! This excellent Grace of love is absolutely essential!

Without love to Christ it is clear that you are not saved, for you lack the mainspring of the spiritual life. We are often accused, when telling men to believe and live, that we throw a holy life and virtuous conversation into the shade. If our objectors were candid they would inquire whether their accusation is true, and as the result of that inquiry they would acquit us. Either ignorance, misunderstanding or malevolence must have occasioned the utterly groundless charge, for we have explained, times without number, that when we say, Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved, we do not mean that the belief of an abstract proposition will save men from Hell! We mean that trust in Jesus will change the heart and so save the life from sin. By salvation we mean salvation from sin, salvation from the old selfish life, salvation unto holy living! This is the salvation that we preachsalvation from eviland this, we say, is the

result of believing in the Lord Jesus Christ.

If these things are so, it is evident that the man who does not love Christ is not saved in this sense, for love to Christ is through the Holy Spirit made to be the mainspring and central force by which a holy life is created and sustained. The love of Christ constrains us. This is the grand power which keeps us back from evil and impels us toward holiness. In proportion as you love Jesus you will be holy! And in proportion as your love to Jesus becomes weak, the power of sin grows strong! And if there is no love to Jesus at all, then there are in you none of the elements which make up the Christian character

*Knowledge, alas! tis all in vain,   
And all in vain our fear;   
Our stubborn sins will fight and reign   
If love is absent there.*

Not to love Christ is a thing so dreadful that those who do love Him can hardly tell you how they tremble at the bare notion of being in such a condition! Death in the most horrible form would be preferable! Many a time have we sung, and I, for one, have felt it at my hearts core

*A very wretch, Lord, I should prove,   
Had I no love to Thee.   
Rather than not my Savior love,   
Oh, may I cease to be.*

It were much better never to have been born than not to love the Savior! It were better to go to annihilation, if such could be the case, than exist a moment without love to the Blessed One! Sometimes the saints of God have grown so warm concerning what is due to Jesus, their Lord, and have felt such a horror at the sin of not loving Him, that they have pronounced a curse, in Gods name, upon those who love not Christ. Perhaps the most terrible words in sacred Scripture are theseIf any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be ANATHEMA MARANATHAcursed when the Lord shall come. It is the major excommunication of the Church! It is the most solemn word of denunciation that could have fallen from Apostolic penand yet Paul felt that he must write iteven that Paul who could not speak of the enemies of Christs Cross without tears.

My dear Hearer, though you are the most moral person in the world and though you are the most orthodox professor in the Church, yet if you love not the Lord Jesus Christ, Anathema Maranatha must be sounded in your ears, for it is proclaimed in the Word of God against you! Who

would wish to live without the love of Jesus in his soul? It is the most hideous of all conditions, for it despoils our life on earth of its highest beauty and renders Heaven impossible! Until He gives you love to Christ, God Himself cannot give you Heaven! You may take my words in their broadest sense, for I mean them just as they stand. I say until God, Himself makes you love Christ, He cannot give you heavenly happiness, for the very essence of Heaven lies in the love of that which is good and true and the essence of all goodness and truth are in Jesus Christ!

Could you be carried to the place called Heaven without love to Christ you would be utterly out of your element! The nearer Presence of Christ into which you would be brought would cause you terror instead of happiness! And the delight which you would see upon the faces of ten thousand times ten thousand who love Him would only provoke you to a direr enmity and a bitterer despair! Oh, my Friend, you cannot know happiness till you know Christ! Till your heart beats with love to Him, the true life can never be yours! You are in darkness and death even now, without love to Christ, and so you must live. It is inevitable that it should be so. So I leave the first very weighty point, praying God, the Holy Spirit, to press it upon the hearts of all who have no affection for the Savior. It is essential that you should love Him.

II. LOVE TO CHRIST IS THE TEST OF SONSHIP. Certain modern teachers have asserted that God is the Father of all mankindand the doctrine of Universal Fatherhood is, I am told, exceedingly prevalent in certain quarters. That God is the Creator of all men and that in this sense men are the offspring of God, is undoubtedly true. But that unregenerate men are the sons of God is as undoubtedly false! How that flesh-pleasing doctrine can be supported, I do not know, for certainly my text gives it no assistance whatever, but rather strikes it a deadly blow.

If God were your Father, you would love Me. Consequently God is not the Father of those who do not love Christ! What do these teachers make out of the privilege of adoption? Why are men adopted, if children by nature? How is it that it is a special promise, I will be a Father unto you and you shall be My sons and daughters? What need of a promise of that which they have already? To as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to as many as believed on His name. What does that mean if everybody already is a child of God? How do they interpret that God has begotten His people, again, by the resurrection of Christ unto a lively hope? Were we sons already? How were we heirs of wrath even as others if all men are in the family of God?

They make use of an expression which bears two renderings to set up a theory which is destructive of the Gospel! I leave those to defend that statement who care to do so. I believe it to be altogether untenable if we keep to the Word of God. The Fatherhood of God is to a special people, chosen from before the foundation of the world and adopted and regenerated in due time, through His Grace. It appears from the text that love to Christ is the only Infallible test of our sonship towards God. Those to whom Christ spoke were, by nature and descent, if any in the world were, the children of God. If any men who did not love Christ could be the children of God they were the Jews who stood before Him, then, for they were of the seed of Abraham, whom God had chosen. They had been brought up from their very childhood in the observance of ceremonies which God had ordained and they bore in their flesh the mark of the Covenant.

They were, moreover, the only people under Heaven that worshipped one God. The Romans, the Greeks and all others were idolaters! These Jews were worshippers of the one unseen Jehovah and very tenacious they were about it, for after the Babylonian captivity, nothing could make a Jew worship an idol! Whatever faults they might have, they certainly were not wanderers from the unity of the Godhead. That they held and held most firmly. And, moreover, these people were, no doubt, made to suffer a good deal of abuse and reproach for worshipping the one, only and invisible God. They were despised by their Roman masters. And the polite Greeks, with their poetic mythology, sneered at their strange worship which they considered to be mere atheism, since they saw no image set up.

The Jew, therefore, stood out grandly as being, if any unregenerate man could be so, a son of God! And yet, as they did not love the Christ, they had not God for their father! Our Master tells them, If God were your Father, you would love Me. And so He puts down all pretensions arising from their pedigree, from their circumcision, from their rites and ceremonies, from their broad phylacteries and bordered garments and everything else! LOVE TO CHRIST is the great test of sonship to God! My dear Hearer, if you do not love Christ, you are no child of God, for if you were, you would love what your Father loves! Your nature, descended from God, would run in the same channeland since He loves Christ supremely and above all thingsso would you love Jesus Christ with all your heart beyond all the world!

If you were a child of God, you would love Jesus, for you would see God in Jesus. He says, Believe Me that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me, and inasmuch as you are a child of God, you would know your Father and perceive Him in the Son, in whom dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. He is the express image of His Person and the brightness of His Fathers glory. And as the child loves his father, so would you love the Godhead in Jesus Christ! It would be impossible for you to do otherwise! No, not only the Godhead, but even the Humanity of our Lord would win your love, for God loves holiness in man and especially in the Man, Christ Jesus, and so must we.

All the qualities of His Human Nature were brilliant with His Divine holiness and, therefore, will be sure to command your love if you love the Father. Every man loves that which is like himself. If you were born of God, you would love God. And Jesus Christ is God and, therefore, you would love Him. If you were born of God, you would be holy and true and loving and tenderand Jesus is all thatand so you would love Him. It is curious how language sometimes teaches morals. You know we have the word, like. We are said to like a thing. But the word has another meaningwe may be like to a thing.

Now a man always likes that which he is like and if you are like God, you love God, to whom you are like. And being like Christ, you like Christ, to whom you are like, for like loves like, or let me say, like likes its like. There must be love to Christ in the soul if you are like to Christ, which you are if you are a child of God. If you are a child of God you must love Christ, because of His essential Divinity. For notice in the text, I proceeded forth and came from God. I do not understand that expression nobody does. You have heard of Dr. Dollinger and a number of learned men meeting to lay down dogmatic declarations upon the double procession of the Holy Spirit.

What a foolish task! They were engaged in defining a subject which they could not possibly understandants met to measure the sun! Mosquitoes debating upon eternity! We cannot enter into the springs of the sea, nor can we enter into the essence of Deity, or the relationships of the blessed Persons of the Trinity, the one to the other! And no man ever undertakes to do so but what he goes wrong, misled by his own presumption! If any man were to undertake to look the sun in the face by the day together he would soon become blindthe light is so excessive and mortal eyes are so dimthat blindness must follow.

Jesus Christ is the Son of God by what we are accustomed to call eternal filiation, or what the text calls proceeding from Him and, therefore, because of that, being Divine and proceeding from the Divine Father in some mysterious sense, He is, Himself to be devoutly adored. And if we are the children of God we must love the Lord Jesus. The text adds that we shall also love Him because of His mission. I came from God; neither came I of Myself, but He sent Me. If we love God we must love that which comes from God. I know when I left the village where I was first pastor and where I had loved the people much and they had loved me, I used to say if I saw even a dog which came from that parish I should be glad to see him, for I felt a love to everything and everybody coming from that spot.

It matters not how small the triflea little flower or a piece of leaf from the gardenyou prize it, for it came from someone you revere. Ah, that little shoe of your dear babe now in Heaven! Or a little piece of the handwriting of your dear mother, now with God! How dear they are! How much more should we love Christ because He came from God! And comes, not as a mere relic or memorial, but as His living, loving Voice! If a child were far away, in India, and he had not heard from home for some time, and he at last received a letter, how sweet it would be! It comes from Father. How pleased he is to get it.

But suppose a messenger should come and say, I came from your father? Why, he would feel at once the deepest interest in him! Would you shut your door against your fathers messenger? No, but you would say, Come in, though it is the middle of the night, I shall always have an ear for you. Shall we not, thus, welcome Jesus? And then, remember, while Jesus came as our Fathers Messenger, what a message He brought pardon for sin, restoration from the Fall, acceptance in the Beloved and eternal life and Glory! Oh, when He comes from the Father, comes for the Father and comes with a message meant to lead us to the Father, we, who are the children of God must love Him for all these reasons! It is not possible that you can be a child of God and not love the Christ whom the Father has anointed, the Messiah whom the Father has sent, the Jesus whom the Father has made to be the Savior, the Immanuel, the God With Us, the Fathers Self revealed in fullness of Grace and Truth!

That He came not of Himself is another reason for love. When a man lives only to serve himself, our love begins to dry up for lack of secret springs. But when we perceive that Jesus Christ did not come of Himself, but was sent of the Fatherthat His aims and objectives were not for Himself in any degree, but entirely for the Father and for usour heart must go out towards Him!

III. I might thus continue, but there is no need for it, to show you that you must love Jesus. And so I close with the APPLICATION. Lend me your ears and hearts a few minutes. If it is so, that love to Christ is essential and is the main test of sonship, come, Brothers and Sisters, do we love Him or not? Now, put the question all round. I know some will say, Love Him? Yes, that I do. Yes, but I will still ask you, for my Lord asked Peter three times, you know, Simon, son of Jonas, do you love Me? And I do not suppose you are better than Peter, so I must repeat the question, though you may answer it as quickly as he did, for it will not hurt you to answer aright three timesbut it would hurt to answer falsely once. So let us put the question homeDo you love Jesus? If I love Him, then I trust Him and lean on Him with all my weight. Ah, I do that. Blessed be His name, I know I do. Can you not speak with assurance as to that point? Tell me, then, have you any other hope besides that which springs from His dear Cross and wounded side? If you have, you do not love Him. But if your trust rests wholly and alone on Him, there are the beginnings of love in you! The root of the matter is there.

If you love Him, you will keep His Word. That is the next point. He says, If any man love Me, he will keep My Word, that is to say, he will reverence what Jesus said and endeavor to learn from His teaching. You will believe what He says and desire to know its meaning. Now, are you quite sure that you pay reverence to the Words of Christ? How about your neglected Bible? How about the parts of Scripture which you have never wished to understand because you were afraid it was a little different from the articles of your Church or the creed of your family? That does not look like reverence to Christs Word!

My dear Friend, let me put the question very pointedly. Do you want to know what Christ taught? Are you willing to believe all He reveals? Do you ask the Holy Spirit to lead you into the things of Christ? For remember, he who breaks one of the least of our Lords Commandments and teaches men so, the same shall be least in the kingdom of Heaven and would you wish to be that? Another test of love to Christ is this, If you love Me, keep My commandments. It is not merely hearing His Word, for that the man did who built his house upon the sand. But the Lord said, He that hears

My Word and does it, is like a man that built his house on a rock. Does it. Does it! Do you obey Christ? If you do not, you do not love Him!

If the commands of Jesus are treated by you as matters of no importance, then your heart is not with Him. The child is to love his father, but the command by which his love is to be tested is, Children, obey your parents in all things. So with Jesus! If you love Him, you will obey Him. Now search your hearts and look at your livesare there not some points which might make you question? At any rate, I think there are many matters that should make us pray, Lord, You know all things and, therefore, You know all my sins and all my failures. But still you know that I love you! Deliver me from sin and let me not grieve You any more.

Now, apply that text to your heart in another form. If you love Christ you will imitate Him. It is the nature of love to be imitative. The sincerest form of admiration is imitation. If you love Jesus, you will labor to be like He. I am sure you will. Are you trying to be Christ-like? You perceive in yourself many things that are not in Christdo you long to get rid of those things? And you see in Jesus Christ many excellencies which you have not yet reached. Are you pressing towards them? Then I know you love Himbut if there is no imitation there is no love.

Love to Christ may also be judged of by love to His people. He who loves Jesus is sure to love all others whose hearts burn with the same flame. How is it with you? Well, you say, I love some of the Brethren. Yes, and so do the publicans and sinners love some of them. Certain of Gods people are so very sweet in their tempers and excellent in their natural dispositions that I should think the most wicked person in the world must love them! But the test is to love them for Jesus sake, even though you cannot help seeing their mistakes and faults.

I love the saints, says one. At least, I love all of my denomination. That, also, is very easy, for the Sadducees loved the Sadducees and the Pharisees loved the Pharisees. But the thing is to love Gods people, though you fear that they are in error upon certain pointsand though you cannot agree with them in some of their viewsand think they dishonor God by certain failures. The Christian loves all who are in Christ, not because of their soundness in the faith, but because of their union to Jesus. Come, then, do you love the Lords people because they are His? We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the Brethren.

And, dear Friend, you may judge, again, whether you love Christ by thisdo you sympathize with His objectives? Whenever we love another, we begin to love the things which he loves. Christ desires to see this world brought to His feet. Do you wish to see Him King over the nations? He desires to gather out to Himself a chosen people. Are you seeking to bring in His wanderers? He delights to save the sons of men. Do you wish to see them saved? Do your thoughts, wishes and desires run in a groove with those of Jesus? If so, you love Him.

Again, do you serve His cause? That love which never leads to action is poor love. Is it love at all? The affection which can be content without doing anything for the beloved object is so base a thing that it were a shame to degrade that golden name of love by applying it to such a miserable counterfeit! Love Jesus? And yet you have never taught a little child His name? Love Jesus? And you are an orator and yet you never stand up to proclaim His Gospel? Love Jesus? And your gold lies cankering and your silver is tarnishedand you give none of these to His work? Love Jesus? And it never costs you a nights unrest, or an hours distress of mind because His kingdom does not come? I thank God I do not understand your love and hope I never may! May God give you a better love than thismay He give you the love which works and shows itself in deeds.

If you love Jesus, you desire to be with Him and you are very glad of every opportunity of having special fellowship with Him. I know if you love Him you will not be happy to live a day without Him. You will feel ill at ease if He is gone but for an hour. If you love Jesus, oh, how you pant for the time when you will see Him face to face! If you love Him, there are seasons when you become sick of love after Him! When you feel as if to die were a fleabite or a nothing if you might but behold His face! How often, when you have been to the House of God and heard a sermon that has carried you near to Jesus, you have been ready to say, like Simeon, Lord, now let Your servant depart in peace according to Your word, for my eyes have seen Your salvation? When you have had to go back into the world again, you have almost felt unhappy to think you were bound to linger in this far-off country and you could only feel satisfied by saying, Sun of my soul abide with me, for this world is dark and dreary without You.

I pass the question round again. Is there anyone here who dares not say, I love the Savior? Then, my dear Friend, I beseech you to look that matter in the face, for if you do not love Christ heartily and sincerely, then you are none of His! And you are none of Godsyou are a child of Satan! Well, says one, it would not yield me any comfort to know that. No, and I do not want you to find any comfort, for comfort, now, would be deadly to you. A good physician does not always look to the immediate ease of his patienthe has his eyes on the cure. I want you to be uncomfortable till Jesus comforts you. I want you to be ashamed of not loving Christ until you become unhappy about it.

I beg you to stand at the foot of Calvarys Cross and look up and see Jesus bleeding and dying, and then say, He has done all this, and yet I do not love Him. I wish you would go into the Garden of Gethsemane and see the bloody drops of sweat fall upon the frozen ground, and hear His cries and groans for sinners, and then say, and yet I do not love Him. I beg you to look at Him taken down from the Cross and laid in the tomb with the image of death stamped on His glorious facea death which He endured out of pure love to His enemiesand then I would have you see if you are vile enough to say, And yet I do not love Him. I beg you in spirit to follow Him in His Resurrection and to see Him as He breathes peace over His disciples and then see if you dare say, I do not love Him. I would wish you to see Him, by faith, rising as He ascends into Glory and

a cloud receives Him, and then I would like you to put your hands to your brow and feel as if your heart must burst while you say, Yet I do not love Him.

I would have you see Him sitting on His Throne in all His Glory, adored by myriads of the blessed, with every harp string in Heaven thrilling out His praise as He sits at the right hand of the Father, and the Father takes delight in Him. Amid that splendor I would wish you to stand and begin to smite upon your breast, and say, And yet, alas, this hard heart does not love Him. How I wish you would get to your chamber and pour your soul out in a flood of tears, to think that, by-and-by, He will come to judge the world in righteousness and to be admired of them that believe, and you, unless you are renewed in heart, will have to stand among that mighty throng that shall surround His Great White Throne and weep and wail and wish you never had been born, while the dire thought will flash through your mind, I do not love Him. He is come to judge me and I am far off from Him, unsaved, uncleansed in His blood.

I entreat you to think of it now, that you may not have to realize it later. Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, O you unloving heart, and you shall be saved from your unloving spirit and taught to esteem Him whom to love is the best evidence of eternal life!

**O love beyond all mortal thought!   
Unquenchable by flood or sea!   
Love that through death to man has brought The life of immortality!   
You do enkindle Heavens own fire   
In hearts all dead to high desire.   
Let love for love our souls inflame,   
The perfect love that fails never;   
And sweet hosannas to your name   
Through Heavens vast dome go up forever.**

***PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMONJohn 8:21-59.*** HYMNS FROM OUR OWN HYMN BOOK423, 807, 377.  
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NOMINAL CHRISTIANSREAL INFIDELS   
NO. 492

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON SUNDAY MORNING, FEBRUARY 1, 1863, BY THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**If I say the truth, why do you not believe Me?   
John 8:46.**

As we meet this evening to commune at the Table of the Lord, it will then be necessary for me to seek the edification of Gods people. I therefore think it best to occupy our time this morning with an exhortation to those that are out of the way. May the Holy Spirit make our words like arrows from the bow of a mighty man. May He graciously direct them to the chosen hearts which He has ordained to bless, and may this hallowed hour be a time of salvation to many among you. Whatever may be lacking in the human instrument, I trust there will be no absence of true affection and solemn earnestness. And O, may the Holy Spirit use those infirmities under which I labor this morning to magnify His own strength!

You know, dear Friends, there has been a great deal of talk lately about the Infidelity, which like a whirlwind, shakes the Establishment. We felt a very stiff breeze caused by certain, Essays and Reviews, and before that could blow over, a perfect hurricane from the African shore astonished many, and alarmed a few. Everybody agrees to censure the inconsistency of a man who wears a miter and quarrels with Moses, professes to be a minister of the Church and undermines her foundations. Too much importance has been attached to the poor attempts of the Arithmetical Unbeliever and what was in reality nothing more than a storm in a teacup has been exaggerated until all the sea of Christendom is tossed with tempest.

To my mind, there is a terrible enemy abroad far more worthy of our steel than the recreant prelate and his Zulu teachers. Spare your voices, O Watchmen of Zion, for a mightier enemyand reserve your swords for a sterner adversary of our Israel. Secret unbelief, as the mother and foster parent of all open infidelity, requires to be watched and wept over. Let us mourn over the professed unbelief of the age. But there is an unbelief more gross than this, more dishonest, more inconsistent, more widely spread, and more deceptive in its character! It is an infidelity so impalpable that we cannot readily arrest it, and drag it into the court of conscience!

It is so unreasonable that argument is out of place in contending with it. This pestilence which walks in darkness, broods frightfully over our congregations, and smothers beneath its death-bearing wings not a few of you, whose souls I would win for Christ. Into the battle with this destroyer of souls I enter this day. Oh, may my Lord and Master give me power to strike home. Solemnly I protest against that dishonest, inconsistent infidelity of which some of you are the victims. You tell me that you believe the Bible to be inspired of God. No suspicions as to its Divine authority

linger in your mind. You have faith in the Gospel which we preach, that it is genuine, true, and sound.

But here lies your inconsistency or dishonestyyou say it is truebut you do not believe it! You admit that it came from God, but practically you reject it! You will not deny that it is worthy of all acceptationit must be so if it came from God. You admit it deals with all-important mattersand yet you practically say it is not worthy of your attention, since many of you are still in disobedience to the voice of love, neglecting the great salvation.

Before charging home upon your consciences, my Hearers, I feel impelled to remark that many professors of religion deserve the rebuke of the text, for they say they believe the Bible, but they do not act in accordance with it. We have been boasting, in the language of Chillingworth, that the Bible, and the Bible alone, is the religion of Protestantsbut the boast requires a little examination. Do we not tolerate many things among Protestants which can never be vindicated from Scripture?

You tell me that the Bible is your religion, and yet bring your infants for Baptism! You sprinkle their brows, or sign their foreheads with a cross. And where do you find your warrant for thus profaning an ordinance which sets forth the burial of Believers with their Lord? Tradition may lend a forced and lame support to baby sprinkling, but to the Bible it is a novelty unknown. Moreover I ask you where comes confirmation? Will anyone be bold enough to assert that there is anything in Gods Word like it?

Yes, and morewhere do you find a State Establishment? Verily, not in the New Testament, since our Lord has said, My kingdom is not of this world, and this unworldly Gospel is a standing protest against the spiritual fornication which State religion involves. Everywhere, in all sects, I see inventions of men arrogating the place of the Commandments of God. Let us sweep our temples, and return unto the Word of the Lord. Say not that you believe the Book, when you act as though it were not truewhen you advocate practices, and set up rites and ceremonies unknown to Apostolic times, and Scriptural records.

Brethren, again I say it, our Churches require to be brought face to face with the infallible Word. By this test try them allthey say the thing is truewill they believe it? Will they practice it? Will they abide by the standard? High professors, the love of this world is enmity against God! You profess to love God, but you are as worldly, as fond of fashion and its frivolities, as pleased with pomp and its fooleries, as hungry for honor and its pretensions, as you can be. And yet you say this Book is true!

Verily, by your acts you prove that you believe it not. I might draw up today a dreadful bill of indictment against the visible Church of this age. I might prove to a demonstration that it is not delivered from this present evil world, according to the will of God, even the Father. And that it teaches for doctrines the commandments of menso that it deserves to be met with the unanswerable question and faithful rebuke of our Lord JesusIf I say the truth, why do you not believe Me?

Although fidelity to my Lord required these few remarks, which are not meant as an angry discovery of a Brothers faults, but as the faithful wounds of a friend, I turn to the matter which has most to do with you, the people of my charge. Having shown you the many giants heads which might be smitten by this smooth stone, taken out of the brook, I shall now take aim at your hearts, O you who believe not on my Lord!

I. Unbelievers in Christ, MY TEXT SETS FORTH VERY PITHILY AND PERTINENTLY YOUR INCONSISTENCY.

If I say the truth, why do you not believe Me? If you boldly meet me by saying, I am not converted, for I do not believe in the mission of Christ, your position is a consistent, though a terrible one. If you tell me you have suspicions about the inspiration of Scripture, and therefore you do not believe in Christ, your position is certainly dangerous, if it is not despicable. But when you tell me that you believe Jesus Christ was sent from Heaven, and that His Gospel is the revelation of God to manand you are still at this day unconvertedyour position, besides its tremendous responsibility and danger, is extraordinarily inconsistent, so inconsistent that an honest man should blush to remain in it for an hour.   
Were you rightly to weigh the matter you would say, I will not, I will not be thus a liar unto my soul any longer. I will not contradict myself, but I will be consistent, and since the thing is true, I will believe it.   
Remember, first of all, that Jesus Christ has revealed to you your need. He has told you in express words that you need regeneration. Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Enlarging upon the doctrine, He addsExcept a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of Heaven. He has laid the new birth before you as an imperative necessity. You admit that this is true. Your admission that this Book came from God is clearly an assent to this teaching. Why, then, is it that you who have never passed from death unto life?   
Why do you remain contented without that Divine change, and are satisfied with moral reformation or outward respectability, while the Book assures you that these will never do? The Great Master assures you that you must be converted. Hear His express wordsExcept you are converted and become as little children, you shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of Heaven. This you allow to be correct, for it is in the Book which you agree to reverence. Oh, Sinner, how then, can you be at ease in an unconverted state? How is it that you can remain so careless, when Heaven is barred against you because you are not converted?   
You cannot delude yourself with the thought that perhaps all will be well with you, when Christ assures you it cannot be well with you except you experience His converting Grace. Has He not told you, too, in many a passage of prophetic and Apostolic Scripture, that you must return unto the God from whom you have wandered, and leave your sins, and give your heart to Him? What meant that gracious parable concerning the prodigal? Did it not set you forth, you who have spent your living with harlots, and are brought to the degradations of sin? Did He not teach you that your only hope lies in quick return to your offended, but loving Father in Heaven? I will arise and go to my Fatheris not this fit language for you?   
The citizens of this countrywhat can they do for you? They send you into their fields to feed swine, but you cannot fill your belly with the husks which the swine eat. Does not Jesus, in that loving parable, say affectionately to you, Return unto your God? Oh, if this is true, and you say it is, then believe itand sure I am your heart will yearn towards your Fathers house, and you will run towards your home at once. Is it not true that we must abhor that which is evil and turn with full purpose of heart unto the Lord? True, you answer, certainly it is. Why then, I reply, do you not believe it, and act upon the belief?   
Dear Friends, if any physician, well-known and honored, should meet you today on your way home, and if he should most affectionately and solemnly inform you that you bear about in your person a dreadful disease. Methinks if you should profess to believe his warning, and yet you should seek no remedy for it, but remain totally unaffected by the dreadful assurance, it might well be asked of you, How can you say it is true, for you evidently do not believe it?   
O my Hearers, as though Christ spoke to you by me, so I ask you this questionHow can you, as candid persons, how can you as honest men, admit this Book to be true, when it tells you that your whole head is sick, and your whole heart faint? When it warns you that, dying as you now are, without a work of Divine Grace in you, you are lost to all eternity how can you, I say, admit these things to be true, and yet prove by your apathy and carelessness that you do not believe them? May God press that enquiry home upon you!   
Our Lord Jesus Christ came not only to reveal your need, but also to set forth His claims. The claims of Jesus of Nazareth are briefly stated by Peter, Repent and be converted, everyone of you, that your sins may be blotted out when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord. He demands repentancethat is, a change of mindthe changing of your mind with reference to sin, caring no more for its pleasures, despising it and turning away from it. A change of mind with regard to holinessseeking your happiness in it. A change of mind with regard to Christ Himself, so that you shall no longer look upon Him as without form or comeliness, but as a most precious Savior, such as you need.   
Sinner, Christ demands of you that you should take your ornaments of self-righteousness from you, and wrap yourself in the sackcloth of humiliation, and cast the ashes of penitence upon your head, and cry, Unclean! Unclean! Unclean! Moreover, He requires faith of you. Repent and believe the Gospel. This is the commandment, that you believe on Jesus Christ whom God has sent. The Jews said, What shall we do that we may do the work of God? Christ said, This is the work of God, that you believe on Jesus Christ whom He has sent. He demands that faith which will accept Him to be the sole cleanser from sin, and to be the sole possessor, as He is the sole redeemer, of the heart.   
Friend, you believe that no less a Person than the Son of God thus bids you look unto Him and be saved. You believe that the Son of God was nailed to the Cross, and that out of love to you He demands that you forsake the sin which will destroy you. And He demands you believe in His blood which will cleanse you. Does Jesus thus speak? Are these demands the hard inventions of a tyrannical priesthood, or the mild and tender claims of love? Is it a mere man who bids you believe and live, or is it the Redeemer, in whom dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, who commands you to believe and be baptized?   
If the claim to faith is true and just, why do you not accede to it? Why harden your hearts? Why stand out against incarnate love, pleading and persuading you? Oh, strange inconsistency, to know the Saviors Truth, but not to believe Him! Oh, shameful dishonesty, to grant the validity of His claim, but to be careless concerning the discharge of it! To grant the justness of the requirement, and refuse to accede to it with your hearts is to write yourselves down as deceitful and unrighteous. If I say the truth, why do you not believe Me?   
Further, Christ came to provide the remedy for your soul. Christ did not preach an impossible Gospelone out of the reach of sinners. He provided a real, ready, and available salvation. No, Beloved, He came to preach glad tidings of great joy to men, a Gospel worthy of all acceptation, in which even the vilest have a share. And this is itthat God wills not the death of the sinner, but had rather that he should turn unto Him and live. That, in order that mercy and justice might both meet, Christ, Gods own dear Son, was sacrificed on Calvary for the ungodly. The Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God. And that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life.   
This is the Gospela Gospel to be preached to every creature, from the cold snows of Lapland to the balmy plains of the torrid zonea Gospel to be published among, every people wherever sinners are foundthat Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, even the very chief, and that an act of faith in Him saves the soul. A simple trusting in Him and the soul is delivered from all sin. My Friends, you profess that this is true. O my Hearers, very few among you doubt that this Gospel is Divine.   
The most of you who sit in these seats Sunday after Sunday, never raise any difficulties of that sort. You say, Our minister has preached the Gospel to us. But oh, if this is true, why do you not believe it? If there is a remedy, a sure one, a God-appointed one, why do you not receive it? O Sirs, this damnable inconsistency of yours will ruin your souls, unless you repent of it. Deny it altogether, and I can understand your position, though I weep over it. But say that it is true, and yet reject it, and your folly is so glaring that it shall be a theme for laughter in Hell, when fiends shall be your companions and the eternal burnings your perpetual abode.   
How can it be? You are hanging over the jaws of Hell, the flames flash into your face! A strong hand that can save you is stretched out. You refuse its grasp and will refuse it, still, unless it lays hold on you by force. Perishing! The very medicine offered you which will cure you, and you will not receive it although you know its healing virtue! You do not believe it. There is infidelity in your heart, and before you condemn open unbelievers, search your own hearts, for how are you better than they? May not your sins be less excusable and your state less hopeful than theirs?   
Dear Friends. Our blessed Lord came also to reveal the freeness of His Grace. Oh, what freeness was there in the Gospel when Christ preached it! No cold theology His lips. Words did not hang like icicles there, but out of His mouth there flowed rivers of living water. What can be freer than thisCome unto Me all you that labor and are heavy-laden and I will give you rest? Or what more wide than thisIf any man thirst let him come unto Me and drink? Or what more gracious than this, by the lips of His servant JohnWhosoever will, let him come and take of the water of life freely? Oh, I need not repeat these invitations! I shall rather remind you that you admit them to be true, hearty, Divine invitations.

Why then, oh, why do you not believe them? You say, Yes, it is freely presented. I have not a doubt about that. Then why do you stand shivering and refusing to lay hold on eternal life? Soul, if this Gospel were hedged with thorns or guarded with bayonets I would recommend you to fling yourself upon their very points to reach it. But when the door is opened, and when Christ Himself, dressed in bleeding love, woos you to comehow shall I make an excuse for you when you can say it is true and yet you do not believe it? May God give you wisdom and teach you reasonright reason.   
Furthermore, Jesus Christ in His preaching gave a very clear description of the danger of unregenerate souls. Hear how He puts itWhere their worm dies not and their fire is not quenched. Mark how He speaks of the unprofitable servantCast him into outer darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Observe how He describes the goats on the left hand, these are the thundering accents of the Judge of All Depart from me, you cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.   
No preacher was ever so awfully explicit upon future punishment as Jesus of Nazareth. No human ministry ever gave such graphic and harrowing descriptions of Hell as Christ has given. You say you believe the words of Jesusyou do not suspect a loving Savior of exaggeration, do you? Oh, my Hearers, I ask you now, in the name of Godif it is true, why do you not believe it? You do not believe itthat is clear enough. Would you sit quietly in your seat this morning, young man, if you really believed that within one instant you may be in Hell?   
Old Man! Old in years, and old in sinwould you be as quiet in your soul today as you are if you knew and believed that there is but a step between you and the flames? Oh, all of you who can make merry while yet you have no hope in Jesus, could it be so with you if you really believed in the wrath of God which abides on you? So near the lake of fire and yet so full of levity! Death and damnation at your doors, and yet jesting and unconcerned! My soul is full of horror at your madness! My heart is ready to burst with anguish at the ruin which will so soon overtake you! What shall I say unto you? How shall I reason with you?Surely if the thunders of an angry God do not arouse you, you will sleep yourselves into the lowest Hell.

Brethren, let me add, Christ has brought to light the hope of immortality, eternal life and Heaven. What glowing pictures does the Word of God give of the state of the blessed in the land of the hereafter! What music streams from angels harps! What joy irradiates every celestial brow! What hallowed blessedness floats along the river of the Water of Life in the midst of every street of the new Jerusalem! You admire the poetry of the Book of God and marvel at its matchless painting of scenes beyond the flood. You believe that Jesus has revealed that which eye had not seen and ear had not heard. Then why do you not believe it?

If you believed it you would seek after it, you would strive to enter in at the strait gate. You would labor for the meat which perishes not. The Spirit of God would lead you to prize the world to come. You would tread this present fleeting world beneath your feet, and be looking for, and hasting unto the glories which are yet to be revealed in those who love the Lord. The sum of all this is the weighty enquiry of our Lord Jesus. If I say the truth why do you not believe Me? If Christ is no liar, if His Word is no fiction, how can you remain as you now areungodly, unthinking, unconverted men and women? May the Holy Spirit constrain you to give heed to this searching question.

II. YOU OFFER SOME DEFENSE OF YOUR INCONSISTENCY, BUT I ANSWER THAT YOUR APOLOGIES DO NOT MEET THE CASE.   
I hear one say, Sir, I do not feel myself entitled to come to Christ. The Revelation of God is true, but I do not believe in Christ because I do not feel any need that I should. I answer that this is no excusethis is rather a proof of guilt. You do not believe that which Christ has told you concerning yourself. The Word of God informs you in many places that your case is an awful and a lamentable one. If you believed this, you would never have to complain that you did not feel it. In matters relating to the body, we feel first, and then believe.   
My hand smarts, and therefore I believe that it has been wounded. But in things relating to the soul, you believe first, and feel afterwards. A woman cannot feel grief on account of the loss of her child till she believes she has lost it. A young man cannot feel joy at the inheritance of a large estate till he believes he has inherited it. But it is impossible for a loving mother to believe that her child is lost, and not to weep, or for an ambitious young man to believe himself suddenly made rich and not to rejoice. Now, if you really believed your heart to be as deceitful as the Bible says it is. If you really believed sin to be as dreadful a thing as God regards it to be, you would necessarily feel repentance and conviction.  
Alas, it is only when the Spirit of God gives you a real belief in these things that you repent in earnest. The real root of your hardness of heart lies in your not believing what you admit to be true. You say the Bible is true, but you say what you do not mean. Oh, I would that this inconsistency would strike you! You say it is true, but you cannot believe it, or you would be at once aroused to anxious conviction.   
But you make a second apology. But, Sir, I do not see how faith can save me. Here, again, there is no excuse, because the basis of your doubt, after all, is thisyou do not believe what Scripture reveals. If you speak honestly, you really mean to say, The testimony of the Bible concerning salvation through faith is not true. Let me affectionately remove this stumbling block, if it is ignorance and not willful unbelief. You say you cannot see how faith can save you. Do you not know that faith, in itself, does not save?   
Faith saves by reason of that which it lays hold of. Christ stood in the place of every man living that ever did or will believe on Him. He took the sins of those persons and was punished for them. And those who trust Him receive the effect of what He suffered. To say that faith could save would be an unreasonable thingbut that the Object of faith, the Divine suffering Savior can saveis no unreasonable doctrine. Now, if you do really believe what Scripture tells you concerning this, you cannot again raise this objection, that you do not see how faith can save.   
But you say you prefer works. But Scripture tells you, times without number, that by the works of the law there shall no flesh be justified. And it adds that all your righteousnesses are but as filthy rags. So all hope in that quarter is destroyed. You admit that Scripture is true, and yet you want to be saved by your works! This is to say that black is white! This is to make God a liar, and yet, to make you bow, and compliment Him as the God of Truth at the same time. Sinner, if you believe the Bible, it is as clear as noonday that he that believes on Him is not condemned, and that he that believes not is condemned already, because he has not believed on the Son of God.   
Perhaps you meet me by saying, that you have long thought that the good things promised in the Gospel, simply and only to faith, are too good to be true. That, conscious of being a lost sinner, and a very wretched offender, you have not the presumption to believe that if you were to trust Christ this very morning, all your sins would be forgiven. Well Friend, come now, you talk like a humble man, but it is very likely you are very proud. Let me get ahold of you by the button. What does all this mean, my dear Friend, but just thisthat you think very meanly of God? I do not believe you think so meanly of yourself as you think you do.   
You think meanly of God! You think that He has but little mercy, at least not so much mercy as you need, and so you limit the Holy One of Israel. But I shall meet you on the ground of my text. You allow that this Book is truevery wellhas not the Lord declared, both by instances, and by express words of promise, that though your sins are as scarlet they shall be as wool? And though they are red like crimson they shall be whiter than snow? However aggravated guilt may be, it can damn no man that believes in Christ. I pray you read the Gospel aright. You cannot then make the greatness of its Grace a ground of doubt. The thing is great, but it is not too great for God. As high as the heavens are above the earth so high are His ways above your ways, and His thoughts above your thoughts.  
But do I hear you answer that you are not quite sure that the promise is made to you. Sinner, I must not lose patience with you, but I would you would lose patience with yourself, for this is trifling. You say the Bible is true. Sir, if you say it is true, you know that the very object for which it was sent to you was that it might save you. What is said in the twentieth chapter of the Gospel by John?These are written that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, and that believing you might have life through His name.   
God did not send this Book to you, I am sure, to play with you. He sent it that you might be saved. But how can you say the invitations do not include you? Whosoever will. Does that shut you out? The Gospel not sent to you? Why, does it not say, Go you into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature? Are you not a creature? Can you escape there? Soul, you know that, inasmuch as the Gospel is to be preached to every creature, and inasmuch as you are condemned already for not believing on the Son of God, therefore the Gospel must have been sent to you.   
You say you do not feel your need and you are not prepared. No preparation was ever asked. This He gives youit is His Spirits rising beam. You say you do not feel this, and you do not feel that. He never asked you to

feel anything as a preparation for Him. All this is the gift of His Divine Grace. You know we preach here every Sunday to you a Gospel which meets you as you are, not as quickened sinners, but as sinners! Not as convicted sinners, but as sinnersnaked, poor and helpless. You know we speak the Truth of God. Why do you not believe us when we tell you that to you, even to you, is the Word of this Gospel sentfor him that comes to Christ He will in no wise cast out?   
Ah, you will think about this, but the time has not yet come. I answer, again, that you do not believe the Bible to be true. If you believed, as the Bible describes, that life is short, and death is certain, and eternity is near, and there is a dreadful Hell into which you will be plunged, and a bright and glorious Heaven which you will lose, you would cry out, Lord, save me, or I perish! As when the hand of the angel hastened Lot from the burning city, so would a full conviction of these things hasten you to the Cross for shelter.   
Ah, I repeat what I commenced with, I would care but little for open infidelity if this secret unbelief could be killed. You know why men are infidels openly? It is because they want to find an excuse for their inward infidelity. When men with some few grains of honesty, and a little pride mingled with it, begin to reason with themselves, they argue thusNow I love my sins too well to give them up. The Bible is true, but it demands of me repentance, faith, and other things not at all palatable. If I say the old Book is true and do not heed it, I shall be inconsistent.   
I will at least show I have one virtueI will be consistent. I will deny the authority of the Scriptures, and then, though conscience may prick me, yet before men I shall earn a reputation for daring consistency, my actions and my words agreeing. Well, Sir, I like you not for this, but I must say this, that we have seen some of the greatest unbelievers converted to God in this House of Prayer, while others remain unblest. We have seen many baptized into Christ who once did not believe His Deity and who doubted the inspiration of Scripture!   
But all the while there are some of you who say the Word is true, but do not believe it, and I am almost ready to give you up. You are like some persons we visit on their sick beds. They say, Yes, Sir, Yes, Sir, to all we say, and they die and are damned with, Yes, Sir, on their tongue, but with No, Sir in their heart! This is what you are doing. You say, Yes, Sir, Yes, Sir, Yes, Sir, but you do not repent, you do not believe. You live, and I fear some of you will die, without God.   
III. Again, I would aim at your consciences from another quarter. Friend, Friend, be not offended with me while I tell you now a piece of solemn Truth. In the forty-fifth verse Jesus gives the reason why some did not believe on Him. It is a most unreasonable reason. It is thisBecause I tell you the truth you believe Me not. Why, that should be the very reason why they should believe Him!   
Now, I fear some of you do not believe the Truth of God, simply because it is the Truth of God. Some of you, my Hearers, hate the Truth of God. You say, That is too severe. It is not true. I would not be untrue even with a good design, for I do not think we should tell a lie even to save a soul. But it is true, solemnly true. Now I will tell one part of the Truth as it is taught in ScriptureWhatsoever a man sows, that shall he also reap. Well now, that teaches that if you continue to sow sin you will have to reap the result of it, and unless, through Divine Grace you are led to give up your right-eye sins and to cut oft your right-arm lusts, you will perish.   
Now this is a Truth of God which you hate. That man who comes here on Sundays and often has pangs of conscience, but is a drunkard still, a secret drunkard stillhe hates this Truth. Where shall I find that other man who listens to the Word, yes, and often with tears, but he has his midnight crime when he thinks no man sees him, and even now, when I press harshly upon his vice, he likes it not. You that are here this morning listening to me, and this afternoon will be busy with your shops on Gods own day, beware!   
And you, too, that so trade in business that you no more dare to show your books than you dare to look at the flames of Hellyou hate the Truth of God. I am sure you do. You abhor the doctrine that all this must be given up! You prove you do not like it, because you do not practice it. Some of you will even sayAh, the preacher is Puritanicalhe is too severehe cuts too close. No! Here it is, you believe it not because it is the Truth of God.   
The Pharisees, my Friends, hated Gods truth deliberately. I think I hear one of you say, I do not do that. I may hate the Truth in the sense you have explained, in rejecting it, and going on in my sins, but I do not do it deliberately. Ah, but how long does it take to make an action deliberate? I have preached to some of you nine years nownine years! And you are still what you were! Is not that deliberate? Some of you have heard the Gospel forty years, and you are unregenerate stilland hate the Truth of Godand prove you do by living in sin! Is not that deliberate?   
And you, young Man, the other Sunday you were so impressed that you felt as if you must yield to God that very day. You stood on those steps under those pillars, and you said to your soulTo be or not to be, that is the question. A companion met you and asked youasked you before the impression had died away, to go with him to the haunt of sin. And you stood and poised it in the balance thuswhich shall it be?   
And you did deliberately choose your own damnation when you chose sin. Take care, lest God shall say, You have chosen your own delusions, and I will give you up unto them and that forever. I lay this charge with all the boldness of a Nathan at the door of some of you, that you have chosen deliberately to despise the Truth of God.   
But the Pharisees, you will tell me, scoffed at it. Yes, and I lay that, too, at the door of some of you. There may be here the regular scoffer, who mocks at everything sacred. With him I have little to do this morning. He shall measure out his iniquities and receive vengeance for them. But you who sit here Sunday after Sunday and hear appeals which you reject have Christ preached to you and will not look at Himhave His sufferings set forth as we try to paint Him, dipping the pencil in His own blood and yet He is nothing to youdo you not despise Him?   
I do not know any contempt that is more sorrowful to the man that is smitten by it than the contempt of utter silence. Do we not say, We pass you by in silent contempt? Thus you treat my Lord! We have another expressionwe say of some people that they are beneath our contempt, and some of you have not enough esteem for my Master to treat Him with open contempt. You think religion such a trifle, that it is not worth your sneering at it. You so despise it, that you think it is not worth your despising. Oh, is it so? Is it so? Then are you of your father, the devil, and you do his works! May God bring you out of that black family and translate you into the kingdom of His own dear Son.  
IV. Having spoken feebly, but yet desiring the Master to make what I have said mighty, I close by asking these questions:  
If these things are true, why do you not believe them? Is there anything to hinder you? Is the doctrine unreasonable? You say the Bible is true. Now the Bible contains many things which are harder to believe than that Jesus Christ died for the ungodly. If you can believe that Jonah was in the whales belly. If you can believe all the marvelous miracles of Scripture, you cannot say that the doctrine of the Cross is unreasonable. To believe that Christ stood as a Substitute, and that through His substitution God can pardon sin, is no tax upon faith.   
Nor can you tell me that the precept is intolerable. His yoke is easy and His burden is light. It is your sin that is intolerable, not the precept. He only bids you give up that which will ruin you. He only asks you to do that which will make you happy. But there is one answer you will give. You will tell me you cannot believe. How do you know you cannot? Well, says one, I cannot believe without the Spirit of God. That is true, but are you sure the Spirit of God is not with you? Let me ask you whether you can now trust Jesus Christ. This is what I am about to experiment upon.   
Jesus Christ, who took the sin of men, declares that whoever will trust Him to save them shall be saved. Now Christ is God, He is a mighty Savior. He has suffered as Man, therefore He has all that is necessary for the office. Do you think you can now trust Christ to save you? I think I hear one say, Yes, I could trust such a Savior as that. Then you can do it, you see, and inasmuch as you can do it, the Spirit of God is with you. Do not expect to see the Spirit of God! He is a great mystery. You cannot know His operations except by their effects.   
Faith is the effect of His secret operation. If you can now believe in Christ, then doubtless the Spirit of God is with you, and I doubt not the Spirit of God is often with you when you know it not. If you can now believe, He is with you. Do I hear one say, Well, I have often thought I could trust Christ, but I thought if I could do it then it was not the work of the Spirit of God, but the work of the creature. No, verily, Beloved, there is no such thing as a simple trust in Christ that comes of the creature. It is always the work of the Spirit of Godand if you can trust in Christ you need not question about the Spirit. The Spirit of God must be in you, or else your trust in Christ would never have been there.   
Only if now the thing seems right and reasonable to you, cast yourself on Jesus, and you are saved! I might multiply words, but I might not, perhaps, increase the force of the text, and therefore let me entreat you who stand to the Scriptures as being true, and yet deny their veracity by remaining unregeneratelet me entreat you to decide one way or the other. Do be consistent. How long halt you between two opinions? Say the Book is false, and then we shall know what you are, and where you stand, and you yourselves will, probably, begin to be alarmed at your position. Say the Book is false, and then you will be openly numbered with the disciples and slaves of Hell. And it may be your conscience will then begin to work.

But, oh, if you are not prepared to take that side, if Baal is not God, and you will not serve him, then if God is Godand that is the only other conclusionserve Him. I bring you to that awful place where the two roads meetthe right, the leftto Heaven, to Hellto righteousness, to sinto God, to fiends! There you stand. I am glad to have made you stand there. If it is a thing that needs consideration, consider. Put your hand to your brow, now, and turn this matter over. And I do trust that through the word which we have spoken to you, the Spirit of God will work on your conscience and on your heart and you will say, For God! For Christ! For holiness! For everlasting life!   
But mark you, I had sooner you would say, For the devil. For sin. For Hell, than say nothing. For if you say nothing, you will go on and be as careless and as indifferent as ever. But if you make this last choice deliberately, it may be that then God will alarm your conscience and stir your soul, so that you may see your danger and may fly to Jesus.   
May He bless you, now, and guide your heart into the way of Truth. And to His name be glory forever. Amen.

Adapted from The C.H. Spurgeon Collection, Version 1.0, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307 Sermon #2169 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

THE MAN WHO SHALL NEVER SEE DEATH   
NO. 2169

[This sermon was preached, in great sorrow, after the sudden death of the senior deacon of the Tabernacle Church, Mr. WILLIAM OLNEY. He had been more than 50 years a member and for many years our right-hand man. His zeal in service was only rivaled by his patience in suffering. Love was his prominent characteristic. He was graciously impetuous and yet persistently constant. While he was a very ready speaker, he was not a mere talker, but was as liberal with his gifts and as abundant in his prayers as he was frequent in his exhortations. Never Pastor had an abler or more earnest helper. His son right worthily sustains the honor of the house, but scarcely could any dozen workers fill up the gap which the fathers death has caused in the departments of Prayer Meetings, foreign missions, home evangelization and orphanage. Help, Lord, for a great man has fallen in our Israel!C. H. S.]

A SERMON DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, OCTOBER 19, 1890, **BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep My saying, he shall never see death. Then said the Jews unto Him, Now we know that You have a devil. Abraham is dead, and the Prophets, and You say, If a man keep My saying, he shall never taste of death. Are You greater than our father Abraham, which is dead? and the Prophets are dead: whom make You Yourself? John 8:51-53.**

IN the previous part of this chapter we hear the Jews, with malicious voices, assailing our blessed Lord with this bitter question, Say we not well that You are a Samaritan, and have a devil? How very quietly the Savior answered them! He did answer them because He judged it necessary to do so, but He did so with great patience and with sound argumentI have not a devil; but I honor My Father. Clear proof, this! No man can be said to have a devil who honors God, for the evil spirit from the beginning has been the enemy of all that glorifies the Father! Paul, who had not read this passagefor the Gospel of John was not written thenwas nevertheless so filled with his Masters spirit that he answered after a like manner when Festus said, Paul, you are beside yourself; much learning does make you mad. He calmly replied, I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the words of truth and soberness.

This was a fine copy of our Saviors gentle and forcible replyI have not a devil; but I honor My Father. Brethren, whenever you are falsely accused and an evil name is hurled at you, if you must reply, give a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear. Be not heated and hurried, for if so, you will lose strength and will be apt to err. Let your

Lord be your model. The false charge was the occasion of our Lords uttering a great Truth of God. On they rush, furious in their rage, but He flashes in their faces the light of Truth. To put down error, lift up Truth! Thus their deadly saying was met by a living sayingVerily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keeps My saying, he shall never see death.

Nothing so baffles the adversaries of the faith as to utter with unshaken confidence the Truth of God. The Truth which Jesus stated was full of promise and if they willfully rejected His promise, it became worse to them than a threat. Christs rejected promises curdle into woes. If these men, when He said to them, If a man keeps My saying, he shall never see death, yet went on reviling Him, then their consciences, when afterwards awakened, would say to them, He that believes not shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him. If the Believer shall never see death, then the unbeliever shall never see life. Thus the Gospel itself becomes a savor of death unto death to those who refuse it and the very word which proclaims eternal life threatens eternal death to the willfully unbelieving.

I pray that, this morning, we may be put into a gracious frame of mind and may be so helped to keep Christs saying, that we may inherit this wondrous promiseIf a man keeps My saying, he shall never see death. May the Holy Spirit specially aid me while I first speak upon the gracious characterthe man who keeps Christs saying. Secondly, I would dwell upon the glorious deliveranceHe shall never see death. Thirdly, taking the two later verses of my text, I would honor the great Quickener, for evidently, according to the Jews, our Lord was making much of Himself by what He said. And in truth, the fact that the Believer shall never see death does greatly magnify the Lord Jesus. May He be glorified in our mourning hearts while we think of our departed friend as one who shall never see death!

I. First, consider THE GRACIOUS CHARACTERIf a man keeps My saying, he shall never see death. Observe, that the one conspicuous characteristic of the man who shall never behold death is that he keeps Christs saying or word. He may have other characteristics, but they are comparatively unimportant in this respect. He may be of a timorous nature; he may often be in distress; but if he keeps Christs saying he shall never see death. He may have been a great sinner in his early life but, being converted and led to keep Christs saying, he shall never see death! He may be a strong-minded man who keeps a firm grip of eternal realities and therefore becomes supremely usefulbut none the more for that is this promise true to him. The reason for his safety is the same as in the case of the weak and timoroushe keeps Christs saying and therefore he shall never see death. Divest yourselves, therefore, of all enquiries about other matters and only make inquisition in your own heart upon this one pointdo you keep Christs saying? If you do this, you shall never see death.

Who is this man who keeps Christs saying? Obviously, he is a man that has close dealing with Christ. He hears what He says. He notes what He says. He clings to what He says. We meet with persons nowadays who talk about faith in God, but they do not know the Lord Jesus Christ as the great Sacrifice and Reconciler. But without a Mediator there is no coming to God. Jesus says, No man comes unto the Father, but by Me. His witness is true. Brothers and Sisters, we glorify Christ as God Himself. Truly, the unity of the Godhead is never doubted among us. And while there is one God, there is also one Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus. Forever remember that Christ Jesus as God-Man, Mediator, is essential to all our communion with the Father. You cannot trust God, nor love God, nor serve God aright unless you willingly consent to His appointed way of reconciliation, redemption, justification and access which is only through the precious blood of Jesus Christ.

In Christ we draw near unto God. Attempt not to approach unto Jehovah, who is a consuming fire, except through the Incarnate God. Tell me, my Hearer, is your faith fixed upon Him whom God has set forth to be the Propitiation for sin? Do you come to God in Gods own way? He will not receive you in any other! If you reject the way of salvation through the blood of the Lamb, you cannot be keeping the saying of Christ, for He says, He that has seen Me has seen the Fatherand He says this of none else.

These people, next, making the Lord Jesus their All in All, reverenced His word and therefore kept itthey respected, observed, trusted and obeyed it. By keeping His saying is meant, first, that they accept His doctrine. Whatever He has laid down as Truth is Truth to them. My Hearer, is it so with you? With some their great source of belief is their own thought. They judge the Divine Revelation, itself, and claim the right, not only to interpret it, but to correct and expand it. In the fullness of self-confidence, they make themselves the judges of Gods Word. They believe a Doctrine because the light of the present age confirms it or invents it. Their foundation is in mans own thought. In their opinion, parts of Scripture are exceedingly faulty and need tinkering with scientific hammers.

The light of the Holy Spirit is to them a mere glowworm as compared with the light of the present advanced age. But he that is to share the promise now before us is one who believes the Saviors Word because it is His Word. He takes the sayings of Christ and His Inspired Apostles as being true, because so spoken. To him the Inspiration of the Holy Spirit is the warrant of faith. This is a very important matterthe foundation of our faith is even more important than the superstructure. Unless you ground your faith upon the fact that the Lord has spoken, your faith lacks that worshipful reverence which God requires. Even if you are correct in your beliefs, you are not correct in your spirit unless your faith is grounded on the authority of Gods own Word.

We are to be disciples, not critics. We have done with quibbling, for we have come to believing. In this our departed deacon stood on firm ground. By him every teaching of the Word was accepted with a lively, child-like faithand though tempted by the school of doubthe was not in the least affected by its reasonings. To him the Gospel was dear as life itself. As he did, so must we believe Christs doctrines.

Next, the gracious man trusts Christs promises. This is a crucial point. Without trust in Jesus we have no spiritual life. Say, my Hearer, do you rely upon the saying of the Lord Jesus, He that believes in Me has everlasting life? Do you believe in the promise of pardon to the man that confesses and forsakes his sinpardon through the precious blood of the great Sacrifice? Are the promises of Christ certainties to you, certainties hallmarked with His sacred, Verily, verily, I say unto you? Can you hang your soul upon the sure nail of the Lords sayings? Some of us rest our eternal destiny solely upon the truthfulness of Christ. When we take all His promises together, what a fullness of confidence they create in us!

*How firm a foundation, you saints of the Lord, Is laid for your faith in His excellent Word!*

Furthermore, the gracious man obeys His precepts. No man can be said to keep Christs sayings unless he follows them practically in his life. He is not only teacher, but Lord to us. A true keeper of the Word cultivates that spirit of love which is the very essence of Christs moral teaching. He endeavors to be meek and merciful. He aims at purity of heart and peaceableness of spirit. He follows after holiness even at the cost of persecution. Whatever he finds that his Lord has ordained, he cheerfully performs. He does not kick at the Lords commands as involving too much self-denial and separation from the world. He is willing to enter in by the strait gate and to follow the narrow way because his Lord commands him. That faith which does not lead to obedience is a dead faith and a false faith. That faith which does not cause us to forsake sin is no better than the faith of devils, even if it is so good

*Faith must obey her Fathers will,   
As well as trust His Grace:   
A pardoning God is jealous still   
For His own holiness.*

So now you see who the man is that keeps Christs sayings. That man receives, through the Word of God, a new and everlasting life, for the Word of God is a living and incorruptible seed, which lives and abides forever. Wherever the seed of the Word drops into a soil which accepts it, it takes root, abides and grows. For God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. It is by Christs sayings, or by Christs Word, that life is implanted in the soulby that same Word the heavenly life is fed, increased, developed and at length perfected. The power and energy of the Holy Spirit which work through the Word are used as the beginning, the sustaining and the perfecting of the inner life. The life of Grace on earth is the blossom of which the life of Glory is the fruit.

It is the same life all along, from regeneration to resurrection. The life which comes into the soul of the Believer, when he begins to keep Christs sayings, is the same life which he will enjoy before the Eternal Throne in the realms of the blessed. We may know what keeping Christs sayings is from the fact that He Himself has set us the example. Note well the 55th verse, where Jesus says concerning the FatherYet you have not known Him; but I know Him: and if I should say, I know Him not, I shall be a liar like unto you: but I know Him, and keep His saying. We are to keep our Lords saying, even as He kept His Fathers saying!

He lived upon the Fathers Word and therefore refused Satans temptation to turn stones into bread. His Fathers Word was in Him so that He always did the things which pleased the Father. When He spoke, He spoke not His own Words, but the Words of Him that sent Him. He lived that the Divine Word might be executedeven on the Cross He was careful that the Scripture might be fulfilled. He said, He that is of God hears Gods Words and this was so truly the case with Him that He said, My ears have You opened. The Word was everything to Him and He rejoiced over His Apostles because He could say of them, They have kept Your Word. He, whose Word you are to keep shows you how to keep it! Live towards Him as He lived towards the Father and then you shall receive the promise He has made: Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep My saying, He shall never see death.

If love is the fulfilling of the Lords saying, our dearly-beloved but now departed friend kept the saying of Christfor in that matter many Believers have done virtuously, but he excelled them all. He has not looked on death.

II. Now we turn to the delightful part of our subject, namely, THE GLORIOUS DELIVERANCE which our Lord here promisesHe shall never see death. Our Lord did not mean that he shall never die, for He Himself died and His followers, in long procession, have descended to the grave. Some Brethren are cheered by the belief that they shall live until the Lord comes and therefore they shall not sleep, but shall only be changed. The hope of our Lords appearing is a very blessed one, come when He may. But I do not think that to be alive at His coming is any great object of desire. Is there any great preference in being changed beyond that of dying? Do we not read that, We which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep?

This is a great Truth of God. Throughout eternity, if I die, I shall be able to say I had actual fellowship with Christ in the article of death and in descent into the grave, which those happy saints who will survive can never know. It is no matter of doctrine, but yet, if one might have a choice in the matter, it might be gain to die

*The graves of all His saints He blessed,   
And softened every bed:*

*Where should the dying members rest,   
But with the dying Head?*   
How dear will Christ be to us when, in the ages to come, we shall think of His death and shall be able to say, We, too, have died and risen again! You that are alive and remain will certainly not have a preference over us, who, like our Lord, shall taste of death. I am only speaking, now, of a matter of no great moment, which, as Believers, we may use as a pleasant subject of discourse among ourselves. We grieve not that our Brother has fallen asleep before the Lords glorious appearing, for we are sure that he will be no loser thereby.

Our Lord has said, If a man keep My saying, he shall never see death, and this does not relate to the few who will remain at His Second Advent, but to the entire company of those who have kept His saying, even though they pass into the grave. What does this promise mean? It means this, in the first placeour face is turned away from death. Here am I, a poor sinner, convicted of sin and awakened to a fear of wrath. What is there before my face? What am I compelled to gaze upon? The Greek is not fully interpreted by the word seeit is a more intense word. According to Westcott, the sight here mentioned is that of a long, steady, exhaustive vision, whereby we become slowly acquainted with the nature of the object to which it is directed.

The awakened sinner is made to look at eternal death which is the threatened punishment of sin. He stands gazing upon the result of sin with terror and dismay. Oh, the wrath to come! The death that never dies! While unforgiven, I cannot help gazing upon it and foreseeing it as my doom. When the Gospel of the Lord Jesus comes to my soul and I keep His saying by faith, I am turned completely round. My back is upon death and my face is towards eternal life! Death is removed, life is received and more life is promised. What do I see within, around and before me? Why, life, and only lifelife in Christ Jesus! He is our life. In my future course on earth, what do I see? Final falling from Grace? By no means, for Jesus says, I give unto My sheep eternal life. What do I see far away in the eternities? Unending life! He that believes in Me has everlasting life.

Now I begin to realize the meaning of that text, I am the Resurrection: he that believes in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. And again, I am the Life: he that lives and believes in Me shall never die. The man who has received the saying of the Lord Jesus has passed from death unto life and shall never come into condemnation! Consequently he shall never gaze on death. All that lies before the Believer is life, life more abundantly, life to the fullest, life eternal! What has become of our death? Our Lord endured it. He died for us. He His own Self bore our sins in His own body on the tree. In His death as our Representative we died. There is no death penalty left for the Believer, for not the least charge can be brought against those for whom Christ has died. Hence we sing

*Complete atonement You have made,*

***And to the utmost farthing paid   
Whatever your people owed:   
Nor can His wrath on me take place,   
If sheltered in Your righteousness,   
And sprinkled with Your blood.***

Shall we die for whom Christ died in the purpose of God? Can our departure out of the world be sent as a punishment when our Lord Jesus has so vindicated justice that no punishment is required? When I behold my Lord die upon the Cross, I see that for me death itself is dead.

Then comes in another sense of the expression. He that keeps My saying shall never see death, means that his spiritual death is gone, never to return. Before the man knows Christ, he abides in death and wherever he looks he sees nothing but death. Poor souls! You know what I am talking about, you that are now under concern of soul, for you try to pray and find death in your prayers, You try to believe, but seem dead as to faith. Alas, you ungodly ones! Although you know it not, death is everywhere within you. You are dead in trespasses and sins. Your sins are to you what grave-clothes are to a corpse! They seem your natural investiture they cling to youthey bind you. Little do you know what corruption is coming upon you, so that God Himself will say of you, Bury the dead out of My sight.

As soon as ever the Gospel saying of the Lord Jesus comes to a man with power, what is the effect? He is dead no longerhe begins to see life! It may be that at first it is a painful lifea life of deep regrets for the past and dark fears for the future. It may be a life of hungering and thirsting; a life of pining and panting; a life that needs somethingit scarcely knows whatbut it cannot live without it. This man sees life and the more he keeps his Saviors Word, the more he rejoices in Christ Jesus, the more he rests on His promise, the more he loves Him, the more he serves Him, the more will his new life drive death out of sight! Life now abounds and holds sway and the old death hides away in holes and corners.

Though oftentimes the Believer has to mourn over the old death which struggles to return, yet he does not gaze upon that death of sin as once he did. He cannot endure it. He takes no pleasure in the contemplation of it, but cries to God for deliverance from it. Grace frees us from the reign of death as well as from the penalty of deathand in neither of these senses shall the keeper of Christs saying ever look upon death. But, cries one, will not a Christian man die? I answer, not necessarily, for some will remain at the coming of our Lordand these will not die. Therefore there is no legal necessity that any should die since the obligation would then rest alike on all. But good men die. The tokens of death are seen in mournful array upon my pulpit.

Yet our dear Brother did not die as the penalty of his sin. He was forgiven and it is not according to Gods Grace or justice to punish those whom He has forgiven. O my Hearers, if you do not believe in the Lord Jesus, death will be a penal infliction to you! But death is changed in its nature in the case of a Believer in Jesus. Our death is a falling asleep, not a going to execution! It is a departure out of the world unto the Father, not

a being driven away in wrath. We quit the militant host of earth for the triumphant armies of Heaven by the gate of deaththat which was a cavern leading to blackness and darkness forever has, by the Resurrection of our Lord, been made into an open tunnel which serves as a passage into eternal Glory! As a penal infliction upon Believers, death was abolished by our Lord and now it has become a stairway from the Grace-life below to the Glory-life above.

If a man keep My saying, he shall never gaze on death, may further mean, he shall not live under the influence of it. He shall not be perpetually thinking of death and dreading its approach and that which follows after it. I must admit that some Christians are in bondage through fear of deathbut that is because they do not keep their Masters saying as they ought to. The effect of His saying upon us is frequently such that instead of being afraid to die, we come to long to depart! In such a case we should realize the verses of Watts, who tells us that could we see the saints above we should long to join them

*How we should scorn these robes of flesh, These fetters and this load!   
And long for evening to undress,   
That we may rest in God.   
We should almost forsake our clay   
Before the summons come   
And pray and wish our souls away   
To their eternal Home.*

I have to check some dear Brethren when they say to me, Let me die the death of the righteous. No, do not talk as Balaam did, but rather say, Let me live, that I may glorify God and help my sorrowing Brethren in the Lords work. I pray you, do not hasten to be goneand yet this impatience proves that death has lost its terrors for us. We do not see death looming before us as a coming tempestwe do not gaze upon it as a fascinating horror which makes our faces pale and casts a lurid glare on all around us. We see not the darkness, for we walk in the light! We fear not the rumbling of the chariot, for we know who rides to us therein! We shall never see that which is the reality and essence of death, namely, the wrath of God in the second death. We have no cause to fear condemnation, for it is God that justifies. That final separation from God, which is the real death of human nature, can never come to us. Who shall separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord? That ruin and misery which the word, death, describes, when used in relation to the soul, will never befall us, for we shall never perish, neither shall any pluck us out of Christs hands!

When the Believer dies, he does not gaze on death . He walks through the valley of the shadow of death, but he fears no evil and sees none to fear. A shadow was cast across my road, but I passed through it and scarcely perceived that it was there. Why was that? Because I had my eye fixed upon a strong light beyondand I did not notice the shadows which otherwise would have distressed me. Believers are so rejoiced by the Presence of their Lord and Master that they do not observe that they are dying. They rest so sweetly in the embrace of Jesus that they hear not the voice of wailing. When they pass from one world into another, it is something like going from England to Scotlandit is all one kingdom and one sun shines in both lands!

Often travelers by railway ask, When do we pass from England into Scotland? There is no jerk in the movement of the train. There is no marking of the boundaryyou glide from one into the other and scarcely know where the boundary lies. The eternal life that is in the Believer glides along from Grace to Glory without a break. We grow steadily on from the blade to the ear, and from the ear to the full cornbut no black belt divides the stages of growth from one another. We shall know when we arrive, but the passage may be so rapid that we shall not see it. From earth to Heaven may seem the greatest of journeys, but it is ended in the twinkling of an eye!

*One gentle sigh, the fetter breaks,   
We scarce can say, Hes gone,   
Before the ransomed spirit takes   
Its mansion near the Throne!*

He shall never gaze on deathhe shall pass it by with no more than a glance. He shall go through Jordan as though it were dry land and scarcely know that he has passed a river at all! Like Peter, the departing shall scarcely be sure that they have passed through the iron gate which shall open of its own accordthey shall only know that they are free. Of each one of them it may be said, as of Peter, He knew not that it was true which was done by the angel; but thought he saw a vision. Fear not death, for Jesus says, He that keeps My saying shall never see death.

Follow the soul when it enters upon the other worldthe body is left behind and the man is a disembodied spiritbut he does not see death. All the life he needs he has within his soul by being one with Jesus. Meanwhile, he is expecting that at the trump of the Resurrection his body will be reunited with his soul, having been made to be the dwelling and the instrument of his perfected spirit. While he is absent from the body, he is so present with the Lord that he does not look on death. But the Judgment Day has come, the Great White Throne is set, the multitudes appear before the Judge! What about the keeper of Christs saying? Is he not afraid?

It is the day of days, the day of wrath! He knows that he shall never see death and therefore he is in no confusion. For him there is no, Depart, you cursed. He can never come under the eternal sentence. Look! Hell opens wide her tremendous mouth. The pit which of old was dug for the wicked yawns and receives them! Down sink the ungodly multitude, a very cataract of souls. The wicked shall be turned into Hell and all the nations that forget God. In that terrific hour, will not his foot slip? No! He shall stand in the judgment and shall never see death. But the world is

on a blaze! All things are being dissolved and the elements are melting with fervent heat! The stars are falling like the leaves of autumn and the sun is black as sackcloth of hair. Is he not now alarmed?

Ah, no! He shall never see death. His eyes are fixed on life and he himself is full of it. He abides in life! He spends that life in praising God. He shall never gaze on death, for Jesus says, Because I live, you shall live also. O blessed eyes, that shall never look on death! O happy mind, that has been made confident in Jesus Christ of an immortality for which there is no hazard! Our dear Brother was the embodiment of life in the service of the Lord. Last Sabbath he sat in this seat behind me and responded in his very soul to the Word of the Lord. Last Monday was spent all day in the service of God and this Church, in the most hearty manner. Though a great sufferer, his spirit carried him over his bodily weakness and he constantly exhibited an amazing zeal for God and the souls of men.

To the last the old ruling passion was strong in himhe would speak for his Lord. He was so struck down that he did not know that he was dying. He found himself in Heaven before he was aware and I dare say he said to himself, I thought I was going to the Tabernacle, but here I am in the Temple of my God! For many a year I took my seat among my Brethren below, or went about serving my Lord among His people and now I have a mansion above! And now I behold His face! But I will now see what there is to do. Yes, he will serve God day and night in His Temple, just as he did here, for he was never tired of work for Jesus. He was always at it, and always full of life. He never beheld death while he was with us, for he overflowed with life!

And when physical death came, he did not gaze upon it but simply bowed his head and found himself before the Throne. What a glorious word is this! Alas for you who are ungodly! You are made to look on death. It haunts you now! What will it be in the hour of your death? What will you do in the swelling of the Jordan? Nothing remains for you but the wages of sin, which is death. The ruin and misery of your souls will be your endless portion. You will be shut in with the finally destroyed, ruined and wretched ones forever! This is a dreadful looking for of judgment. It ought to startle you. But as for the Believer, surely the bitterness of death is past. We have nothing more to do with death as a penalty or a terror any more than we have to do with spiritual death as the choke-damp of the heart and the mother of corruption.

III. This brings me to the third pointTHE GREAT QUICKENER. Those Jewswhat a passion they were in! How unscrupulous their talk! They could not even quote Christs words correctly. They said, You say, If a man keep My saying, he shall never taste of death. He did not say so. He said, Shall never see death. We may be said to taste of death as our Master did, for it is written that He tasted death for every man. And yet in another sense we shall never taste the wormwood and gall of death, for to us it is swallowed up in victory. Its drop of gall is lost in the bowl of victory.

However, the Lord Jesus did not say that we shall never taste of deathneither did He mean that we shall not die, in the common sense of the word. He was using, to the Jews, words in that religious sense in which their own Prophets used them. The ancient Scriptures so used the word, death, and these Jews knew their meaning right well. Death did not always mean the separation of the soul from the body, for the Lords declaration to Adam was, In the day that you eat thereof you shall surely die. Assuredly, Adam and Eve died in the sense intended, but they were not annihilated, nor were their souls separated from their bodies for they still remained to labor on earth. The soul that sins it shall die, relates to a death which consists of degradation, misery, inability, ruin.

Death does not mean annihilation, but something very different. Overthrow and ruin are the death of a soul, just as perfection and joy are its life forever. The separation of the soul from God is the death penaltyand that is death, indeed. The Jews refused to understand our Lord, yet they clearly saw that what Jesus claimed tended to glorify Him above Abraham and the Prophets. Hidden away in their abusive words we find a sense which is instructive. It is not the greatness or the goodness of a Believer that secures his eternal lifeit is his being linked by faith to the Lord Jesus Christ, who is greater than Abraham and the Prophets! The man keeps Christs saying and that becomes a bond between him and Christand he is one with Christ.

Because of their Lord, the saints live and the living of the saints by Him brings to Him glory and honor. His life is seen in every one of His people like mirrors, they reflect His Divine life. He has life in Himself and that life He imparts to His chosen. As the old creation displays the Glory of the Father, so the new creation reveals the Glory of the Son. Believers find their highest life in Christ Jesus their Lordand every particle of it glorifies Him. It is also to our Lords Glory that we live by His Word. He does not sustain us by the machinery of Providence, but by His Word. As the world stood out into being because God spoke, so do we live and continue to live because of Christs Word. That which He taught, being received into our hearts, becomes the origin and the nourishment of our eternal life. It is greatly glorifying to Christ that, by His Word, all spiritual life in the countless myriads of Believers is begotten and sustained. It is clear that the Lord Jesus is far greater than Abraham and all the Prophets. Their word could not make men live, nor even live themselves. But the saying of Jesus makes all live who receive it. By keeping it they liveyes, live forever! Glory be to the name of Him who quickens whom He wills!

A sweet inference flows from all this and with that I conclude. The glory of Christ depends upon the not seeing of death by all who keep His saying. If you and I keep His saying and we see death, then Jesus is not true. If you, believing in Jesus, gaze on death, it will be proven that either He had not the power or the will to make His promise good. If the Lord fails in

any one case, He has lost the honor of His faithfulness. O you trembling, anxious souls, lay hold on this   
*His honor is engaged to save   
The meanest of His sheep.*   
If the saint of God, who has won thousands for Jesus, should, after all, perish, what a failure of Covenant engagements there would be! But that failure would be just as great if one of the least of all those who keep our Lords Word should be suffered to perish. Such a loss of honor to our AllGlorious Lord is not to be imagined! Therefore if one of you who are the least in your Fathers house do really trust in Himthough you are encumbered with infirmities and imperfectionsHe must keep you from beholding death!   
His Truth, His power, His immutability, His love are all involved in His faithfulness to His promise to each Believer. I want you to take this home with you and be comforted. Yes, and if I have some foul transgressor here this morningthe grossest sinner that ever livedif you will come to Christ, lay hold upon His gracious sayingkeep it and be obedient to it you shall never see death! There is not a soul in Hell that can ever say, I have kept Christs saying and I have seen death, for here I am. There never will be such an one, or Christs Glory would be tarnished throughout eternity!   
Keep His saying and He will keep you from seeing death! How eagerly did my departed friend long for the conversion of those who came to the Tabernacle! He was never satisfied while any were unblessed. He had great longings. He loved revivals and missions. Tidings of souls saved stirred his inmost soul. Oh, that his prayers, while he was with us, may be answered now that he is gone from us! He not only lived among us, but he lived in our hearts! He needs no praise from mehis praise is in all the Church. He will require no monumentall your hearts are his memorials. Never can I forget my beloved fellow worker either in time or in eternity! Beloved, the real William Olney has not seen death, although with many tears we must lay him in the grave next Wednesday. Pray much for memy loss is not to be measured. Pray much for his dear family, whose loss cannot be repaired. Amen.

**PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMONRevelation 7.** HYMNS FROM OUR OWN HYMN BOOK875, 877, 872. Adapted from The C.H. Spurgeon Collection, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307. Sermon #2652 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

SEEING CHRISTS DAY   
NO. 2652

A SERMON   
INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS-DAY, DECEMBER 10, 1899.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, JULY 23, 1882.

**Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day: and he saw it, and was glad. John 8:56.**

THESE Jews had claimed to be of the seed of Abraham and the Lord Jesus Christ admitted their claim as far as it was a valid one. It is always best, in argument, to concede as much as you can fairly grant to your opponent. Sometimes we take a few steps backward in order to get a firmer footing, that we may leap forward with greater sureness. In the case of these Jews, since they said Abraham was their father, the Lord Jesus admitted that they were his seed according to the flesh and therefore He said, Your father Abraham.

Very much might be spoken in honor and commendation of Abraham. He was a princely man, well worthy to be called the father of the faithful, for, though all Believers have a certain beauty about them because of their faith, yet Abraham stands head and shoulders above the rest of themat least, above those who lived before the Incarnation of Christ. Much, therefore, might be said in his favor, but there is no word of commendation which could possibly exceed this utterance of Jesus, our Lord, to the quibbling Jews in Jerusalem, Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day: and he saw it, and was glad. Let this stand as the very crown jewel among all the gems that make up Abrahams crown, that he saw the day of Christ through the mist of 2,000 years or thereabouts, and so saw it that his heart was gladdened at the sight! There may be many good things that might be truly said of you, dear Friends, but the best thing that ever can be said of you is, They saw Christs day, and were glad. Whatever else you do not see, if you see this, all is well with you! Blessed, indeed, are your eyes if you can, by faith, behold the Lamb slain for sinners and so behold Him as to be saved by His death. I do not think that anything better than this could be said of Abraham and nothing better will be said of any of you than this testimony from the lips of Christ, Himself, He saw My day, and was glad.

Yet we must learn, from our text, a sad lesson before we go fully into its teaching concerning Abraham. It reminds us that however good a man may be, personally, he cannot possibly ensure that his descendants will be like he was. It was to the carping, unbelieving Jews that our Lord said, Your father Abraham. What a contrast there was between the princely father and those who boasted that they were his children! There they stood, howling like so many wolves around the Lamb of God, all eager to devour Him! Their fingers were itching to pick up stones with which they might put to death the Lord of Life and Glory, yet they were the descendants of Abraham! The children of the friend of God were seeking to slay Gods only-begotten and well-beloved Son! And, a little later, those who were descended lineally from the loins of the great Patriarch gathered in the street about Pilates palace and cried, Crucify Him! Crucify Him!that, Him, being the Son of the Highest who was One with the ever-blessed Father and Spirit, and who had come to earth upon an errand of mercy and love. Yet the men who were the first and loudest to clamor for His death were those who said, Abraham is our father.

It is almost enough to make some good men come out of their graves to see what their children or their grandchildren are doing. It is a sad thing that Divine Grace seems to quit some families. It never does run in the bloodthat cannot be, for all Gods children are born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And of God alone. Yet is it a very blessed fact that, often, if Grace does not run in the blood, it runs side by side with it, and godly fathers joyfully live to see their children treading in their footsteps. In some families, they have this highest of all honorsthat they are a household of saints. Generation after generation, this is the testimony concerning them, that they are a company of people whom God has blessed. But, alas, it is not always so and as it was not so with Abrahams seed in Christs day, as the Jews had, to a very large extent, apostatized so far that they even sought to slay the Christ of God!

You and I must not be staggered when we see the same thing occurring in other families, the heads of which were renowned for Grace. With holy diligence we should seek to bring up our children in the fear of the Lord so that if they do wander, it may not be through our fault, for if we have to blame our guilty neglect, or our evil example for their going astray, it will, indeed, be sad for us. But if we are satisfied, in the sight of God, that we have done all that we could to bring them to Jesus, then, if they should dishonor our name, yet at least there will not be this wormwood mingled with the gall that we helped them to tread the downward road. O Brothers and Sisters, with all your hearts cry mightily unto God that your household, to as many generations as yet shall come, shall never lack a man to stand before the Lord God of Israel, and to be a faithful witness for Him and for His Truth in the midst of the wicked and perverse people by whom they may be surrounded!

This Truth of God is manifest on the very surface of our text Abraham was a great saint, a mighty saint, a clear-eyed saint whose gaze pierced through those 20 centuries and beheld his Lord! Yet, after the flesh, he was the father of a bleary-eyed generation that could not see the Eternal Light, even when it flashed directly upon their eyes! I think there is nothing that is more full of warning than this to those of you who are descended from godly parents. I charge you, before the living God, put no confidence in your descent. You must be born again. Even if you are the best of all who have ever been born of woman, you must be born again. Wisely did Job speak when he said, who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one. No mother can bring into this world a perfect being, for the whole human race is fallenwe are the degenerate children of a father who, himself, was unfaithful to the allegiance which he owed to his God. The stain from that first sin of Adam is upon us all, so let us not say, We are Abrahams seed. Let us not talk about being descended from a line of saints, but rather, let us take to ourselves what Christ said to the Jews on another occasion, Except you repent, you shall all likewise perish. However gracious our genealogy may be, unless our family tree begins in Christ and we, ourselves, are personally grafted into Him, we shall die in our sins and perish forever. God help us, who have been so highly privileged as to be born of godly parents, to lay that Truth of God to heart and to seek the Lord now, that we, also, may be numbered among those who are saved!

With these observations by way of preface, let us now come directly to the text. And we shall notice, first, in what respects Abraham saw Christs day. Secondly, the effect it had upon him. That will lead us, in the third place, to think of the respects in which we, also, may see Christs day, and to notice, in closing, the effect which such a sight will have upon us. If we see His day, we shall also rejoice and be glad.

I. First, then, let us enquire, IN WHAT RESPECTS DID ABRAHAM SEE CHRISTS DAY?   
I understand the term, Christs day, to mean, first, His day of humiliation here upon earth. Christ had a certain day when He lived here in this world. What if I were to call His whole natural life on earth one long Lords-Day? Had the Jews known the things which would have made for their peace, our Lords sojourn here would have been to that nation one long Sabbath! Had they understood the rest which Christ brings to believing, obedient souls, it would have been the true Jubilee to them! But there is another day yet to come, which, in the highest sense, our Lord will call, My day. Know you not that He is to come a second time, without a sin-offering unto salvation? This was foretold by the angels who said to His disciples, after His Ascension, This same Jesus, who is taken up from you into Heaven, shall so come in like manner as you have seen Him go into Heaven. Arrayed in the vesture of His Humanityfor He still wears it at the right hand of the FatherHe will come again, but not as He came the first time

*The Lord shall come! A dreadful form   
With rainbow wreath and robes of storm! On cherub wings and wings of wind,   
Appointed Judge of all mankind!*

He shall come to gloriously reign on earth among His ancients! He shall come to gather to Himself His own, those that have made a covenant with Him by sacrifice. He shall come to set the sheep on His right hand and the goats on the leftand to make a severance between them that fear the Lord and them that fear Him not. This will be His Second Day, the great day of His appearing, the day for which all other days were made, after which there shall be no day that can be ended with a night, but the Ancient of Days shall reign forever and ever, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords! This is also His day and, without drawing fine distinctions, I have no doubt that Abraham saw Christs day in this double sense and that he knew Him both as the Lamb slain, and as the King who is to reign forever and ever!

How did he see Christs day? I answer, first, by a far-seeing, clearsighted faith. I do not know what Revelation, which is not recorded, God may have made to Abrahamwhether he had, in night visions, as Daniel did, beheld the King sitting upon His Throne. But, whatever he did know, he turned to practical use by believing it. He believed that the Lord would come in the fullness of time. He believed that there would be a Seed of the woman that would bruise the serpents head according to the promise at the gates of Paradise. He believed, most assuredly, that a Man would come who would give rest unto His flock, that Man being his own Seed, in connection with whom God had expressly said that He would bless Abraham, and make him a blessing. Your seed shall possess the gate of his enemies and in your seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because you have obeyed My voice. So Abrahams faith often realized what it saw. We have no record of the subject of his morning meditations when he rose early that he might spend some time alone with the Lord before the world became dim with smoke, or the business or ordinary occupation of the day had commenced. At such seasons I have no doubt that Abraham was in his chosen place of prayer, waiting and watchinglooking into the far-distant future and seeing with gladdened heart that day of the Lord which now has comeand that other day of the Lord which is yet to arrive. He believed it and therefore he saw

it! Brothers and Sisters, there is no seeing unless there is believing! I

have heard that seeing is believing, but it is notit is the very opposite! Seeing and believing do not run this wayto see first and then to believe. They run the other waybelieve and then see! And that is just what Abraham did. He believed God and then he saw Christs day afar off and was glad. See as much as you like after you have believed, but remember our Lords words to Thomas, Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believedthat is, those who did not need to see first, but believed first, and then their eyes were so opened that they saw the salvation of God.

When once you get faith, there are many windows through which that faith can look. And no doubt Abraham saw Christs day through the windows of special promises. There were not so many made to him as we have now with our larger Revelation in the entire Bible, but, still, there were sufficient promises to be used by his faith and especially that one which I quoted to you just now, In your seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed. That promise, alone, was enough to make him know that God would, in due time, give him a Seed through whom all the nations of the earth would be blessed. If you want to see Christ, dear Friends, borrow the telescope of promise. Faith is very fond of that optic glass and it is amazing what she can see when she puts it to her eye. Ten thousand blessings, not seen by our natural vision, become visible to the eye of faith when we look at them through the medium of the promises of God.

Next, Abraham saw Christ with the eye of faith in the types that came before him. There were at least two very remarkable ones, or I might call them three. The first was Melchizedek. I cannot help believing that when Abraham met Melchizedek, the Priest of the most high God, first King of Righteousness and then King of Peaceand when he gave Him tithes of all and received His blessinghe recognized in Melchizedek One who was greater than himself. Neither can I help believing that after he had partaken of the bread and wine which Melchizedek brought to him, and had gone back to his own quiet oratory once more, he mustor at least he may have had some clear intimation, to his own mind, that this was one of the grandest types of that Seed which was to bless all nations of the earth! And, Beloved, have not we seen Jesus as our Melchizedek? When we have been battling with the kings. When we have come back weary from the conflict, has not Jesus met us and refreshed us with His bread and wine? Has He not blessed us and have we not then adored Him and felt that we must say to Him, concerning all that we have, Take not merely a tithe, but take it all? Blessed are the men and women who, with eyes of Abraham, have spied out Christ beneath the robes of Melchizedek! And I cannot help thinking that if we, the children, can do so, he, the father of the faithful, must have also done it! Paul could clearly see Christ in Melchizedekand surely Abraham, also, must have seen Christ in Him!

But especially did Abraham see Christs day in the type that was given him in IsaacI cannot help thinking that when Isaac was born, not after the flesh, but according to the promisefor the seed according to the flesh was sent about his business, and his mother with him. And when Abraham made a great feast at the weaning of that child whose very name was laughterand the promise of whose birth had made the venerable Patriarch, close upon his 100

th year, fall down upon his face and laugh at the very thought. And whenever, afterwards, he looked upon that son of joy, given to him, not by the strength of nature, but by the visitation of GodI say he saw, there, a picture of Him who is not born to us after the energy of manhood, but by the power of the Holy Spirit, and who has come among us to bless and cheer us till our very heart laughs again as we think of Jesus, the Son of the promise. He is our true Isaac! Now is our mouth filled with laughter and our tongue is full of praises as we think of Him.

But chiefly, Abraham saw Christ in type and figure on that memorable day when he took Isaac up to the top of Mount Moriah and, at the command of God, unsheathed his knife to slay his son! Abraham must then have seen the Everlasting Father about to act in the same fashion towards His only-begotten Son. He saw, in Isaac, the victim bound and laid upon the altar and then, in the ram caught in the thicket, he saw the very symbol of the Lamb of God, who, in the fullness of time, would be offered upon the altar of Calvary for our sakes, that He might die as our Substitute and Representative. There could never have been, I think, a more plain parallel than in this caseand in all these types Abraham saw Jesus Christs day, and was glad.

Once more, Abraham did actually see Christs day, not by faith only, but in the disembodied state, after he was dead and buried. There he slept, with Sarah, in the cave of Machpelah, but his spirit was neither dead nor buriedit was in the place of souls separated from their bodies and it is remarkable that, in the account of the death of Lazarus, our Lord says that he was taken to Abrahams bosom, as if the Patriarch had given a name to that very world in which the gracious dwell when they quit this house of clay. From that place of bliss, he looked down upon all the wondrous Life that began at Bethlehem and closed at Calvary. He was seeing Christs day even while Jesus was speaking to these Jews, and from the celestial seats he must have gazed with wonder that God should thus assume the nature of man!

II. That is enough concerning Abraham, except that we have to dwell, in the second place, for just a minute or two, upon THE EFFECT OF THIS VISION UPON ABRAHAM.

It made him glad. He rejoiced at the very thought of seeing Christs day. It is a very strong word which is used here for rejoicinghe leaped forwardthat would be the correct expression. At the thought of seeing Christs day and when he did see it, he was glad. It is a curious thing that the second word should be a softer one than the other. There is no idea of leaping or jumping about the second, but in the first, there is. Master Trapp renders it, His good old heart danced levaltos within him, as children use to dance about a bonfirewith an exuberance of joyat the very thought that Jesus Christ would come in the flesh and that he would see Him. But when he did see Him, that kind of rejoicing seemed to subside and he appeared to rise into a calm state of intense gladness.

You know that when Christ first makes us glad in Him, we do not know how to contain ourselves. But afterwards our capacity increases and we are able to hold more. There may be far less excitement, but there is more real joy after all. You remember how it is put in Isaiah 40:31They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles. That is, when they are young and light. They shall run, and not be wearythat is, when they are getting a little stronger they do not take to flying. They know better, so they are content to run. But what comes next? They shall walk, and not faint. The pace gradually gets lessfrom flying to running and from running to walking. Is that a growth? Certainly! It is always better to walk than to run.

Some young folk, when they are first converted, are very eager to fly. Fly away, Brothers, while you can, and you who can run, run as fast as you are able! But, mark you, it is the steady pace that does not kill, which enables us to live down death itself! I do not read that Enoch flew with God, or ran with God, but he, walked with God. And he kept that pace up for 300 years! And he could have kept it up even longer. Let a man fly while he may. Let him run when he can, but walking is the best pace, after all. So, from our text we learn that Abraham rejoiced and leaped forward to see Christs day. And when he saw it, he sobered down, and was glad. And that is the best condition in which the spirit can remain. I cannot help thinking that it was this inward joythis intense but calm gladnessthat made Abraham such a noble man throughout all his life.

Isaac is a very little man compared with his father Abraham. Where there is a high mountain, there generally is a low valley, so it was with Abraham and Isaac, and, as to Jacob, though he was a great man in some respects and especially great at driving bargains, yet, someway, he had nothing of the nobility of Abraham who walked along in the dignity of a true prince among men. What a grand reply Abraham gave to the king of Sodom who had said to him, Give me the persons, and take the goods to yourself. Though all the spoil was his by the laws of war, yet he answered, I have lifted up my hands unto the Lord, the most high God, the possessor of Heaven and earth, that I will not take from a thread even to a shoe-latchet, and that I will not take anything that is yours, lest you should say, I have made Abram rich.

No, no, Abraham was too great a man to stoop at the foot of the king of Sodom, even to take what was his by right. He had fought for him and brought him back the spoiland he handed it over to him without any exception but that which had been eaten by the young men, or taken by the others who had gone with himhis neighbors and friends who had a right to their share, although Abraham refused to take his portion of the plunder.

The Patriarch had many troubles but before his history is closed, it was recorded that the Lord had blessed Abraham in all things. He had believed God in all things and God had blessed him in all things! His was a happy, calm, noble, dignified life almost throughout the whole of it. Oh, that you and I might drink in deep draughts of Abrahams faith and that our eyes might see Christs day even more clearly than Abraham saw it that we might have rejoicing and gladness like his! Nothing can so surely bring this joy to our souls as faith like that which he possessed.

III. So much for Abraham. Now we come to ourselves and enquire, IN WHAT RESPECTS DO WE SEE CHRISTS DAY?   
We stand, as it were, on a narrow neck of land between two seas of glory. Look backthere is Christs day of mercysalvation, reconciliation, death, conflict, victory. Now look forward and see, by faith, that sight which the Apostle describes, For the Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of Godin splendor such as never was seen before and which shall make the sun, itself, to be ashamed because of the greater glory of Christthe Sun of Righteousness!   
Now let us ask ourselves, have we really seen Christ in His first day? Search your hearts, dear Friends, and see. Have you looked to Christ as living and working out a robe of spotless righteousness? And then, as dying, that He might dye that robe crimson and make it fit for His chosen princes to wear? Have you seen Jesus on the Cross bearing your sins? This is a sight that is indeed worth living for! Heaven itself cannot match that sight and there is nothing that can excel it! When we are in sins densest darkness, that sight brings more light than the rising sun. And when we are cast out, like the dry bones of the Valley of Vision, it is this sight that makes us live again and stand upon our feet, a part of the exceeding great army of God! Say, dear Friend, have you looked to Christ by faith? Are you looking to Him? Are you seeing His first day every day?   
And then, have you learned to look forward to His second coming? It is not a subject for curiosity, as some make it. It is not a subject for speculation, as others make it. But it is a subject for reverent expectation! I know not when He will come, but I know that He will come. He may come at any moment and the sooner the better for me, for let Him come when He may, He will be welcome. And if I am dead before He comes, I shall see His day all the same, for I know that my Redeemer lives and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me. Fix your eyes upon the coming King, for it will make you strong! You are not fighting for a vanquished leader! He has won the victory and He will come back to wear the crown before long. There is no question about who is to win the great fightChrist has already won it and He shall come back to divide the spoil with the strong. God has given it to Him and He shall have it!   
Listen to the trumpets that proclaim His appearing! Your faith may almost hear them sound, Lo, He comes! Lo, He comes! It is getting towards midnight in the history of the world. Both the wise and the foolish virgins are all too apt to go to sleep, but the cry may be heard even now by the ears of faithand it will awaken us into supreme energy of action for our Lord, Behold the Bridegroom comes; go you out to meet Him! How little there is of that going out to meet Him! Let us have something of it tonight as we go out, in imagination and in faith, to meet Him who comes quickly. What countless trumpets shall then sound to wake the sleeping dead! Glory, glory, glory, to Him that once was despised and rejected of men! Welcome, welcome, Son of God! All Your saints delight in You! Came quickly, come quickly! Make no tarrying, O our God!   
IV. Now, lastly, we are to consider THE EFFECT OF THESE SIGHTS UPON US. If we really see them, they will do for us what they did for Abrahamthey will make us glad

*Are you weary? Are you languid?   
Are you sorely distressed?*   
Come, then, get a sight of the weary and languid One who died for you upon the Cross! There is no gladness so easy to obtain as this. Is it not strange that when the mourners heart is heavy, we never hear that he looks to the place where the star of Bethlehem burns, though there is joy there. But he looks where human woe culminated in the death of the Well-Beloved. To the Cross the mourner turns his eyes, for there is no light that can come into the darkened heart except from the pierced side and broken heart of Him whom we call Master and Lord. Do you want true joy? Then learn that joy was born where Christ died and that joy lives because Jesus livesit flourishes because He is risen! Keep your eyes on Him and they shall know no tears save those which shall bless both eyes and hearts.   
Then, when you have found joy through looking on Christs first coming, look forward to His second coming and get joy out of it, also. I cannot speak fully of that glorious event tonight, but, certainly, it is a well of joy. If you have seen Christ in His shame, it is a fountain of delight to expect to see Him in His honor and glory. You are nobody nowthe world knows you not, for it knew Him notbut when He shall appear, then will be the time of your manifestation also. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Now it is often heartache and headache, weariness and toilsome pilgrimage, but when He comes, it will be the marriage feast and all the merriment of which human hearts are capable! Oh, what a thrill of joy will go through this poor groaning world when He comes! Creation is in bondage and continually groans and, we groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. But when He comes, creation itself shall shake off its heavy weights and shall get rid of its night dreams. Swathed in mist today, our poor planet scarcely gives forth a ray of light, but then, with all mists removed, when Jesus comes, surely she shall shine more brightly than the morning star!   
And if every Believer is to be as the sun, what will this world be, filled with Believers, each one shining like the sun in its strength? Oh, clap your hands, Beloved, clap your hands, for He comes who is your Lord and Savior! Let the heavens rejoice and let the earth be glad! Let the sea roar and the fullness thereof. Let the fields be joyful and all that is therein: then shall all the trees of the forests rejoice before the Lord: for He comes, for He comes to judge the earth: He shall judge the world with righteousness and the people with His Truth.   
Children of the morning, the morning comes! What a day yours shall be, then, when your sun shall go down no more forever, for your Lords coming shall be as a morning without clouds! Blessed and happy are they who, by faith, can see it! They can say good-bye to sin and good-bye to sorrow! They can say to all discouragements, to all baffling, to all defeats, Farewell, for He comes, our Champion who will lead us forward to the everlasting victory, in whose name we set up our banners and in whose name, even now, our spirit rejoices with exceeding gladness that shall never end!   
God give to each of you a portion in these glorious things, by a simple faith in Jesus, for His names sake! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON:  
**JOHN 8:31-59.**

Verse 31. Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on Him, If you continue in My word, you are My disciples indeed. For there were many, in Christs day, coming to Him for a while and then going away from Himprofessing to believe and then stumbling when Christ proclaimed some Doctrine of God which struck them as being strange and hard to receive. Our Lord Jesus tells them that constancy is necessary to true discipleship. It is of no use to start running in the race unless we continue in the course till the prize is won. We are not true pilgrims to Heaven merely because we cross the threshold of our doorwe must keep on, and on, and on till we reach the golden streets of the New Jerusalem!

32. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. That is the result of being a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ. With Christ, who is the Truth of God, to be our Teacher, and the Holy Spirit to bless His Words, we come to know the Truthand the operation of the Truth upon the heart is to deliver us from the bondage of sin and of error.

33. They answered Him, We are Abrahams seed and were never in bondage to any man: how can You say, You shall be made free? What a lie this was! They were at that very time in bondage to the Romans! They had been subdued and conquered and, a little while after, they, themselves, confessed that they had no king but Caesar. Men are not very selective about telling lies when they wish to resist Christthey will do anything rather than believe on Him.

34. Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whoever commits sin is the servant of sin. The man who habitually lives in sin is not a free man, for he is still a slave to sin. If he finds pleasure and delight in disobeying God, he has no right to talk about being a free man. His chains are rattling on his wristswhat can he know about freedom?

35. And the servant abides not in the house forever; but the son abides always. A servant may be dismissed from the household, but a son may not. If we were only servants of God, we might fall from Grace and perish. But if we are the sons of God, we never shall. If we ever did, in truth, call God, Father, we shall always be able to use that blessed title, for the relationship of fatherhood is not a temporary one and cannot come to an end.

36. If the Son, therefore, shall make you free, you shall be free, indeed. If you have the freedom of sonship, you are free, indeed. There are none so free in our Fathers house as His children!

37-39. I know that you are Abrahams seed, but you seek to kill Me because My word has no place in you. I speak that which I have seen with My Father: and you do that which you have seen with your father. They answered and said unto Him, Abraham is our father. Jesus said unto them, If you were Abrahams children, you would do the works of Abraham. The real descendants of the father of the faithful are, themselves, faithfulthat is, Believers. The father of Believers has Believers for his children. If you were Abrahams children, you would do the works of Abraham. Our Lord had admitted that these Jews were Abrahams seed according to the flesh, but He proved that they were not Abrahams Seed in the high and spiritual sense, since they were not like he whom they claimed for a father.

40, 41. But now you seek to kill Me, a Man that has told you the truth, which I have heard of God. Abraham did not do this. You do the deeds of your father. He had not told them who that father was, but as it is a standing rule that men do the deeds of their father, the genuineness of the descent which they claimed could be tested by their likeness to their father.

41, 42. Then said they to Him, We are not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God. Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, you would love Me. Any man who is born of God must love Jesus Christ. The purity of His motives, the loveliness of His Character, the charms of His Person would all be sure to win the heart of a man who was truly born of God.

42, 43. For I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of Myself, but He sent Me. Why do you not understand My speech? Even because you cannot hear My word. You are dull of comprehension. You are hardened in heart. You are proud in spirit. You are just the opposite of everything that is good and, therefore, you cannot hear My word, said Christ. And this is proof positive that you do not love God and that you are not the children of God.

44. You are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father you will do. Remember from whose lips these words fell, even from the lips of the gentle Jesus! Honest speech is the surest token of a loving heart, but, nowadays, if a man preaches the Truth of God plainly and faithfully, men say that he is hard and unkind. But if a man glosses over the Truth of God and alters it according to his own idea of what will please men, then they say, He is a kindly-disposed and large-hearted man. I would be disposed to doubt whether he has any heart at all, if he will sooner see sinners damned than offend them by proclaiming the Truth! I thank God that some of us care little about offending those who offend God! If men will not yield themselves to the Lord, we want not their friendship, but we will strive to make them uneasy in their rebellionand if they resolve to be lost, we will at least be clear of their blood.

44. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks of his own, for he is a liar, and the father of it. Falsehood is his natural element. When Satan deceives, he only acts according to his nature which is blackened through and through with lies.

45, 46. And because I tell you the truth, you believe Me not. Which of you convicts Me of sin? What a grand challenge! None of us can speak like that except in a very modified sensebut Christ, standing before His enemies, who gnashed their teeth at Him and would have given their eyes to be able to fix some fault upon Himboldly says to them, Which of you convicts Me of sin?

46-51. And if I say the truth, why do you not believe Me? He that is of God hears Gods words: you, therefore, hear them not, because you are not of God. Then answered the Jews, and said unto Him, Say we not well that you are a Samaritan, and have a devil? Jesus answered, I have not a devil; but I honor My Father, and you dishonor Me. And I seek not My own glory: there is One who seeks and judges. Verily, verily, I say unto you, If anyone keeps My sayings, he shall never see death. This statement quite staggered them! Yet it is true. To Believers

*It is not death to die,*   
they simply pass out of this world into a larger and yet more glorious life! They descend not to death, but they rise to immortality!

52, 53. Then said the Jews to Him, Now we know that You have a devil. Abraham is dead and the Prophets; and You say, If anyone keeps My sayings, he shall never taste of death. Are You greater than our father Abraham, who is dead? And the Prophets are dead. Who do You make

Yourself out to be? Who do You make Yourself out to be? Someone greater than Abraham and the Prophets?

54-56. Jesus answered, If I honor Myself, My honor is nothing: it is My Father that honors Me; of whom you say, that He is our God: yet you have not known Him; but I know Him: and if I should say, I know Him not, I shall be a liar like you: but I know Him and keep His saying. Your father AbrahamAs you call him.

56, 57. Rejoiced to see My day: and he saw it and was glad. Then said the Jews unto Him, you are not yet fifty years old, and have you seen Abraham? They allowed a wide margin in speaking of our Saviors age, for He was only 33 years old. It may be true that the sorrows of His life had so marred His Countenance that He looked more like a man of 50 than one of thirty-three. I cannot tell, nor do I know whether that is what they meant. But it is amazing that they should have said to Him, You are not yet 50 years old.

58. Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I AM. They had asked Him, Who do You make Yourself out to be? And now they have His answer! Before Abraham was, I AM, said Christ. It is the very name by which God revealed Himself to Moses at the burning bush, I AM. Yet Jesus takes this title to Himself! Before Abraham wasnot, I was. Notice that. But, I AM, as if His life was one continued present existence, as indeed it is, for with God there is no past or future, but all things are ever-present to His infinite mind! When Jesus said, Before Abraham was, I AM, He claimed the GodheadHe declared that He was certainly God, self-existent from all eternity!

59. Then took they up stones to cast at Him. They counted Him a blasphemer and so He was if He was not all He claimed to be. I have heard of some who reverence Christ, but do not believe Him to be Godbut how can that be? He evidently made Himself out to be God and this was the great charge the Jews brought against Him. For this, indeed, they put Him to death, because He made Himself equal with God. If He were not equal with Godif He were not really GodHe led men to think that He was. And if this were false, it was a great sin not consistent with the holy Character of Christ. If He was not God, He was the grossest impostor who ever visited this world! But He is God and nothing less! Yet because He claimed this, the Jews took up stones to cast at Him.

59. But Jesus hid Himself, and went out of the Temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by. Glory be to His holy name forever and ever!

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PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #2309 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

GODS WORKS MADE MANIFEST   
NO. 2309

**INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS-DAY, MAY 21, 1893. DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, MAY 12, 1880.

**Jesus answered, Neither has this man sinned, nor his parents**

**(that he was born blind): but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.   
John 9:3.**

NEVER attribute any special sorrow endured by men to some special sin. There is a tendency to consider that those on whom the tower in Siloam fell must have been sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem. And if any have met with a very sudden death, we are apt to suppose that they must have been exceedingly guiltybut it is not so. Very godly men have been burned to death in a train. I remember one who came to that terrible end. Many holy men have been drowned on board ship when they have been going about their Masters errands. Some of the most gracious men that I ever met have dropped dead without a moments warning. You cannot judge of a mans state before God by that which happens to him in the order of Providence. And it is very unkind, ungenerous and almost inhuman, to sit down, like the friends of Job, and suppose that because Job is greatly afflicted, he must, therefore, be greatly sinful. It is not so. All afflictions are not chastisements for sinthere are some afflictions that have quite another end and objective. They are sent to refine, sent as a holy discipline, sent as sacred excavators to make more room in the heart for Christ and His love. Indeed, you know that it is written, As many as I tenderly love, I rebuke and chasten. Whom the Lord loves, He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives.

It was, therefore, in the last degree, absurd to suppose that if a man was born blind, it was a punishment for the sin of his parents, or a punishment sent beforehand for some sin which he might commit, by-and-by. Our Savior bids us look quite another way and regard infirmities and physical evils as sent to be a space wherein God may display His power and His Grace. It was very specially so in this particular instance and I am going to push the fact, further, and say that even sin, itself, existing as it does everywhere, existing especially in some, may afford what we call, elbow room, for the Grace of God and may, indeed, become a platform upon which the wonderful power, patience and sovereignty of Divine Grace may be displayed.

That will be the subject that we shall talk about, tonight, how God takes opportunity from the sorrows and the sins of men to make manifest His own works to His own Glory. As this man was born blind, in order that, through his blindness, the power of God might be seen in giving him sight, so I think there are many in whom the power of God may very readily be seen and the works of God be very clearly made manifest.

I. So, first, let us enquire what works these are. WHAT WORKS OF GOD ARE SEEN IN THE SALVATION OF MEN?   
There is a man over yonder who is all out of order. There is nothing right about him. He is a man upside down. His heart loves that which will ruin it and does not love that which would bless it. His understanding is darkened. He puts bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter. His will has become very domineering and has usurped power which it never ought to possess. If you will study him well, you will not make much of him. He is all out of gear, like a piece of machinery in which the wheels do not operate correctly. To describe him briefly by one word, I should say that he is in a state of chaos, everything is in confusion and disorder, tossed up and down. Well, says one, that is my case. I am like that tonight.   
Now, the first work of God that we read of in the Bible is the work of creationIn the beginning God created the Heaven and the earth. When the fullness of time was come for the fitting up of the world, which event we generally call, creation, although it was really the arrangement of that which had been created, then the Lord came forth and the Spirit of God, with outspread wings, brooded over chaos and brought order out of confusion. Oh, that the Spirit of the Lord would, tonight, come and brood over that mans confused and confounded mind where everything is tossed about in wild disorder! He cannot tell why he was born, nor for what objective he is living. He seems to have no purpose in life, he is tossed to and fro like a log in the ocean. His passions fly from vanity to vanity and you cannot put him in order. His mother tried it, but he scorned to be tied to her apron strings. Many friends have tried it since then, but he has now taken the bit into his mouth and has run awayhe refuses to obey the reins. O God, if You will come, tonight, and make him a new creature in Christ Jesus, Your creating work will be made manifest in him! If You will mold, and model, and form, and fashion him until he shall be a vessel fit for Your use, then will the work of God begin to be manifested in him. Oh, that it might be so! There are some of us here who can bear witness that God is a great Creator, for He has made all things new within us and transformed what before was chaos into a world of beauty and delight wherein He delights to dwell.   
After the world was created, Gods next work was that of making light. The earth was created, but it was swathed in darkness. Darkness was upon the face of the deep. No sun, no moon, no stars had yet appeared. No light had yet fallen upon the earthperhaps by reason of dense vapors which shut out the light. God did nothing but say, Let there be light; and there was light.   
Well now, tonight there has come in here one who is not only without form and void, and dreadfully tossed about, but one who is, himself, dark and in the dark. He needs the Light of God, but he has none. He does not know the way of life. He does not see a ray of hope that he ever will find the way. He seems shut up in gloomy, thick, Egyptian night and, perhaps, worst of all, he does not know his true conditionhe calls darkness light, and prides himself that he can see, when really he can see nothing at all! Lord, speak the Word, and say, Let there be light, and the man will see the light, and see it at once! I am quite sure that, whether I can speak with power, or not, God can speak with power and, standing here, it is to my heart a sweet solace that He can, at this moment, find out the most darkened sinner in the building, sitting or standing anywhere about, and the Light of God can penetrate into his soul in less time than it takes me to say the words! And to his own surprise the darkness shall be light about him and the Egyptian night shall be turned into the midday of infinite love and mercy! Pray God that it may be so, Brothers and Sisters! Lift up a silent prayer to Heaven, for this light-giving! This illumination is a special work of God and there are many who are now in the dark, in whom it is possible for this work of God to be manifested.

After these two works of God are done, after we have had creation and light-bringing, still there is death and there is need of the Divine work of resurrection. What is the use of a form beautifully fashioned if it is dead? And what is the use of light shining with all its brilliance upon a corpse? Yet in this House of Prayer there are, tonight, some who are dead in trespasses and sins. They do not feel the weight of sin, yet to a living man it is an intolerable burden. They are not wounded by the two-edged sword of the Lord, though a living man is soon cut and gashed by it. They do not even hear the joyous notes of Free Grace and dying love though they ring out like a peal of silver bells! These dead sinners do not appreciate their sweet music. It is the work of God to make men live. There will come a day, and perhaps sooner than we think, when all the myriads of bodies that lie in our cemeteries and churchyards will rise up from the grave to live again! That will be a manifestation of Divine Power, but it will not be a greater manifestation of Divine Power than when a dead heart, a dead conscience, a dead will is made to live with a Divine life! Oh, that God would work that mighty miracle of mercy tonight! Pray that it may be so, beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ. The dead will not pray for this resurrectiontherefore let us pray for it for them! And if there is a man who does pray for it, one who cries, Lord, make me live! that is a proof that already there is a thrill of life shooting through him, or he would not have that living desire!   
Brethren, I might thus continue working upon the line of the story of the creation and the arranging of the world in due order, but I will not you can do that for yourselves. I want, next, to speak to you about the Divine work of cleansing. There is, tonight, in this place of worship, a man who is black with filth. He has done everything that he could do in order to rebel against God. Perhaps he is like Mr. John Newton who describes himself somewhat thushe says, I was, in many respects, like the Apostle Paul. I was a blasphemer, a persecutor and injurious, but there was one point in which I went beyond the Apostle Paul, for he did it ignorantly, but I sinned against light and knowledge. Do I speak to any here who, in sinning, have transgressed very grossly because they have done what they knew was wrong and have persevered in doing it against the checks of conscience and against the warnings of a better longing, which they have never yet been able to kill?   
I am amazed, sometimes, when I have had to talk with those whose lives have certainly gone almost to the very extremity of iniquity, but who, nevertheless, all the time have had a certain inward check that would never let them go just that little piece further which would have put them beyond hope. There was always a something that they still revered, even when they pretended to disbelieve everything and to blaspheme everything! There was some influence for good still operating upon them, as though God had a line and a hook in the jaws of leviathanand though he ran out so far into the great deep of sin that you could not tell where he had gone, yet he had to come back, again, after all. God still does wonders of mercy and Grace!   
Now, suppose, tonight, that that black sinner, with all his years of sin, should be forgiven outright? Suppose that, tonight, the whole of those 50 or 60 years of sin should vanish once and for all? Suppose that God should forgive, better still, that God should forget? Suppose that, with one tremendous fling of His Omnipotent arm, He should take the whole mass of that sinners sin and cast it into the depths of the sea? What a wonder of Grace that would be! That is what God will do for everyone who trusts in Jesus! If you will come and cast yourself at His dear feet, and look up to Jesus, Crucified, bleeding in your place, and believe those words of the Prophet Isaiah, The Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all, or the words of the Apostle Peter, Who, His own Self, bore our sins in His own body on the tree. If you trust Jesus, the great Sin-Bearer, He will make you whiter than snow! And in your case the works of God shall be manifested, for none but the Almighty God can make scarlet sinners white and He can do it in a moment. Lord, do it now!   
Suppose that another thing should happen, that a man here, or a woman who is desperately set on mischief, should, tonight, be turned in an entirely opposite direction? That would be manifestly a Divine work of changing the whole current of life! I have never seen Niagara Falls and I do not suppose that I ever shall, but there are some here who have seen it. Down comes the mighty flood with a tremendous crash, forever leaping down from on high! Would you not believe Him to be God who should, in a moment, make that waterfall leap upward instead of downward and, as impetuously seek the heights as now it leaps into the depths? Well, the Lord can do that with some big Niagara Fall of a sinner here this very evening! You are determined, tonight, to go into evil company and to commit a filthy sin. You are determined, tomorrow, to grasp the drunkards cup and not be satisfied until you have turned yourself into something below a beast! You are determined to pursue that evil business of yours, that getting money by gambling, or something worse. Yes, but if my Lord comes forth, tonight, determined to save you, He will make you sing to another tune!   
Oh, but I could never be a Methodist! says one. I do not know what you will yet be. Oh! says another, you would never make a convert of me. I did not say that I couldbut the Lord can make you what you think you never will be! There are some here, who, if they could have seen themselves 10 years ago, sitting here, and enjoying the Word, would have said, No, no, Charlie, that is not you! I am sure, my boy. And, No, Mary, that is not you, my girl! You will never be there, there is no fear of that. But you are here, you see, and what Free Grace has done for some of us, it can do for others. Lord, do it according to that mighty power which You did work in Christ when You did raise Him from the dead! Work in the same fashion in the ungodly, tonight, and turn them from the error of their ways to run as impetuously after You as now they run from You!   
I have only one more matter to mention under this head. I think that Gods works are sometimes manifested in men by giving them great joy. There is a person here, tonight, convicted of sin. Mr. Conscience has come up against him. You know Mr. Consciencehe keeps a cat-o-nine-tails. When he is allowed to get to work and he gets tight hold of a sinner who has long kept him under hatches, he says, Now it is my turn! And he lets you know it, believe me! Let a man once get conscience, with a cat-onine-tails, laying it on, and he will never forget it! Every stroke seems to tear off a thongful of his quivering flesh. Look how the nine plows make deep furrows every time they fall!   
You speak, says one, like a man who knows it. Know it? I knew it for years while but a child! And neither night nor day could I escape from the falling of those terrible thongs! Oh, how conscience scourged me and I could find no rest anywhere till, once upon a time, I heard the Divine voice that said, Look unto Me, and be you saved, all you ends of the earth. And conscience put away his cat-o-nine-tails and my wounds were bathed in heavenly balsam! And they ceased to smart and I was glad! Oh, how my heart cried, Hallelujah! as I saw Jesus on the Cross! Then I understood that God had executed the full vengeance due to my sin upon His Well-Beloved who had kindly bared His shoulders to the lash and undertaken to bear the punishment of my sin. Then did my heart leap with joy!   
You notice that I am always preaching that Doctrine of Substitution. I cannot help it, because it is the only Truth of God that brought me comfort. I should never have gotten out of the Dungeon of Despair if it had not been for that grand Truth of Substitution! I hope that no young lady is going to ask me to write in her album this week. That request is made to me, I do not know how many days in the week, and I always write this verse in all the albums   
*Ever since by faith I saw the stream   
Your flowing wounds supply,   
Redeeming love has been my theme,   
And shall be till I die.*   
If you once know the power of that blessed theme, then you will see that it is a work of God to sweep away our ashes and to give us the oil of joyto take from us our robes of mourning and to clothe us with garments of beautyto put a new song into our months and to establish our goings. May you all have this blessed work of God worked in you, to the praise of the glory of His Grace!   
II. Now, my second head is this, HOW ARE THESE WORKS MADE SPECIALLY MANIFEST IN SOME MEN?   
I will take this blind man and just run over his life. First, he was totally blind. There was no sham about his blindness. He could not see a ray of lighthe was totally blindhe knew nothing about light. Is there anybody here who is totally blind in a spiritual sense? You cannot see anything, my poor Friend. You have not one good desireyou have not had, even, a good thought! Ah, you do not know what kind of people we have in this London, but we do meet with people who, for years, seem never to have had a good thought ever cross their minds. And if someone else were to speak to them about anything that is good, or even decent, he would be talking double Dutch to them! They do not understand it. We have multitudes of that kind in our slums, yes, and in the West End they are just as bad.   
Now, when the Lord, in His infinite mercy, comes to these people who are totally blind and He makes them see, there is room for His mighty power to work there, for everybody says, What a wonderful thing that such a person as that should be converted! I remember well a man with whom I have often prayed in very sweet fellowship. He was a strange fish when I first knew him, though he was a very good man afterwards. He was as eccentric a being as I ever metand I am sufficiently eccentric myself but he was a dead worldling. His Sundayswell, he did not know any difference between Sunday and Monday except that he could not be in the beer shop for quite so long on Sundays. He said, I had been out one Sunday morning to buy a pair of ducks and I put one in each pocket of my coat. As I went along, and saw the people going into a place of worship, I thought that I would see what it was like, I had heard that it was a decent looking place inside.

He went in. The Lord met with himand that day those ducks did not get cookedthey had to wait till Monday! But he was, himself, caught and captured for Christ that day. A total change took place in him and he became a fervent Christian at once, whereas before he had been totally without any kind of religious thought, either of fear or of hope! Here was a case in which the works of God were specially made manifest! That man has gone to Heaven, now. Well do I remember him and how I praised God for his conversion!   
But the man mentioned in our text was born blind. Now, there are many like that, indeedall people are born blind. It is original sin, from which we all suffer. Sin is a taint of the blood. We are born blind. There are some who, in a very peculiar way, are bred and born in a family utterly destitute of religion. They are brought up to despise it, or else brought up in the midst of superstition and taught to say a useless prayer to a crucifix of wood or stone. Can these people, who are so brought up, find Christ? Yes, by His Grace, they do find Christ, or rather, Christ finds them! And they hear the Gospel and it commends itself to their minds straight away. I suppose that nobody was ever more superstitious than Martin Luther was. I have seen that staircase in Rome, up which Martin Luther went on his knees. It is said to be the staircase which our Lord came down from the palace of Pilate. I have seen the people go up and down on their knees. Just think of Luther doing itand there came to him, as he was going up the stairs on his knees, those words, The just shall live by faith, and he rose up at onceand he did not go on his knees any farther! Oh, that God would appear in that way to some of you!   
Next, this blind man was cured by special means. That was another manifestation of Gods works. The Savior spat, stooped down and with His finger worked that spittle into the dust until He had made clay. Then taking it up, He began to put it over the mans eyes. I believe that God is greatly glorified by the salvation of people through the simple preaching of the Gospel, the very simplest means that can be used. Often men say, when souls are saved in this place, as they are continually, Well, I cannot see anything remarkable in the preacher. No, and if you were to look a great deal longer, you would see less than you see now, for there is not anything whatever in himbut there is a great deal in the Gospel! O Brothers and Sisters, if some preachers would only preach the Gospel, they would soon see how very superior it is to all their fine essays! But they prepare their sermons so well. Oh, yes, I know, but did you ever hear of the man who used to prepare the potatoes before he planted them in his garden? He always boiled themthey never grew, for he had prepared all the life out of them! Now, many a boiled sermon is brought out to the people, but it never grows. It is elaborated and prepared so much that nothing will ever come out of it. The Lord loves to bless living words spoken in simple language out of an earnest heart. The man who speaks thus does not get the glorythe glory goes to Godand thus there is room for the works of God to be manifested!   
This blind man was also a specially fit sphere for God to manifest His works in because he was known as a public beggar. They used to lead him up in the morning, I suppose, to the gate of the Temple, and there he took his place and sat down. He was a man with a ready tongue, I should guess, so that he often used to exchange chaff with those that went by, and they remembered what kind of a man he was. He was always very sarcastic, I suspect, and when they spoke to him, and gave him nothing, he knew how to give them something! That blind beggar was a well-known character in Jerusalem, as well known as the blind beggar of Bethnal Greenso the Savior selected him because he was so well knownand opened his eyes.  
So you have come here, tonight, my Friend, have you? You are well known, but I will not point you out. I do not like doing that kind of thing. There came in here, not long ago, a soldier who had been a professor of religion, but he had been a dreadful apostate and had gone back. But he wanted to hear the Gospel again. Just over yonder, where there are two pillars, he wisely chose a place where I could not see him. But it so happened on that Sunday night, and he is the witness of itI well remember saying, Well, Will, you have to come back, you know. You have got to come back. And the sooner, the better. And Will did come back! And he sent word to me to say that Will had come back with a broken heart to find his Lord. I did not know that his name was Will, I am sure, and I did not know why he had hidden himself behind the pillars, there, but God did, and He adapted the Word of God to the person, and so he fetched Will back again!   
If there is any Will, or Tom, or Jack, or Mary, or if there are any others here who have wandered far from God, O Sovereign Grace, bring them back, whether they are soldiers or civilians, that they may seek and find the Savior even now! This Will was well known and his restoration to Christ will, I trust, manifest the works of God in him because he was so well known. Oh, that the Lord would hear that prayer of my friend, this morning, and convert the Prince of Wales! We all said, Amen, to that petition! We want the Lord to bring into His Church some of those who are best known, whether they are princes or whether they are beggars, that the works of God may be manifest in them!   
When this man was converted, instead of being a public beggar, he became a public confessor. I like that answer of his, Whether He is a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see. There is many a man who can say, Well, I do not know much about theology, but I know that I was a drunk and I know that I am not a drunk, now. I know that I used to beat my wife and now, God bless her, she knows how I love her! Then I could have gone into all manner of sinful company, but now, thank God, His saints are my choice companions! Once I could have gloried in my own righteousness, but now I count it dross and dung, that I may win Christ and be found in Him. There is a great change in menobody can deny that factand I praise Gods name for it.   
The Lord send out a great company of men who are not ashamed of Jesus Christ! We need many men and women who will come straight out from the world and say, Christ for me, for He has so touched my heart, that I am for Him! And if no one else will confess Him, I must do so, for He is my best Friend, my Lord, my Savior, my All! In such cases, the works of God are made manifest.   
III. Now I have done when I have just said three or four things by way of hints upon this last point, How MAY GODS WORKS BE MANIFEST IN US?   
Some of you are very poor. Others are very lame or very sickly. You are consumptive, asthmatic, full of aches, pains and complaints. Now, then, perhaps all this suffering is permitted that the work of God may be manifest in your afflictions by your holy patience, your submission to the Divine will, your persevering holiness amid all your poverty and trials. All this is sent that Gods Grace may be seen in you. Will you look at your afflictions in that light and believe that they are not sent as a punishment, but as a platform upon which God may stand and display His Free Grace in you? Bear well all the Lords will, for your trials are sent for this purpose, that Gods works may be manifest in you.   
The same is true of your infirmities. We are, none of us, perfect, but we may also have physical infirmities. Now believe, if you are sent to preach the Gospel, or to teach children, or in any way to advance the Kingdom of God, that you would not be any better fitted for your work if you had all the eloquence of a Cicero and all the learning of a Newton! You, as you are, can serve the Lord and can fill a certain place, better, with all your drawbacks, than you could without those drawbacks. A sensible Christian will make use of his infirmities for Gods Glory. There is a strange story that they tell of St. Bernard, a tradition which is believed, by some people, but which I look at as an allegory rather than as a matter of fact. He was going over the Alps towards Rome upon some business. The devil knew that the saint was about to do something that would greatly injure his kingdom, so he came and broke one of the wheels of the saints carriage. Whereat Bernard called out to him, and said, You think to stop me in this way, do you, Satan? Now you shall suffer for it yourself! So he took him and twisted him round, and made a wheel of himand fastened him to the carriageand then went driving on,   
Now, the meaning of that allegory is that, when infirmities threaten to injure your usefulness, you are to use those infirmities in Gods service. Turn the devil, himself, into a wheel and go ahead all the better because of the hindrance that he tried to cause. Why, it might be an advantage, sometimes, to be compelled by stammering to lay emphasis on a word! And if ever I did feel myself, now and then, stuck in a hole by that process, I would take care to be stuck somewhere near the Cross. Many a man has had the power to attract people by the very singularity which looked as if it must impair his usefulness. All our infirmities, whatever they are, are just opportunities for God to display His gracious work in us.   
So it will be with all the oppositions that we meet with. If we serve the Lord, we shall be sure to meet with difficulties and oppositionsbut they are only more opportunities for the works of God to be seen in us.   
By-and-by, we shall come to die and, in our deaths, Gods work may be manifest. I wonder by what death we shall glorify God? Was not that a beautiful expression of Johns, when the Savior spoke of Peter? He told Peter how he would die, but John does not put it so. He says, By what death he should glorify God. Perhaps it will be by a long, pining sickness. Some will be gradually dissolved by consumption. Well, you will glorify God by it! Those pale cheeks and that thin hand, through which the light will shine, will preach many a sermon on that sick bed. Or perhaps you will glorify God in some other fashion. You may have to die with bitter pangs of pain, but then, if the Lord cheers you and makes you patient, you will glorify God by that kind of death. You will look death calmly in the face, and not fret, and not be afraid. You will have to die somehow, unless the Lord, Himself, shall come and, blessed be His name, He will take you Home in a way that will somehow or other bring glory to His name, however it may be! So let us begin to rejoice in it even now.

May God bless these words of mine and may many, here, be eternal monuments of the boundless, Sovereign Grace of God! And unto Him be Glory forever and ever! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON.   
**JOHN 9:1-38.**

Verse 1. And as Jesus passed by, He saw a man who was blind from his birth. The man could not see Jesus, but sight came to the man from Jesus. If there are any here who cannot look to Christ as yet, our prayer is that He may look on them as He looked on this blind man.

2. And His disciples asked Him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind? Beloved, if you had Christ with you, you could occupy your time better than in asking such questions as this! And I think that when we go to Holy Scripture, we can do better than pry into things of small practical importance, or even into great mysteries. However, in this case, since the disciples were liable to fall into grave error, our Lord gave them instruction upon the matter that perplexed them.

3. Jesus answered, Neither has this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him. In other words, this man is not blind as the result of sin in himself, or in his parents. He is blind in order that God may have a platform for the display of His gracious power in healing him!

4, 5. I must work the works of Him that sent Me, while it is day: the night comes, when no man can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the Light of the world. Our Savior felt that He was commissioned as a Servant of His Father, sent here to do a certain work, and He must be doing it. It is well for Gods servants to feel a holy compulsionit does not take away from them the freedom of their action and their delight in the service of Godbut exercises a powerful influence over a man when he feels, Woe is me if I preach not the Gospel. Or when, like the Lord Jesus, he says, I must work the works of Him that sent me. Did the Well-Beloved, the Prince of Heaven, come under compulsion? Did He put Himself under that, must, which is for the King? Then you and I may well put ourselves under holy bondage for the Lord. There, do not hinder me! Do not tell me that I am too feeble in healthI must work the works of Him that sent me.

6, 7. When He had thus spoken, He spat on the ground and made clay of the spittle, and He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay, and said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, (which is by interpretation, Sent). He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing. Our Lord often works miracles without means and, sometimes, with means which appear to be quite inappropriate. It would seem to be more easy to blind a man with clay than to open his eyes with it! And there are some who assert that the Gospel plainly spoken would lead men into sin, but it does not. It is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believes. If you go to work in the name of God. If you put the clay on the sinners eyes and bid him go and wash, you will see what will happen.

8-11. The neighbors therefore, and they which before had seen him that he was blind, said, Is not this he that sat and begged? Some said, This is he: others said, he is like he. But he said, I am he. Therefore said they unto him, How were your eyes opened? He answered and said, A Man that is called Jesus made clay, and anointed my eyes, and said unto me, Go to the pool of Siloam, and wash: and I went and washed, and I received sight. Does he not tell his story well? If he had not been a blind man whose eyes had just been opened, he would have exaggerated somewhere or other. I never heard a man tell a tale with absolute correctnessit is not the way of peoplethey are sure to put in some little item by way of garnishing, for there is a bump of romance in most mens heads. But this shrewd, strictly honest man tells the story briefly and leaves out no important particular.

12-15. Then said they unto him, Where is He? He said, I know not. They brought to the Pharisees him that aforetime was blind. And it was the Sabbath day when Jesus made the clay, and opened his eyes. Then again the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight. He said unto them, He put clay upon my eyes, and I washed, and do see. That was short and sweetand when you have to deal with Pharisees, do not give them muchthey are not worth it and they are sure to misuse it! When he spoke to the common people, he enlarged and gave them details, but now that he comes to talk to these pragmatic professors, he cuts it down to as few words as possible.

16. Therefore said some of the Pharisees, This Man is not of God, because He keeps not the Sabbath day. Others said, How can a Man that is a sinner do such miracles? And there was a division among them. Yes, and there is always a division among the enemies of Christthey cannot agree among themselves. If they could always lay their heads together and agree, they might have greater power, but the Edomites draw their swords against the children of Ammon, and they are sure to slay one another in the long run. There were also some among these Pharisees who had a conscience, men like Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathaea, and they asked, How can a Man that is a sinner do such miracles?

17. They said unto the blind man again, What say you of Him, that He has opened your eyes? He said, He is a Prophet. He must be a Prophet. He could not have worked such a miracle as that if He had been a common manHe said, He is a Prophet.

18. But the Jews did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind, and received his sight, until they called the parents of him that had received his sight. You see, John gives to the Pharisees the name which they arrogated to themselveswe are Jews. But they were not true Jews. They called themselves Jews and so John speaks of them as the Jews. It often happens that a certain clique or party will run away with a name which does not belong to them any more than it does to a great many who differ from them very widely. These Pharisees pretended that they would not believe the miracle. It was manifest before their eyes, but yet they would not believe it until they called his parents.

19-21. And they asked them, saying, Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see? His parents answered them and said, We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind: but by what means he now sees, we know not; or who has opened his eyes, we know not: he is of age; ask him: he shall speak for himself. This was very shrewd on their part, but I think that I must add that it was very cowardly to throw all the testimony on their son. There are some parents who, if their children do right, if they follow Christ, seem to leave them to take care of themselves.

22. These words spoke his parents, because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that He was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue. Excommunicatedand they could not bear to be cut off from the respectable society which they had before enjoyed.

23, 24. Therefore said his parents, He is of age; ask him. Then again called they the man that was blind, and said unto him, Give God the praise: we know that this Man is a sinner. Does it not sound pretty from their Pharisaic lips? Arch-hypocrites pretending to teach a man who knew much better than themselves! We know that this Man is a sinner. You did not know it, but we know it and as we know it, and we are doctors, you must believe it.

25. He answered and said, Whether He is a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see. He could not be beaten out of that! You cannot argue a man out of an experience of this kind and, if the Lord Jesus Christ has ever opened your eyes, dear Friend, nobody can make you doubt that blessed fact!

26, 27. Then said they to him again, What did He to you? How opened

He your eyes? He answered them, I have told you already, and you did not hear: why would you hear it again? Will you also be His disciples? He threw a little sarcasm into that last question. The man was a very remarkable persona simple-hearted, honest manbut quite able to hold his own in any company.

28. Then they reviled him. It is a bad case, so abuse the plaintiff. There is nothing to be said for our side, so let us abuse the man who has had his eyes opened!

28-30. And said, You are His disciple; but we are Moses disciples. We know that God spoke unto Moses: as for this Fellow, we know not from where He is. The man answered and said unto them, Why herein is a marvelous thing, that you know not from where He is, and yet He has opened my eyes. Does not that manifestation of miraculous power show where He must have come from? Could He have come from anywhere but from God?

31-33. Now we know that God hears not sinners: but if any man is a worshipper of God, and does His will, him He hears. Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind. If this man were not of God, He could do nothing. Well argued! The case is proven, indeed.

34. They answered and said unto him, You were altogether born in sins, and do you teach, us? Cannot you hear them say it? A blind beggar, who has just begun to see, Do you teach us?D.D.s, men who are learned in the LawDo you teach us? Well, Brethren, if a man has only one eye, he may teach those who have not any, for the old proverb says, In the realm of the blind, the man with one eye is king. Yet there is another proverb on this subject and that is, In the realm of the blind, the man with one eye gets hanged. That was likely to be the case herethe blind Pharisees could not bear the man who could see! He knew too much for them.

34-36. And they cast him out. Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when He had found him, He said unto him, Do you believe on the Son of God? He answered and said, Who is He, Lord, that I might believe on Him. He needed instruction. Christ may have done much for a man, but he may not, as yet, fully know the Lord. There may be some here, tonight, upon whom Christ has worked a great deal, and yet you do not know Him as you will know HimDo you believe on the Son of God?

37, 38. And Jesus said unto him, You have both seen Him, and it is He that talks with you. And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped Him. That is the way with a genuine Believerhe worships Christ! Why? Because he believes Him to be God! It would be idolatry to worship Christ if He were only man! And Christ would have been an impostor if He had allowed this man to worship Him if he had not been God! But he was God and we, believing Him to be God, worship Christ as very God of very God, to whom be praise forever and ever! Amen.

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THE BLIND MANS EYES OPENEDOR PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY   
NO. 1754

**DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, AUGUST 12, 1883, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT EXETER HALL.

**Jesus answered, Neither has this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him. I must work the works of Him that sent Me, while it is day: the night**

**comes, when no man can work.   
John 9:3, 4.**

OBSERVE, dear Friends, how little disconcerted our Lord Jesus Christ was by the most violent opposition of His enemies. The Jews took up stones to stone Him and He hid Himself from them. But almost the moment after, when He had passed, perhaps, through a single court and was sufficiently out of range to be unobserved by them, He stood still and fixed His eyes upon a blind beggar who had been sitting near the Temple gate. I am afraid that the most of us would have had no heart to help even the most needy while we were escaping from a shower of stones! And if we had attempted the work, moved by supreme compassion, we would have gone about it blunderingly, in a great hurry and certainly would not have talked calmly and wisely, as the Savior did when He answered His disciples question and went on to talk with them.

One of the things worthy to be noticed in our Lords Character is His wonderful quiet spirit, especially His marvelous calmness in the presence of those who misjudged, insulted and slandered Him. He is reviled often, but never ruffled. He is often in deaths but always full of life. No doubt He felt keenly all the contradictions of sinners against Himself, for in a passage in the Psalms which refers to the Messiah, we read, Reproach has broken My heart, yet the Lord Jesus did not permit His feelings to overcome HimHe was quiet and self-possessed, acting with a profound disregard of the calumnies and assaults of His bitter enemies.

One reason, I take it, for His being so self-contained was that He was never elated by the praise of men. Take my word for it, for I know, that if you ever allow yourself to be pleased by those who speak well of you, to that extent you will be capable of being grieved by those who speak ill of you! But if you have learned (and it is a hard lesson for the most of us) that you are not the servant of men, but of God and that, therefore, you will not live upon the breath of mens nostrils if they praise youand you will not die if they denounce youthen you will be strong and show that you have come to the stature of a man in Christ Jesus. If the great Masters head had been turned by the hosannas of the multitude, then His heart would have sunk within Him when they cried, Crucify Him, crucify Him! But He was neither lifted up nor cast down by menHe committed Himself unto no man because He knew what was in man!   
The innermost reason for this quiet of heart was His unbroken communion with the Father. Jesus dwelt apart, for He lived with Godthe Son of Man who came down from Heaven still dwelt in Heaven, serenely patient because He was raised above earthly things in the holy contemplations of His perfect mind. Because His heart was with His Father, the Father made Him strong to bear anything that might come from men. Oh, that we all could wear this armor of the Light of God, the celestial panoply of communion with the High Eternal One! Then we would not be afraid of evil tidings, or of evil occurrences, for our hearts would be fixed on the sure Rock of Jehovahs unchanging love!

There was, perhaps, another reason for our Saviors wonderful composure when He was attacked with stones, namely, that His heart was so set upon His work that He could not be turned away from it whatever the unbelieving Jews might do. The ruling passion bore Him on through danger and sufferingand made Him calmly defy all opposition. He had come into the world to bless men and He must bless men. The Jews might oppose Him for this reason and for that, but they could not turn the current of His soul from the riverbed of mercy along which it rushed like a torrent. He must do good to the suffering and the poor! He could not help itHis face was set like flint towards His lifework!

It had become His meat and His drink to do the will of Him that sent Him and so, when they took up stones, although He withdrew Himself a little, yet as He only wished to preserve His life to do good, He returned to His lifework without a moments delay! Stones cannot drive Him from His gracious pursuits. As we have seen a parent bird, chased away, for a moment, from its nest, return to it the instant the intruder has withdrawn, so do we see our Lord come back to His holy work almost before He is out of the sight of His would-be murderers!

Yonder sits a blind man and Jesus is at once at his side to heal him. They will overtake You, O Christ! They will seek to slay You! There are more stones in their cruel hands! Your haters hurl their missiles fiercely and they will be upon You in a moment! What cares He for that? No coward spirit can make Him overlook an occasion for glorifying the Father! That blind man must be attended to and at all hazards. He stops to deal with Him in love. If you and I become completely taken up with zeal for God and with the desire to win souls, then nothing will daunt us. We shall bear anything and not seem to have anything to bear! We shall hear slander as though we heard it not and endure hardship as though there were none to endure.

As an arrow from a bow shot by an strong archer, defies the opposing wind and speeds forward to the white of the target, so shall we fly forward towards the great objective of our compassionate ambition. Happy is that man whom God has launched like a thunderbolt from His handwho must go on and fulfill his destinyhappy that it is his vocation to bring sinners to the Saviors feet! O Blessed Spirit, lift us up to dwell in God and so to sympathize with His fatherly compassion that we may heed neither stones, nor sneers, nor slanders, but become absorbed in our self-denying service for Jesus sake!

Let that stand for an introduction. The Savior in His worst and lowest estate, when near to death, thinks of nothing but the good of men! When cruel eyes are spying Him out that they may slay Him, He has an eye for the poor blind. There is no stone in His heart towards the sorrowful even when stones are flying past His ears!

I. So I introduce you, tonight, to the first topic of the present discourse, which is THE WORKER. I give that as a well-earned title to the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the Worker, the Chief Worker and the Example to all workers. He came into the world, He says, to do the will of Him that sent Him and to finish His work. On this occasion, when He is pursued by His enemies, He is still a workera wonder-worker with the blind man. There are many in this world who ignore sorrow, who pass by grief, who are deaf to lamentation and blind to distress.

The easiest thing that I know of to do with this wicked, wretched city of London is not to know much about it. They say that half the world knows not how the other half lives! Surely if it did, it would not live so carelessly as it does, or be quite as cruel as it is. There are sights in this metropolis that might melt a heart of steel and make a Nabal generous! But it is an easy way of escaping from the exercise of benevolence to shut your eyes and see nothing of the abject misery which is groveling at your feet. Where ignorance is bliss it is folly to be wiseso said some easygoing ignoramus of old! If beggars are importunate, then passersby must be deaf. If sinners are profane, it is a simple matter to stop your ears and hurry on.

If this blind man must necessarily sit and beg at the gate of the Temple, then those who frequent the Temple must just slip by as if they were as blind as he. Crowds pass by and take no notice of him. Is not that the way with the multitude today? If you are in troubleif you are suffering heartbreakdo they not ignore you and go their way to their farm and to their merchandise, though you lie down and starve? Dives finds it convenient to remain ignorant of the sores of Lazarus. It is not so with Jesus! He has a quick eye to see the blind beggar if He sees nothing else. If He is not enraptured with the massive stones and the beautiful architecture of the temple, yet He fixes His eyes upon a sightless mendicant at the Temple gate. He is all eyes, all ears, all heart, all hands where misery is present. My Master is made of tenderness! He melts with love. O true souls who love Him, copy Him in this, and always let your hearts be touched with a fellow beingfeeling for the suffering and the sinning!

There are others who, though they see misery, do not diminish it by warm sympathy, but increase it by their cold logical conclusions. Poverty, they sayYes. Wellthat, of course, is brought on by drunkenness and by laziness and by all sorts of vice. I do not say that it is not so in every case, but I do say that the observation will not help a poor man to become either better or happier! Such a hard remark will rather exasperate the hardened than assist the struggling. Sickness, say someOh, no doubt, a great deal of sickness is caused by wicked habits, neglect of sanitary laws, and so on. This may be sadly true, but it grates on a sufferers earsa very kind and pleasing doctrine to teach in the wards of our hospitals! I would recommend you not to teach it till you are ill, yourself, and then, perhaps, the doctrine may not seem quite so instructive.

Even Christs disciples, when they saw this blind man, thought that there must be something particularly wicked about his father and mother, or something especially vicious about the man, himself, which God foresaw and, on account of which, He punished him with blindness! The disciples were of the same spirit as Jobs three comforters, who, when they saw the Patriarch on a dunghill, bereft of all his children, robbed of all his property and scraping himself because he was covered with sores, said, Of course he must be a hypocrite. He must have done something very dreadful, or he would not be so grievously afflicted. The world will still stick to its unfounded belief that if the Tower of Siloam falls upon any men, they must be sinners above all sinners upon the face of the earth!

A cruel doctrine, a vile doctrine, fit for savages, but not to be mentioned by Christians who know that whom the Lord loves He chastens! Yet I do see a good deal of this cruel notion about. And if men are in trouble, I hear it muttered, Well, of course they brought it on themselves. Is this your way of cheering them? Cheap moral observations steeped in vinegar make a poor dish for an invalid! Such censures are a sorry way of helping a lame dog over a stileno, it is putting up another stile for him so that he cannot get over it at all! Now I mark this of my Lordthat it is written of Him that He gives to all men liberally, and upbraids not. When He fed those thousands in the wilderness, it would have been most just if He had said to them, Why did you all come out into the wilderness and not bring provisions with you? What have you to do out here without something to eat? You are unthrifty and deserve to starve! No, no! He never said a word of the sort, but He fed them, fed them all and sent them home filled!

You and I are not sent into the world to thunder out commandments from the top of Sinaiwe are come unto Mount Zion! We are not to go on circuit as if we were judge and hangman rolled into one, to meet all the sorrow and misery in the world with bitter words of censure and condemnation. If we do so, how different we are from that blessed Master of ours who says not a word by way of rebuke to those who seek Him, but simply feeds the hungry and heals all those who have need of healing! It is easy to criticize. It is easy to upbraid. But ours should be the higher and nobler task of blessing and saving!

I notice, yet again, that there are certain others who, if they are not indifferent to sorrow and do not pitch upon some cruel theory of condemnation, nevertheless speculate a good deal where speculation can be of no practical service. When we get together, there are many questions which we like to raise and dispute upon which are of no practical value whatever. There is the question of the origin of evil. That is a fine subject for those who like to chop logic by the week without making enough chips to light a fire for cold hands to warm! Such was the subject proposed to the Saviorforeseen guilt, or hereditary taintWho did sin, this man, or his parents? How far is it right that the sin of parents should, as it often does, fall upon the children?

I could propose to you a great many topics equally profound and curious, but what would be the use? Yet there are many in the world who are fond of these topics, spinning cobwebs, blowing bubbles, making theories, breaking them, and making more! I wonder whether the world was ever blessed to the extent of a bad farthing by all the theories of all the learned men that have ever lived? May they not all be put down under the head of vain jangling? I would rather create an ounce of help than a ton of theory! It is beautiful to me to see how the Master breaks up the fine speculation which the disciples are setting forth. He says somewhat shortly, Neither has this man sinned, nor his parents. And then He spits on the ground, makes clay and opens the blind mans eyes! This was work, the other was mere worry.

Father, said a boy, the cows are in the corn. How did they get in? Boy, said the father, never mind how they got in, let us hurry up and get them out! There is common sense about that practical proceeding. Here are these people sunken in vice and steeped in poverty. Postpone the inquiries as to how they got into this condition! What is the origin of moral evil? How is it transmitted from parent to child? Answer those questions after the Day of Judgment, when you will have more light! But just now, the great thing is to see how you and I can get evil out of the world and how we can lift up the fallen and restore those who have gone astray!

Never let us imitate the man in the fable who saw a boy drowning and then and there lectured him upon the imprudence of swimming out in the deep water. No, no! Let us land the boy on the bank, dry him and dress himand then tell him not to go there again, lest a worse thing happen to him! I say that the Master was no speculatorHe was no spinner of theories; He was no mere doctrinalistbut He went to work and healed those that had need of healing. Now, in this, He is the great Example for us all in this year of Grace. Come, what have we ever done to bless our fellow men? Many of us are followers of Christ and, oh, how happy we ought to be that we are! What have we ever done worthy of our high calling?

Sir, I heard a lecture the other night, says one, upon the evils of intemperance. Is that all you did? Has any action come of that brilliant oration and of your careful attention to it? Did you straightway try to remove this intemperance by your example? Well, I shall think of that, Sir, one of these days. Meanwhile what is to become of these intemperate ones? Will not their blood lie at your door? I heard the other day, says one, a very forcible and interesting lecture upon political economy. I feel that it is a very weighty science and can explain much of the poverty you mention. Perhaps sobut political economy in itself is about as hard as brass! It has no heart, or conscienceneither can it make allowance for such things.

The political economist is a man of iron who would be rusted by a tear and, therefore, never tolerates the mood of compassion. His science is a rock which will wreck a navy and remain unmoved by the cries of drowning men and women! It is as the moon of the desert which withers all it blows upon. It seems to dry up mens souls when they get to be masters of it, or rather are mastered by it. It is a science of stubborn facts which would not be facts if we were not so brutish. Political economy or no political economy, I come back to my pointWhat have you done for others? Let us think of that and if any of us have been dreaming, day after day, what we would do iflet us see what we can do now and, like the Savior, get to work!

Yet that is not the point which I am driving at. It is this. If Jesus is such a worker and no theorizer, then what a hope there is, tonight, for some of us who need His care! Have we fallen? Are we poor? Have we brought ourselves into sorrow and misery? Do not let us look to men or to ourselves for the answers! Men will let us starve and then they will hold a coroners inquest over our body to find why we dared to die and so necessitated the paying for a grave and a coffin! They will be sure to make an inquiry after it is all over with us! But if we come to Jesus Christ, He will make no inquiry at all, but receive us and give rest unto our souls. That is a blessed text, He gives to all men liberally, and upbraids not.

When the prodigal son came home to his father, according to all propriety, as people would do, nowadays, the father should have said to his son, Well, you have come home and I am glad to see you, but what a state you are in! How did you get into this condition? Why, you have scarcely a clean rag on your back! How is it you have become so poor? And you are lean and hungryhow did this comes about? Where have you been? What have you done? What company have you kept? Where were you a week ago? What were you doing the day before yesterday at seven oclock?

His father never asked him a single question, but pressed him to his bosom, and knew all about it by instinct! He came as he was and his father received him as he was. The father seemed, with a kiss, to say, My boy, bygones are bygones. You were dead but you are alive. You were lost but you are found and I inquire no further. That is just how Jesus Christ is willing to receive penitent sinners tonight! Is there a streetwalker here? Come, poor woman, as you are, to your dear Lord and Master who will cleanse you of your grievous sin. All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven.

Is there one here who has transgressed against the rules of society and is pointed at as especially sinful? Yet, come, and welcome to the Lord Jesus of whom it is written, This Man receives sinners, and eats with them. The physician never thinks it scorn to go among the sick and Christ never felt it shame that He looks after the guilty and the lost! No, write this about HimThe Savior of sinners, even of the very chief. He counts this His glory! He will work for you, not chide you! He will not treat you with a dose of theories and with a host of bitter rebukes, but He will receive you just as you are into the wounds of His side and hide you there from the wrath of God! Oh, blessed Gospel that I have to preach to you! May the Holy Spirit lead you to embrace it!

So much concerning the Worker.   
II. Now, the second thing is THE WORKROOM. Every worker needs a place to work. Every artist must have a studio. Did Christ have a studio? Yes, He came to do very wonderful worksthe works of Him that sent Himbut what a strange, strange place the Lord found to do His work! And yet I do not know that He could have found any other. He resolved to work the works of God and He selected the fittest place for doing so. One of the works of God is creation. If Jesus is to perform this work among men, He must find out where something is missing which He can supply by a creating act. Here are two eyes without the proper light-receiving apparatushere there is room for Jesus to

create eyes and sight! He could not have created eyes in my head or in yours had we been present, for eyes are already there, and more eyes would be unsuitable for us.   
In the blind beggar of the Temple there was room for Jesus to produce that which was lacking in the curious mechanism of the eyesthe blind eyes were, therefore, His workshop. If there were eyeballs, they were completely sightless and had been from the mans birthand this gave the occasion for Jehovah Jesus to say, Let there be light! If that mans eyes had been like yours and mineclear and bright and full of lightthere would have been no space for our Lords Divine operation. But since he was still in the darkness which had been about him from his birth, his eyes afforded space in which the power of the Almighty might be manifested by a work so wonderful that since the world began it had never been heard that anyone had opened the eyes of a man who was born blind!   
The man was blind for this reasonThat the works of God should be made manifest in him. Oh, and that is a blessed thought if you will think about it! Apply it to yourself. If there is anything lacking in you, there is room for Christ to work in you! If you are naturally perfect and there is no fault in you, then there is no room for the Savior to do anything for you, for He will not gild refined gold, nor lay enamel on the lily! But if you suffer from some great deficiency, some awful lack that makes your soul sit in darknessyour necessity is Christs opportunityyour need of Grace supplies His need of objects for His pity! Here is room for the Savior to come and display His pity towards you and you may be sure He will soon be with you. Even so, come Lord Jesus!   
Then, again, it was not only this mans deficiency of sight, but it was this mans ignorance which required Almighty aid. It is a work of God not only to create, but also to illuminate! The same power which calls into existence also calls into light, whether that light is natural or spiritual. It is a Divine work to enlighten and regenerate the heart. This man was as dark in mind as he was in bodywhat a grand thing to enlighten him in a double sense! He did not know the Son of God, therefore he did not believe in Him, but asked in wonder, Who is He, Lord, that I might believe on Him? Jesus Christ came to work in this man the knowledge of God, the life of Godin a word, SALVATIONand because the man was destitute of these things, there was room in him for the Saviors skill and power!   
Friend, is that your case? Are you unconverted? Then there is space in you for the Redeemer to work by converting Grace! Are you unregenerate? Then there is space in you for the Spirit of God to work regeneration! All these spiritual deficiencies of yoursyour ignorance and your darkness shall be turned, by Infinite Love, into opportunities for Grace. If you were not lost, you could not be saved! If you were not guilty, you could not be pardoned. If you were not sinful, you could not be cleansed! But all your sin and sorrow, by a strange mystery of love, is a sort of qualification of yourself for Christ to come and save you!   
That is putting it, says one, in a new light to me. Accept that new light and be comforted, for it is Gospel Light and intended to cheer the despairing! You have said, There is nothing in metherefore it is clear that there is room for Christ to be your All in All. You see there cannot be two all in allsthere can be but oneand as you do not pretend to the title, Jesus will wear it! All the space that you occupy in your own esteem takes so much away from the glory of the Lord Jesus. But if you are nothing, then the whole house is left for the Savior! He will come and fill up all your inward vacuum with His own dear Self and be glorious in your eyes forever! Pray to be nothing!   
I may venture to say, tonight, that all affliction may be regarded in the same manner as affording opportunity for the mercy work of God. Whenever you see a man in sorrow and trouble, the way to look at it is not to blame him and inquire how he came there, but to say, Here is an opening for Gods almighty love! Here is an occasion for the display of the Grace and goodness of the Lord! This man, being blind, gave the Lord Jesus opportunity for the good work of giving him his sight and that work was so great a wonder that all around were obliged to acknowledge it and admire it! The neighbors began to inquire about it. The Pharisees had to hold a conclave over it and though nearly 19 centuries have slipped away, here are we at this hour meditating upon it!   
That mans opened eyes are enlightening our eyes at this hour! The Bible would not have been complete without this touching and teaching narrativeif this man had not been born blind and if Christ had not opened his eyes, all generations would have had less Light of God! We ought to be glad that this man was so grievously afflicted, for thereby we are graciously instructed! If he had not been sightless, we had not seen the great sight of blindness at birth chased away by Him who is the Light of men! So I think I may say to all afflicted ones here tonightDo not kick at your afflictions. Do not be excessively troubled by them, or utterly cast down by them, but hopefully regard them as openings for mercy, gates for Grace, roadways for love! The valley of Achor shall be to you a door of hope!  
That mighty Worker of whom I have been speaking will find a workshop in your affliction and therein He will fashion monuments of His Grace. Glory in your infirmities that the power of Christ may rest upon you! Rejoice that as your tribulations abound, so, also, shall your consolations abound by Christ Jesus. Ask Him to make all things work together for your good and for His Glory and so it shall be! I leave the thought of the workshop when I have added that I do believe that sin, itself, has somewhat of the same aspect as affliction, for it makes room for the mercy of God. I hardly dare say what Augustine said, when speaking of the Fall and of the sin of Adam, and looking to all the splendor of Grace that followed after it. He said, Beata culpahappy faultas if he thought that sin had furnished such opportunities for the unveiling of the Grace of God and so displayed the Character of Christ, that He even dared to call it a happy fault!   
I will not venture upon such an expression. I scarcely dare do more than repeat what that great master in Israel once said. But I do say that I cannot imagine an occasion for glorifying God equal to the fact that man has sinned, since God has given Christ to die for sinners. How could that unspeakable Gift have been bestowed if there had been no sinners? The Cross is a constellation of Divine Glory brighter than creation itself! *For in the Grace that rescued man,   
His noblest form of Glory shines;   
Here on the Cross tis fairest writ   
In precious blood and crimson lines.*   
How could we have known the heart of God? How could we have understood the mercy of God? If it had not been for our sin and misery, how could such forbearance and love have been displayed? Come, then, guilty ones, take heart and look for Grace! As a physician needs the sick that he may exert his healing power, so does the Lord of Mercy need you that He may show what Grace He can bestow!   
If I were a physician and desired a practice, I Would not inquire for the healthiest parish in England, but for a position where the sick would fill my surgery. If all I sought was to do good to my fellow men, I should desire to be in Egypt or some other land visited by cholera, or plague, where I could save human life. The Lord Jesus Christ, looking over this throng tonight, seeks not those who are good, or think themselves so, but for the guilty who know their sinnership and bemoan it! If there is a sinner here, leprous and defiled. If there is a soul here sick from head to foot with the incurable disease of sin, the Lord Christ, the mighty Worker, looks on him, for in him He finds a laboratory in which He may work the works of Him that sent Him!   
III. Please bear with me, now, as I pass on, in the third place, briefly to notice THE WORK BELL. You hear early in the morning a bell which awakens the workers from their beds. See how they troop into the streets, swarming like bees hastening to or from the hive. You see them going forth to labor, for the bell is ringing! There was a work bell for Christ and He heard it. Then He said, I must work. I must work. I must work. What made Him say that? Why, the sight of that blind man! He no sooner saw him than He said, I must work. The man had not asked anything, nor uttered a sound, but those sightless orbs spoke eloquently to the heart of the Lord Jesus and rang aloud the summons which Jesus heard and obeyed, for He, Himself said, I must work.   
And why must He work? Why, He had come all the way from Heaven to do so! He had come from His Fathers Throne to be a Man to bless men and He would not cause His long descent to go for nothing! He must workwhy else was He here where work was to be done? Besides, there were impulses in His heart which we need not stop, now, to explain, which forced Him to work. His mind, His soul, His heart, were all full of a Force which produced perpetual activity. Sometimes He selected a route when He was traveling because, He must go through Samaria. Sometimes He went after men because, He said, Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring. There was a sort of instinct in Christ to save men and that instinct craved gratification and could not be denied. I must work, He said.   
The sight of those blind eyes made Him say I must work. And He thought of that poor manhow for 20 years and more he had lived in utter darknesshow he had not been able to enjoy the beauties of Nature, or look his loved ones in the face, or earn his daily bread. And He pitied the sorrows of the man in a life-long darkness. Moreover, as He recollected how that mans soul had also been shut up like a prisoner in a dungeon by reason of gross ignorance, He said, I must work, I must work. You see they are after Him with stones, but He stops, for He says I must work. They may stone Me if they will, but I must work. I hear the summons and I must work.

Now learn this lesson, all you followers of Christ. Whenever you see suffering, I hope you will each one feel, I must work. I must help. Whenever you witness poverty, whenever you behold vice, say to yourself, I must work. I must work. If you are worthy of the Christ whom you call Leader, let all the necessities of men impel you, compel you, constrain you to be blessing them. Let the world which lies in the Wicked One awaken you! Let the cries of men of Macedonia awaken you as they say, Come over and help us! Men are dying, dying in the dark. The cemetery is filling and Hell is filling, too! Men are dying without hope and are passing into the eternal night. I must work.   
They cryMaster, spare Yourself! Incessant labor will wear You down and bring You to Your grave. But look! Look! Look! Perdition swallows crowds! They go down, alive, into the Pit! Listen to their doleful cries! Lost souls are being shut out from God! I must work. Oh, that I could lay my handsor, far betterthat my Master would lay His pierced hands on every true Christian here and press them upon him until he cried out, I cannot sit here! I must be at work as soon as this service is done! I must not only hear and give, and pray, but I must also work!   
Well, that is a grand lesson, but I do not mean it to be the chief one, for I am looking out for those who long to find mercy and salvation! What a blessing it is for you, dear Friend, if you desire to be saved, that Christ must save! There is an impulse upon Him that He must save! I know you say, I cannot pray. I cannot feel as I wish to do. Never mind about that the matter is in abler hands. You see, this man did not say a wordthe sight of Him was enough to move the heart of the Lord Jesus! As soon as Jesus had seen him, He said, I must work. Have you ever seen a man in London who has no particular oratory skills and yet succeeds in obtaining alms on a large scale? I have seen him! He dresses like a laborer. He wears a tattered smock frock and he sits down in a corner where many pass by.   
His squatting place is a little out of the rush of traffic, but near enough to secure attention from many passengers. He displays a spade much the worse for the use made of it by somebody else, and on it is written, I am starving! He looks gaunt and hungry. He is exceedingly well made up and is as pale as chalk can make him! Oh, the quantity of halfpence that go into his old hat! How people pity him! He does not sing a mournful ditty. He does not speak a word and yet many are moved by the fact that he looks as if it were true that he is starving!   
Now, my Hearer, you need not be false in what you do if you set out your misery and sin before the Lord. Tonight, when you get home, kneel at your bedside and say, Lord Jesus, I cannot pray, but here I am. I am perishing and I put myself within sight of You. Instead of hearing my pleas, look at my sins. Instead of demanding arguments, look at my wickedness. Instead of oratory, which I have none, Lord, remember that I shall soon be in Hell if You do not save me.   
I tell you, the bell will ring and the Great Worker will feel that the time has come for Him to labor! He will say in the words of my text, I must work, and in you the works of God shall be made manifest! You shall be the workshop of Christ!   
IV. One more head and that is THE WORKDAY. Our Divine Master said, I must work the works of Him that sent me, while it is day: the night comes, when no man can work. Now, listen. This is not meant about Christ, the risen Savior, but this refers to the Lord Jesus Christ as He was Man here on earth. There was a certain day in which He could bless men and when that day was over He would be gonethere would be no Jesus Christ on earth to open blind mens eyes, or to heal the sickHe would be gone from among men and be no more approachable as the healer of bodily disease. Our Lord, as a Man here on earth, had a day. It was only a daya short period, and not very longHe could not make it longer, for it was settled by the great Lord.   
The day of His Sacrifice was appointed. He, Himself, once said, My hour is not yet come. But that hour did come. Our Lord occupied 30 years in getting ready for His lifework and then in three years His warfare was accomplished. How much He crowded into those three years! Centuries of service could not equal the labor of that brief period. Brothers, some of us have had 30 years of work, but we have done very little, I am afraid. And what if we have only three years more? Let us feel the impulses of the coming eternity! Within a little while I shall no more look into the faces of the throngthey will remember me but as a name therefore I will preach as best I can while my powers remain and my life is prolonged.   
Within a little while, my Brother, you will not be able to go from door to door winning soulsthe street will miss you and your tractsthe District will miss you and your regular visits. Do your work well, for your sun will soon set. These words of mine may be more prophetic to some present than we dream. I may be speaking to some who are nearing their last hour and shall soon render in their account. Up Brothers! Up Sisters! Say, We must work, for the night comes in which no man can work. Life cannot be made longer if we wish to make it sopredestination will not lengthen out the thread when the hour has come to cut it off! Life will be short at the very longest and O, how short with those who die young! If you and I shall omit any part of our lifework, we can never make up the omission. I speak with solemn reverence of our Divine Master, but, if He had not healed that blind man in the days in which He lived on earth, He would have missed a part of the business upon which the Father sent Him.   
I do not mean that as God, out of Heaven, He might not have given the poor beggar sight, but that makes the case the more stern in its bearing upon us since we have no such future to expectif we do not serve men now, it will be out of our power to bless them from the skies. This narrative could never have appeared in the life of the Son of Man had He forgotten to be gracious to the blind man! His period of sojourn here below was the time for our Lord to workif He had come back from Heaven to heal the man, that would have been done in a Second Advent and not in the first! And if He omits anything from His first errand, below, it cannot be put in again.   
When you and I have written a letter we add a postscript. When we have made a book we can write an appendix or insert something that we have left out. But to this life of yours and mine there can be no postscript! We must do our work now, or never and, if we do not do it now, even now, while our opportunity serves us to perform our service to our God, we can never do it! If you omitted anything yesterday, you cannot alter the fact of imperfect service on that day. If you are more zealous, now, it will be the work of todaybut yesterday will still remain as incomplete as you left it. We must, therefore, be on the alert to do the work of Him that sent us while it is called today.   
To this conclusion I come and here draw to a closeif our Lord Jesus Christ was so diligent to bless men when He was here, I feel certain that He is not less diligent to hear and heal them, now, in that spiritual sense in which He still works upon men. Oh, that I knew how to lead you to seek my Lord and Master! For if you seek Him, He will be found of you as surely as you seek Him! Christ has not lost the heart of His compassion! He is not cold in heart or slack in hand. Go to Him at once! I spoke, just now, to some of the chief of sinners, and I say to them againGo to Jesus!   
Let me speak to some of you who are not the chief of sinnersyou that have been hearers of the Gospel and have only failed because you do not believe in Jesus. Go to Him at once! You are backward, but He is not. He must still work, and still work while the Gospel Day lasts, for that Gospel Day will soon close. He is waiting and watching for you. Oh, come to Himcome even now! I do not know what it is to come, says one. Well, to come to Christ is simply to trust Him. You are guiltytrust Him to pardon you. If I do that, says one, may I then live as I did before? No, that you cannot, for if a ship needed to be brought into harbor and they took a pilot on board, he would say to the captain, Captain, if you trust me, I will get you into harbor all right. There, let that sail be taken down.   
But they do not reef it. Come, he says, attend to the tiller and steer as I bid you. But they refuse. Well, says the pilot, you said you trusted me. Yes, says the captain, and you said that if we trusted you, you would get us into port, but we have not got into port at all. No, says the pilot, you do not trust me, for if you trusted me you would do as I tell you.   
A true trust is obedient to the Lords commands and these forbid sin. If you trust Jesus, you must leave your sins and take up your cross and follow Him. Such trust shall surely have its rewardyou shall be saved now and saved forever! God bless you, dear Friends, for Christs sake.

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WORK

NO. 756

**DELIVERED ON THURSDAY EVENING, MARCH 21, 1867, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE SURREY CHAPEL, BLACKFRIARS ROAD.

**I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day: the night comes, when no man can work.   
John 9:4.**

You observe that a very speculative question had been put to our Lord, and His answer to that very speculative question is, I must work. His disciples wished to know something about the mysterious fact that some persons are born in an unhappy conditionblind, or deaf, or dumbon what account they were sent into the world under such disadvantageous circumstances. Would you not, yourselves, like to know? Do you not wish that the Savior had expounded all that mystery?

There are so many points of controversy connected with that question that He could scarcely have had a more suggestive topic. Surely He might have enlightened us far more than Socrates or Plato. Why did He not, at once, with such a noble opportunity, plunge into the labyrinth of metaphysics, or begin to expound predestination and open up the points in it which agree or disagree with free agency? Here was a noble opportunity for interpreting all the marvels of Divine Sovereignty and natural suffering!

Why did He not at once open all this up to the people? No, but with a very short answer He turns to them and says, I must work. You may think. You may talk. You may argue, but I must work. You may give yourselves up, if you know no better, to the inferior occupation of jangling about words, but I must work. Nobler calls I have to obey than those which come to your carnal ears.

We gather, then, that the Savior has a greater respect for work than He has for speculation! That when He comes into the world He will go to all the mighty thinkers, and the gentlemen who are constantly producing new ideas, and wonderful points of subtlety, and put them into the scale as so much rubbish! But when He finds a single workera poor widow who has given her two mites, a poor saint who has spoken for Christ and been the means of the conversion of a soulHe will take up these works which were done for Him as precious grains of costly gold!

We may say of the field of enterprise and work for Christ, as of the land of Havilah, The gold of that land is good, and Christ thinks it to be so. He estimates the work of faith and labor of love done for Him as of great price.

I. I shall ask your attention to the text, taking and keeping close to the very words of it. And the thing we observe first, is, A NECESSITY TO LABORI must work. With Christ it was not, I may if I will. Nor, I can if I like. It was not the mere possibility and the mere potentiality of work, but an imperious necessityI must. He could not help Himself. If I may use such words concerning One who is no less Divine than He was human, He was under restraint. He was bound. He was compelled.

The cords, which bound Him, however, were the cords of His Deity. They were the cords of love which bound Him who is Love. I must work. It was because He loved the sons of men so well that He could not sit still and see them perish. He could not come down from Heaven and stand here robed in our mortal flesh and be an impassive, careless, loitering spectator of so much evil, so much misery. His heart beat high with desire. He thirsted to be doing good, and His greatest and grandest act, His sacrifice of Himself, was a baptism with which He had to be baptized, and He was straitened until it was accomplished.

His great soul within Him felt as if it could not be easy. It was like the troubled sea that cannot rest. Each of His thoughts was like a mighty wave that could not be still. His whole soul was like a volcano when it begins to swell with lava, and needs to vent. He must let His soul run out in hot consecration and devotion to the cause of those whom He came to save. I must, He says, I must work. Not only was it the love within which made the compulsion, but it was also the sorrow without which compelled Him.

That blind man had touched the secret chord that set the Saviors soul at work. If that blind man had not been there, or, rather, if it had been possible for the Savior to forget the cases of misery which existed around Him, then He might, perhaps, have been quiet. But because always before His soul He saw the multitudes perishing as sheep without a shepherd. Because, far more vividly than you and I have ever done, He realized the value of a soul and the horror of a soul being lost, He felt as though He could not be still. I must work, He said.

Fancy yourselves, my Brothers and Sisters, standing on the beach when a ship is being broken on the rocks. If there were anything that you could do towards the rescue of the mariners, would you not feel within yourselves, I must work? Why, it is said that, sometimes, when the crowd sees a vessel going to pieces, and hear the cries of the drowning men, they seem as if they were all seized with madness, because, not being able to give vent to their kindness and brotherly feeling towards the perishing ones by any practical activity, they know not what to do, and are ready to sacrifice their own lives if they might but do something to save others.

Men feel that they must work in the presence of so dreadful a need. And Christ saw this world of ours quivering over the pit. He saw it floating, as it were, in an atmosphere of fire, and He wished to quench those flames and make the world rejoice, and therefore He must work to that end. He could not, He could not possibly rest and be quiet. He knew not how to take His ease even at night

*Cold mountains and the midnight air   
Witnessed the fervor of His prayer.*

And when He was faint and weary, and needed to eat, He would not eat because the zeal of Gods House had eaten Him up, and it was His meat and His drink to do the will of Him that sent Him. The love within and the need without acted towards one common end and formed an intense necessity so that the Savior must work.

Moreover, you must remember that He had come into this world with an aim which was not to be achieved without work, but which was a passion with Him, and therefore He must work because He desired to achieve His endthe salvation of the many whom the Father had given to Him. The gathering together in one those that were scattered abroad. The finding of the lost sheep. The restoration of the fallenHe must accomplish these objects. Eternal purposes must be fulfilled. His own surety engagements must be honored. He had loved His own which were in the world, and He loved them so that He could not leave the world until all His work should be completely done and He should be able to say, It is finished.

So, hopefully looking forward to the recompense of the reward, anticipating the glory of bringing men from the thralldom of their sins and conducting them into the tower of salvation, He longed and panted to work. The soldier who is desirous of promotion scorns peace and longs for war, that he may have an opportunity of ascending in the ranks. The young man who wants to carve out a position is not satisfied to vegetate in a country villagehe wants workwants it because he knows that work is the way of rising in the world. It is right enough, if a man has a just ambition, that he should seek the means by which that ambition may be attained.

Our Saviors ambition was to be crowned with the gems of the souls which He had saved, to be the great Friend of man, the great Redeemer of mankind, and consequently He must work. He must be mens SaviorHe cannot be their Savior without working and, therefore, the passion within, the need without, and the great and all-absorbing aim which drew Him onward, furnished three cords which bound Him, like a sacrifice, to the horns of the altar. I must work.

Now, Brethren, without enlarging upon a theme so tempting, let us ask whether you and I feel the same compulsionfor if we are as Christ was in the world, if we are worthy to be called His followers at all, we must be compelled with His compulsionwe must be weighted with His load. Do we feel as if we MUST work? Oh, there are so many professors who feel that they must feed! No, they must be fed! They do not even get so far into activity as to desire to feed, but they must be fed as with a spoonand they desire to have certain precious Gospel Truths broken down and dissolved into pap for themand put into their mouths while they lie in bed, almost too idle to digest the food after they have received it!

There are some other Christians who feel as if they must always find fault with other peoples work, as if it were a passion with them to criticize and judge. Many besides are there who must be excused from working they will do anything to get out of any taskthey count it no small thing if they can escape giving to any charitable or Christian object, or if they can avoid exposing their own precious selves to any kind of sorrow or toil in the service of the Lord Jesus.

I trust we are not of such a craven spirit as this. If we are, then let us leave off bearing the name of the Gospel. As one said, Either be a stoic, or give up being called a stoic. So I would either be a Christian, or else give up being called a Christian. This is not to be a Christianto shun work for Christ. I do trust, however, that we have felt this compulsionI must work. Why must I work? That I may be saved? Oh, no! God forbid! I am saved if I am a Christiansaved, not through my own works, but through Christs works.

I have heard the Gospel which tells me that there is life for a look at the Crucified One. I have looked to Christ, and I am saved. Then why must I work? Why, because I am saved! If He bought me with His blood, I must spend myself for Him who bought me. If He sought me by His Spirit, I must give myself to Him who sought me. If He has taught me by His Grace, I must tell others what I have learned from Him. The motive which constrains to Christian activity is not so base and selfish a one as that of obtaining Heaven by it!

Why, even a Romanist (a masterly Romanist howeverstrange anomaly that so sweet a song should come from so foul a cage of unclean birds!) could sing

*My God, I love You not because   
I hope for Heaven thereby,   
Nor yet because who love you not   
Must burn eternally.   
You, O my Savior, You did me   
Upon the Cross embrace;   
For me did bear the nails and spear,   
And manifold disgrace.*

Our love is caused by Christ. His love to us makes us feel that we must work for Him. When we were little children, a kind friend made us very happy one day, and yet a second and a third time did that same friend make our little hearts leap for joy. And when we went to bed we said, before we fell asleep, I wish we could do something for Mrs. So-and-So. I wish I could give Mrs. So-and-So something.

Perhaps we had no money, but the next morning we got a few flowers out of the garden, and we set off so pleased to take our little posy to our kind friend, and we said, Please accept this little present, for you have been so kind to me. We felt as if we could not help it, and we were only afraid lest our little present should not be received. And we felt that if we could have done 10, 20 or 50 times as much, we should have thought it all too little! It was our

happiness to do what we did, and to wish to do more.

The same spirit prompts us to wish to do something for the Lord Jesus. Oh, will He accept anything from me? Will He let me try to increase His glory? Will He suffer me to feed His lambs, or to be a shepherd to His sheep, or to look after three or four girls in a Sunday school, or to watch over one child as for Him, or to give a tract away, or to subscribe of my substance to any of His interests? Oh, then, how good it is of Him to let me! How I wish I could do more! O that I had a thousand hands to work for Him! A thousand hearts and a thousand tongues, that I might spend all for Him!

I hope you do feel, Brethren, that the love of Christ which is in you makes you say, I must work. Then, if you live in this neighborhood, and most of us, I suppose, do live this side of the water, can you go through the courts and streetscan you go into the darker parts of the neighborhoodthose close about here which you know, without feeling, I must work? I wish, sometimes, that some of you people, some of you who have got on tolerably well in the world, and who live a little farther out in the country where the air gets a little purerI wish you could be made to sniff, sometimes, the air in which poverty always lives in this city of oursand I think you would feel, then, as if you must work.

Our city missionaries must sometimes feel marvelously enthusiastic, I should think, from the sights which they see and the sounds which they hear. They must feel as if they must work, for men are dying, Hell is filling, the Gospel is not taken to the people and the people do not come to the Gospel, and the multitude go their way as though there were no Christ, and no Heaven, and would to God I could have said, no Hell after they died! But there is their portion, and they live here as if they were preparing themselves for inheriting it! May we, then, understand, by Gods Grace, the first part of the text, I must work.

II. Now, secondly, let us notice that here is A SPECIALITY OF WORK I must work the works of Him that sent Me. There are plenty of people who say, I must work, but there are very few who say, I must work the works of Him that sent me. Oh, the work, the brain-work and head-work that is done in London to get rich! It is very proper, of course. If a man wants to get on in the world, he must work. It is very well. I would not say to any young man, Be idle.

If you want to prosper in anything, throw your whole soul into it, and work as hard as you can. Many, many people feel the compulsion of working to get on, or working to support a family. Very proper, indeed! But I need not exhort you to do it, for I dare say, as honest and moral men, you will feel that compulsion without any exhortation from me!

Some work in order to get fame. Well, that is not so bad a thing in its way. But I need not speak about it, for those who choose that path will fall into it without my advice. But here is the point, I must work the works of Him that sent Me. Christ came into this world neither to be a King among kings, nor to be famous among the famed. He came but to be a Servant of servants, and to fulfill the will of God. Lo, I come: in the volume of the Book it is written of Me, I delight to do Your will, O My God. He came to do it, and, having come, He did it.

Observe the character of the work which Christ performed. It was not a work of His own devising. It was not a work which He had set to Himself of His own will. It was a work which had been ordained of old and settled by His Father. I came not to do My will, but the will of Him that sent Me. Observe, too, that Christ made no picking nor choosing about this work. He says, I must work the works. Not some of them, but all of them, whether they should be works of drudgery or works of honor, bearing reproach for the Truth, or bearing testimony to the Truth.

He did them whether they were works of suffering Himself or works of relief to those that suffered. Whether they were works of silent secret groaning, or works of ministry in which He rejoiced in spirit. Whether they were works of prayer on the mountainside, or works of preaching on the mountains brow. Christ had given Himself up unreservedly to do for God whatever the Father should bid Him do. And all these works were works of mercy, works of soul-saving, disinterested work, works not selfish or egotistical. He saved othersHimself He could not save.

They were not works by which He increased His own treasureHe distributed to the needynot works by which He lifted Himself up He condescended to men of low estate. They were not works by which He earned honor among men for He gave His back to the smitersthe reproaches of them that fell upon Him. His works were works of pure philanthropy to men, and of entire consecration to God. I wonder whether you and I, as Christians, have ever fully and thoroughly realized a compulsion to do such works as these? I must work the works of Him that sent Me.

O my Brethren, it is so easy to work our own works, even in spiritual things, but it is so difficult to be brought to thisI must work the works of Him that sent me. Understand me, there are 10,000 actions good in themselves which it might not be right for me to choose as my avocation in life. I know a great many persons who think it is their business to preach but who had much better make it their business to hear for a little while longer. We know some who think it is their business to take the headship of a class, but who might be amazingly useful by giving away some tracts, or by taking a seat in a class themselves for a little while.

The fact is that we are not to pick and choose the path of Christian service which we are to walk in, but we are to do the work of Him that sent us. And our object should be, as there is so much work to be done, to find out what part of the work the Master would have us do. Our prayer should be, Show me what You would have me dohave me do in particularnot what is generally right, but what is particularly right for me to do. My servant might, perhaps, think it a very proper thing for her to arrange my papers for me in my study, but I should feel but a very slender amount of gratitude to her.

If, however, she will have a cup of coffee ready for me early in the morning, when I have to go out to a distant country town to preach, I shall be much more likely to appreciate her services. So, some friends think, How I could get on if I were in such-and-such a position! If I were made a deacon! If I were elevated to such a post. Go your way, and work as your Master would have you. You will do better where He puts you than you will where you put yourself.

You are no servant, indeed, at all, when you pick and choose your service, for the very spirit, the very essence of service consists in saying, Not my will, but Yours be done. I wait for orders from the Throne. Teach me what You would have me do. On this point, however, there is, perhaps, less need of insisting than there is of insisting upon the other. We must feel ourselves impelled to some form or other of spiritual effort which shall be disinterested, for the good of others, and I ask you Christian men and women, Do you all feel this?

Oh, what wonders were done by two or three hundred persons after our Lord went up to Heaven! Why, they were enough for the evangelization of a world! Here is this great city of London of ours, with its three million and more of inhabitantsI know not how many Christian souls there may be in it, but there must be many thousands, and yet up to this day we have been insufficient for the evangelization of this city! Instead of our meeting its demands, it is a simple matter of statistics that 10 years ago London was better provided for, than with all our efforts, it is now! And is this to be endured? If there were a necessity for this, we might with weeping bow down to the grim necessity! But as there is none, as it is with ourselves that the fault must be, as it still remains with us, let us ask, What is the cause of the mischief?

It is thisthat all Christians have not learned yet the Truth of God that each Christian is personally to do the work of Him that sent him. We are not to deputize our ministers to do it, nor to think that we can discharge the service of God by proxy! Each man and woman, personally, must give himself and herself to the service of Christ, feeling, each one, that he or she can read this text for himselfI, I, I, must work the works of Him that sent me! I must do it if nobody else does! I mustI feel a compulsion! I must in some form or other give myself to those works which are peculiarly the works of God, who sends His people into this wicked world on purpose that they may do them.

May I say here, by way of illustration, to prove to you that progress is not impossible if we were but willing to make the effort, that probably there is no religious movement in England which is so formidable, which has advanced so rapidly, as that movement of Ritualism, which we sometimes call Puseyism! It is advancing wonderfully, and it is advancing in two quarterstwo quarters which ought to shame us forever, because they are the two most inaccessible quarters. That is to say, you shall find rampant Puseyism laying hold upon the upper classes, getting into the drawing rooms which we thought could not be entered! It is storming what we thought to be impregnable citadels of rank and lofty respectability, and finding its victims and its votaries there, and finding them in such a style, and getting them into its grip so wholly and completely that the substance of the rich is given far more thoroughly to their false faith than our substance among us is given to our true faith.

Then, the greatest advance of this system has been made among the poorest of the poor, those people who, it is said, will not come to hear the Gospel. Oh, but that is a lie, for they will come to hear the Gospel if the Gospel is but preached so that they can understand it! But it is to the scandal of many Christian Churches that these poor people will not go to them, and yet these very same people are affected by this Puseyism! Yes, and get converted to it, too, and go down upon their knees as earnest worshippers, and are thorough believers in the whole thing!

Now, how is this done? Well, I will tell you. It is in this waythe priests who believe in this thing do honestly believe in it! They believe it to be the Truth of God, and they hold it with a grip that is not relaxed, and they are not ashamed to suffer reproach for it but come out boldly in their own colors. Not hiding, and playing, and shuffling, as some others have done ashamed to confess what they have donebut they have come out boldly. And let me say, all honor to them for the honorable courage they have displayed in their dishonorable work!

I like to give the devil his due, and if you see courage even in a foe, you can but let it be called courage. I like, I must say I reverence the courage of those who will stand up for Rome in the teeth of a prevalent Protestantism, as well as the courage of the Protestant who stands up against Rome in the midst of a prevalent Romanism. Now, if they have done all this, and they have done it very much through the real earnestness of the priests, have we not some such courage and earnestness as that among our ministers? I hope that if the ministers have failed here, each one will begin to correct himself and that we shall become as earnest and as bold in our cause as ever they can be in theirs.

But the next thing is thisthey make all their members and all their admirers earnest missionaries. You shall find them spreading their little tracts, dropping their books, saying a word to those young men in the shop, talking a little to that young lady in the drawing room. You shall find them everywhere sending round their Sisters of Mercy. A minister I know went into the house of one of his members and said, There is a Sister of Mercy going round near here. Does she call at this house? Oh, yes, was the answer, certainly. She goes into every room in the house.

Well, he said, but I did not know that I dared to go into every room. Does the Sister of Mercy really go into every room here in the house? Oh, yes, Sir, and into every room in the street. Well, how is that? Oh, I dont know, Sir, but she gets in somehow or other. And why should not we get in somehow or other? What they can do, why cannot we do? Shall they do after their fashion what we dare not do and cannot do? Oh, it is a fine thing that the soldiers of the Pope should be braver than the soldiers of the Cross. Shall it be so?

Oh, God forbid! May the old spirit, and the old valor, and the old enthusiasm come back to the Christian Church and there is enough yet to save London! There is enough yet for us to send back the tide of Popery! There is enough yet to vindicate the Gospel, and to show that it is yet a thing of power, mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds! Only we must come to thisthat our work, our activitymust drive itself into the special channel of doing the work of Him that has sent us, and doing it at once.

III. Thirdly, as there is a necessity for work, and a specialty of effort, so there is A LIMITATION OF TIME: I must work the work of Him that sent Me while it is day. This limitation of time sounds very weightily to my ears, coming, as it does, from the lips of Christ. Jesus Christ, the Immortal, the Ever-living, yet says, I, I must work while it is day! My Brethren, if anyone could have postponed work, it was our eternal Lord! See Him. He is in Heaven, but He is still working!

There are a thousand ways in which He can serve His Church. We believe not in the intercession of the saintsthey cannot work for us in that land of rest after they quit this world of laborbut we do believe in the intercession of the saints Master. He can pray for us still. The Head of the Church is always active, and yet He said, I must work while it is day! Then, see with what force it comes to you and to me, for we can do nothing more with our hands when once the turf has covered our head! All, as to work, is over then, so heed it as an omen. That word is full of portent which you hearwhile it is day.

How long will it be day with us? Some days are very short. These wintry days are soon over. My young Sister, my young Brother, your day may be very briefwork while you have it. Is there a sign of consumption? Work, then! Do not make that an excuse for idleness, but an argument for labor. Work while it is day. Or, if there is no such sign, remember that still your sun may go down before it reaches its noon.

O young Man, wait not till your powers are ripe and your opportunities are large, but say, I must work the works of Him that sent me while it is day. You may never live to be one and twenty. Oh, be a soul-winner before you are a man! Dear Sister, seek to be a mother in Israel, a matron for Jesus Christ while yet you are but a girl. Seek to win souls for Jesus while you, yourselves, are but lambs in Jesus fold. While it is day.

Some of you are getting gray and your day cannot be very much longer. Eventide has come and the shadows are drawn out. Now you must not make the infirmities of old age an excuse for being altogether out of harness. The Master asks not from you what you cannot render, but such strength as you still have, give to Him while it is day, feeling that you must work the works of Him that sent you. While it is day. While it is day. If I had a prophets eye, and could pick out the persons here for whom the bell will toll during the next month, how this text might suit them! While it is day!

Dear Mother, if you had only another thirty daysanother month to live, and you knew ithow you would pray for your children during that month! How you would talk to those dear boys about their souls, though you have never taken them aside and spoken to them before! Dear Sunday school Teachers, if you knew that you should only go to school one, or two, or three, or four more Sundays, how solemnly would you now begin to talk with those children in your class! And yet, remember, this is the way in which we ought to live and work always.

You know Baxters words  *I preach as tho I neer might preach again, And as a dying man to dying men.*

Let us do the same. Then, supposing you should live 10, 20, or 30 years longer, yet how brief those years are! And when they are gone, they seem but as yesterday! So let me even ring the bell myself. Let me sound the text like a knell in your ear, While it is day! While it is day! While it is day! And, having thus reminded you of your own mortality, let me give the text another sound, as I bid you remember that the day may soon be passednot to youbut to the objects of your care. Let me, if you would loiter, remind you that there are two lives here to be insuredanother life as well as your own. While it is day.

You cannot speakyou will not have an opportunity of speaking to some people in London tomorrowfor they will die tonight. It is impossible that you should have an opportunity of speaking to 2,000 of them next week, for they will die this week. The bills of mortality will demand the insatiable hunger of death will call for them. They must go. Oh, work, then, While it is day with them! And with some it is day only for a very short time, even though they may live long. For, with some men, their day is only the one occasion when they go to a place of worship! The one occasion when there is sickness in the house, and the missionary enters. The one occasion when a Christian comes across their path and has a fair opportunity of speaking to them of Christ.

Many of our friends here in London have not a day of mercy, in a certain sense. They do not hear the Gospel. It does not come across their track. A bishop once said that it would have been well for some people in London if they had been born in Calcutta, for if they had been born in Calcutta, Christian earnestness might have found them out. But living as they do, in some of the back slums of London, none care for their souls at all. Ah, then, since their day may be so brief and yours is so brief, too, let each gird up his loins tonight, and say, I must work the works of Him that sent me while it is day.

You came over Blackfriars Bridge tonightyou may drop down dead on it as you go back! You have come from your house tonight, and you have left at home a dear friend to whom you wish to speak about his soul. Do it tonight, for he may die in the night. I think I read it in the life of Dr. Chalmers, that on one occasion he spent an evening with a number of friends and there was present a Highland chieftain, a very interesting character. They spent the evening in telling anecdotes of their lives, and repeating extracts from many entertaining works of voyages and travels spent the evening, as we should think, very properly, indeed.

And after having very much enjoyed themselves, they went to bed. At midnight, the whole family were startled from their sleep, for the Highland chieftain was in the pangs and agonies of death. He went up to his chamber in sound health, but died in the night. The impression upon Chalmers mind was this: Had I known that he would have so died, would not the evening have been differently spent? Then ought it not to have been spent in a very different manner by men all of whom might have died? He felt as if the blood of that mans soul, in some measure, fell upon him. The occurrence itself was a lasting blessing to him. May it be so to us in the hearing of the story, and from this time forth may we work with all our might while it is day.

IV. We close tonight with the last words of the text: The night comes when no man can work. Here is the REMEMBRANCER OF OUR MORTALITY. The night comes. You cannot put it off. As sure as night comes in its due season to the earth, so death comes to you. There are no arts nor maneuvers by which night can be deferred or prevented, nor by which death can be postponed or altogether adjourned. The night comes, however much we may dread it, or however much we may long for it. It comes with stealthy tread, surely, and in its appointed time. The night comes.

The night comes for the pastor who has labored for his flock. For the evangelist who has preached with earnestness. For the Sunday school teacher who has loved her charge. For the missionary who has worked for souls. The night comes. The night comes for the sitters in the pews. For the father, the mother, the daughter, the husband, the wife. The night comes. Dear Hearer, shall you need to be reminded that the night comes for

you?

Will you take it home to yourself, or will you, nursing mans hapless delusion, think all men mortal but yourself? The night comes when the eyes shall be closed, when the limbs shall grow cold and stiff, when the pulse shall be feeble, and at last shall stop its beating. The night comes. Solomon thought this out for all mankind: No man has power over the spirit to retain the spirit; neither has he power in the day of death: and there is no discharge in that war.

To the Christian worker it is sometimes a dreary thought. I have plans in action for the cause of God, upon some of which I have just newly entered, and I sometimes think I should like to live to see them in greater maturity. Perhaps I may, but I daily feel as if I should not. Constantly it haunts meI may commence these things, but if I do not do all I can do today, I may never have a tomorrow. And, therefore, I say again what I have said a thousand times in my own soulthat I will do all I can now. As for the years that are to come, they must shift for themselves. It is no use, when starting plans, to look forward to what they may grow into in years to come, and then to write down as our work what may spring out of our work.

No, we must do immediately and at once all that has to be done. God can afford to wait with His work, but we cannot afford to delay with ours. We must work now, while it is day, for the night comes when no man can work. The coming of the night, though always comfortable to the Christian when he recollects that he shall see his Master, is yet sometimes a very heavy thought to us who are engaged in many works for Christ and who would like to live to see some of those works prospering. How dreary the conclusion! When no man can work.

Mother, you cannot bend over your children and teach them the way of life when you have departed. If you would have them taught in the things of God, your voice, at least, will never teach them, then, of the love of Jesus. Missionary, if that district of yours is unattended, and souls are lost, you at least can never make up for the damage you have done, for the mischief which you have caused. Your memory and your love are past. You are gone. The place that knew you once knows you no more. Among the deeds of the living you can take no share.

If you lifted, by your example, the floodgates of sin, you cannot return to let them down again, or to stem the current. If you missed opportunities of serving Jesus here, you cannot come back again to retrieve them. If one were a warrior, and had lost a battle, one might pant for another day to dawn for another conflict yet to retrieve the campaign. But when you lose the battle of life, you shall never have it to fight again. The tradesman may have gone bankrupt once, but he trusts that, with more careful dealing, he may yet achieve success.

But bankruptcy in our spiritual service is bankruptcy forever, and we have no chance of retrieving our loss! It is a night in which no man can work. The myriads before the Throne of God can do no service here. The poverty of London they cannot alleviate. Its shame and sin they cannot remove. They can praise God, but they cannot help man. They can sing unto Him that loved them and washed them, but they cannot preach of Him, nor proclaim to those who need to be washed at the Fountain that is filled with His blood. It were almost to be desired that they could, for surely they would do the work so much better than we can do it!

But the Master has decreed otherwise. They must fight no more! They must stand and look on at the battle. They must delve the field no longer. They shall eat the fruit, but they cannot till the soil. The work is left to those who are still here. Let us have no regrets because they cannot join in it, but rather let us thank God that He reserves to us all the honor as well as all the labor. Let us plunge into the work now! As the British soldiers in battle, when few, were told by their king that he hoped there was not one man there who desired that they should be more, for, said he, the fewer the men, the greater each mans share of the honor, so let us not desire that we should have helpers from the skies.

With the might of God upon us. With the open Word still full of precious promises. With the Mercy Seat still rich in blessing. With the Holy Spirit, the irresistible Deity, still dwelling in us. With the precious name of Jesus which makes Hell tremble, still to cheer us, let us go forth feeling that we must work while it is day for the night comes when no man can work. Let us go forth determined that we will work while the day lastsand hearing the chariot wheels of eternity behind uswe will speed on with all our might and main.

But all that I have been saying applies but very little to some of you, for you have never given yourselves to God. You are still servants of Satan, and you cannot serve God. O poor Souls, do you know why it is that we want Christian people to be earnest? Why, it is in order that you may be saved! We should not have much need of all this stirring up of Christians if it were not for you. You are without God. You are without Christ. You are on your way to everlasting ruin, some of you! And some of you, too, who have heard the Gospel for many years, know as much about it as I do, though you know nothing about its power within your own souls.

Is it not strange that while we are so much in earnest about you, you are not in earnest about yourselves? If there were a womans child out there in the street, and a dozen women tried to catch it up before it was run over by a cab, you would think it was a very singular thing if the mother stood by calm and cool, unexcited, or, as it were, uninterested about it! And yet here is your soul, and there are full as many people in this venerable Chapel tonight who feel anxious about you, and wish they could save you. Yet you do not care about your own soul!

Well, now, if you should be lost forever, it will be no wonder, will it? You do not value yourself at all. You throw yourself away. Who shall be blamed for this? O dear Hearers, shall this be one of the thorns in your pillow forever? I took no thought about my soul. I set no value upon it, but I carelessly cast it away? Shall this keen remorse keep up the flames unquenchable that shall forever torture your conscience: I would not think of everlasting things. I played the fool, and danced my way into Hell. I trifled where God was earnest. I was careless where ministers wept. I was frivolous where Christ bled?

Oh, I beseech you, consider your ways, and remember that whoever believes in the Lord Jesus Christ shall be saved! Believe in Him! Trust Him! That is the way of salvation. Rest upon Him! And the Lord grant that when you have so done, being saved, you may feel the impulse of my text and say, I, too, must join with the band of workers saved by Christ! I, too, must say as Christ said, I must work the works of Him that sent Me while it is day, for the night comes, when no man can work.

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THE SPUR   
NO. 943

**DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, JULY 31, 1870, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**I must work the works of Him that sent Me, while it is day: the night comes, when no man can work.   
John 9:4.**

IF this ninth chapter of John is intended to be a continuation of the history contained in the eighth, as we think it is, it brings before us a very extraordinary fact. You will observe in the eighth chapter that our Lord was about to be stoned by the Jews. He therefore withdrew Himself from the circle of His infuriated foes, and passed through the crowd, not, I think, in a hurried manner, but in a calm and dignified wayas one not at all disconcerted, but wholly self-possessed. His disciples, who had seen His danger, gathered round Him while He quietly retreated. The group wended their way with firm footsteps till they reached the outside of the Temple.

At the gate there sat a man well-known to have been blind from his birth. Our Savior was so little flurried by the danger which had threatened Him that He paused and fixed His eyes upon the poor beggar, attentively surveying him. He stayed His onward progress to work the miracle of this mans healing. If it is so that the two chapters make up but one narrative, and I think it is, though we are not absolutely sure, then we have before us a most memorable instance of the marvelous calmness of our Savior while under danger.

When the Jews took up stones to stone Him, He did not needlessly expose His life, but after He had withdrawn a very little space from the immediate danger He was struck by the sight of human misery and stood still awhile in all calmness of heart to do a deed or mercy. Oh, the Divine majesty of benevolence! How brave it makes a man! How it leads him to forget himself and despise danger, and become so calm that He can coolly perform the work which is given him to do!

I think I see our Savior thus considerate for others, and unmindful of Himself. May I add that there is a lesson here to us not only for imitation but for consolation! If He, while flying from His enemies, still stops to bless the blind, how much more will He bless us who seek His face now that He is exalted on High? Now that He is clothed with Divine power and Glory at the right hand of the Father? There is nothing to hurry Him now, He is exposed to no danger now. Send up your prayers, breathe out your desires, and He will reply, According to your faith, so be it unto you.

Reading this cure of the blind man, one is struck, again, with the difference between the disciples and the Master. The disciples looked at this man, blind from his birth, as a great enigma, a strange phenomenon. And they began, like philosophers, to suggest theories as to how it was consistent with Divine Justice that a man should be born blind. They saw that there must be a connection between sin and sufferingbut they could

not trace the connection here. So they were all speculating upon the wonderful problem before them, which they knew not how to solve.

This suggestively reminds us of theorists upon another difficulty which never has been explained yet, namely, the origin of evil. They wanted to sail upon the boundless deep, and were anxious that their Master should pilot them. He had other and better work to do. Our Lord gave them an answer, but it was a short and curt one. He Himself was not looking at the blind man from their point of view. He was not considering how the man came to be blind, but how his eyes could be opened. He was not so much meditating upon the various metaphysical and moral difficulties which might arise out of the case, but upon what would be the best method to remove from the man his suffering, and deliver him from his piteous plight.

A lesson to us, that instead of enquiring how sin came into the world, we should ask how can we get it out of the world. And instead of worrying our minds about how this Providence is consistent with Justice, and how that event can tally with benevolence, we should see how both can be turned to practical account. The Judge of all the earth can take care of Himself. He is not in any such difficulties that He needs any advice of ours. Only presumptuous unbelief ever dares suppose the Lord to be perplexed. It will be much better for us to do the work of Him that sent us than to be judging Divine Providence, or our fellow men. It is ours not to speculate but to perform acts of mercy and love according to the tenor of the Gospel. Let us, then, be less inquisitive and more practicalless for cracking doctrinal nutsand more for bringing forth the Bread of Life to the starving multitudes.

Once again, as a prefatory remark, our Lord tells us the right way of looking at sorrow and at sin. It was a dreadful thing to see a man shut out from the light of the sun from his very birth. But our Savior took a very encouraging view of itHis view of it was nothing at all desponding, nothing that could suggest complaining. It was most encouraging and stimulating. He explained the mans blindness thusNeither has this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.

The mans calamity was Gods opportunity. His distress was an occasion for displaying Divine goodness, wisdom, and power. I see sin everywherein myself, in others, in this great city, in the nations of the earth and very conspicuously sin and suffering in this thrice accursed war. But what shall I say of it? Sit down and wring my hands in utter despair? If so, I shall be incapable of service. No, if I would do good, as Jesus did, I must take His bravely hopeful view of things, and so keep my heart whole, and my loins girt ready for work.

The Masters view of it is that all this mischief furnishes, through the infinite benevolence of God, a platform for the display of Divine Love. I remember in the life of Dr. Lyman Beecher, he tells us of a young convert who, after finding peace with God, was heard by him to say, I rejoice that I was a lost sinner. Strange matter to be glad about, you will say, for of all things it is most to be deplored. But here was her reasonBecause Gods infinite Grace, and mercy, and wisdom, and all His attributes are glorified in me as they never could have been had I not been a sinner and had I not been lost.

Is not that the best light in which to see the saddest things? Sin, somehow or other, desperate evil as it is, will be overruled to display Gods goodness. Just as the goldsmith sets a foil around a sparkling diamond, even so the Lord has allowed moral and physical evil to come into this world to cause His infinite wisdom, Grace, power, and all His other attributes to be the better seen by the whole intelligent universe. Let us look at it in this light, and the next time we see suffering we shall say, Here is our opportunity of showing what the love of God can do for these sufferers.

The next time we witness abounding sin let us say, Here is an opportunity for a great achievement of mercy. I suppose great engineers have been very glad of Niagara, that they might span it. Very glad of the Mont Cenis that they might bore it. Very glad of the Suez Isthmus that they might cut a canal through itglad that there were difficulties that there might be room for engineering skill.

Were there no sin there had been no Savior. If no death, no Resurrection. If no Fall, no new Covenant. If no rebellious race, no Incarnation, no Calvary, no Ascension, no second advent. That is a grand way of looking at evil, and marvelously stimulating. Though we do not know, and perhaps shall never know the deepest reason why an infinitely gracious God permitted sin and suffering to enter the universe, yet we may at least encourage this practical thoughtGod will be glorified in the overcoming of evil and its consequences. Therefore let us gird up our loins in Gods name for our part of the conflict.

Thus much by way of preface. Now I shall invite you, this morning, and may God assist you while I invite, to consider first of all, the Master Worker. And, secondly, ourselves as workers under Him.

I. The text is a portrait Of THE GREAT MASTER WORKER. We will read it againI must work the works of Him that sent Me, while it is day: the night comes, when no man can work. And first observe, this Master Worker takes His own share in the workI must workI, Jesus, the Son of Man, for two or three years working here on earth in public ministry, I, I must work.

There is a sense in which all Gospel work is Christs. As the atoning Sacrifice, He treads the winepress alone. As the great Head of the Church, all that is done is to be ascribed to Him. But only in the sense in which He used these wordsspeaking of His human nature, speaking of Himself as living among the sons of menthere was a portion of the work of relieving this worlds woe, and scattering Gospel Truth among men that He must do, and nobody else could do. I must work.

I must preach, and pray, and heal, even I, the Christ of God. In salvation, Jesus stands alone. In life-giving He has no human co-worker. But in light-giving, which He refers to in the fifth verseAs long as I am in the world, I am the Light of the worldin light-giving He has many companions. Though anointed with the oil of gladness above His fellows in this respect, yet is it true that all His saints are the light of the world,

even as Jesus Christ, while in the world was the worlds light.

There were some to be cured by Him who could not be cured by Peter, or James, or John. Some to have the Good News brought to them who must not receive it from any lips but His own. Our Lord, when He became the Servant of servants, took His share in the common labors of the elect brotherhood. How this ought to encourage us! It is enough for the general if he stands in the place of observation and directs the battle. We do not usually expect that the commander shall take a personal share in the work of the conflict.

But with Jesus it is not so! He fought in the ranks as a common soldier. While as God-Man, Mediator, He rules and governs all the economy of Grace, yet as partaker of our flesh and blood He once bore the burden and heat of the day. As the great Architect and Master Builder He supervises all. Yet there is a portion of His spiritual temple which He condescended to build with His own hands. Jesus Christ has seen actual service, and actually resisted unto blood, amid the dust and turmoil of the strife.

This made Alexanders soldiers valiant, it is said, because if they were wearied by long marches Alexander did not ride, but marched side by side with them. And if a river had to be crossed in the teeth of opposition, foremost amidst all the risk was Alexander himself. Let this be our encouragementJesus Christ has taken a personal share in the evangelization of the world. He has taken not only His own part as Head, and Prophet, and High Priest, and Apostle, in which He stands alone, but He has taken His part among the common builders in the erection of the New Jerusalem. I must work the work of Him that sent Me.

Note, next, that our Lord laid great stress upon the gracious work which was laid upon Him. I must work the work of Him that sent Me Whatever else is not done I must do that. The work allotted me of God, I must, as His servant, faithfully do. The Jews may be close at My heels, their stones may be ready to fall upon Me, but I must fulfill My lifework. I must open blind eyes, and spread the light around me. I can forget to eat bread, I can forget to find for Myself a shelter from the dews that fall so heavily at night, but this work I must do.

Beyond all things the Redeemer felt a constraint upon Him to do His Fathers will. Know you not that I must be about My Fathers business? The zeal of Your house has eaten Me up. Everything in life yielded in the Saviors case to His master passion. There were some works our Savior would not do. When one asked Him to speak to his brother to divide the inheritance, though that might have been a useful thing, yet Christ did not feel a call to it, and he said, Who made Me a judge and a divider over you?

But when it came to the work of giving light, that He must do. This was the specialty of His life. To this He bent all His strength. He was like an arrow shot from a bow, speeding not towards two targets, but with undivided force hurrying towards one single end. The unity of His purpose was never for a moment brokenno second object ever eclipsed the first. Certain works of Grace, works of benevolence, works of light-giving, works of healing, works of savingthese He must do. He must do them, His own part of them He must perform.

He rightly describes this work as the work of God. Note that. If ever there lived a man who as man might have taken a part of the honor of the work to himself, it was the Lord Jesus. And yet over and over again He says, The Father that dwells in Me, He does the works. As Man He is particularly careful to set us the example of acknowledging constantly that if any work is done by us it is the work of God

through us. And so, though He says, I must work, notice the next words, the works of Him that sent Me. They are still my Fathers works when most they are mine. Though I must work them, yet shall they still be ascribed to Him, and He shall derive honor from them. My Brethren, if I do not say much about this in respect to Christ, it is because it seems so much more easy to apply this to us than to Him, and if so easily applied, let it be humbly and practically remembered by us today. My Brother, if you shall win a soul by your work, it is Gods work. If you shall instruct the ignorant, you do it, but it is God that does it by you if it is rightly done.

Learn to acknowledge the hand of God, and yet do not draw back your own. Learn to put out your own hand, and yet to feel that it is powerless unless God makes bare His arm. Combine in your thoughts the need of the all-working God and the duty of your own exertion. Do not make the work of God an excuse for your idleness, neither let your earnest activity ever tempt you to forget that power belongs unto Him. The Savior is a model to us in putting this just in the right form. It is Gods work to open the blind eye. If the eye has been sealed in darkness from birth no man can open it, God must do it. But yet the clay and the spittle must be used, and Siloams pool must be resorted to, or the light will never enter the sightless eyes.

So in Grace, it is Gods to illuminate the understanding by His Spirit. It is His to move the affections, His to influence the will, His to convert the entire nature. It is His to sanctify, and His to save. Yet you, O Believer, are to work this miraclethe Truths of God you shall spread will illuminate the intellect. The arguments you shall use will influence the affections. The reasons you shall give will move the will, the precious Gospel you shall teach will purify the heart. But it is God who does itGod indwelling in the Gospel.

See you to this, for only as you see these two Truths of God will you go to your work aright. I must work personally, and this holy work must be my special business, but I must do it in a right spirit, humbly feeling all the while that it is Gods work in and through me. Our Lord, in this portrait of Himself, as the Master Worker, is clearly seen as owning His true position. He says, I must work the work of Him that sent Me. He had not come forth from the Father on His own account. He was not here as a principal, but as a subordinate, as an ambassador sent by His King. His own witness was, I can of My own self do nothing: as I hear I judge: and My judgment is just because I seek not My own will, but the will of the Father which has sent Me.

He often reminded His hearers in His preaching that He was speaking in His Fathers name, and not in His own name. As, for instance, when He said, The words that I speak unto you I speak not of Myself. He took

upon Himself the form of a servant. The Spirit of the Lord, says He, is upon Me. For He has anointed Me. God gave Him a commission and gave Him the Grace to carry out that commissionand He was not ashamed to confess His condition of service to the Father.

Though in His Divine Nature, God over all, blessed forever, whose praises ten thousand times ten thousand harpers are rejoiced to sound upon that glassy sea, yet as the Mediator He stooped to be sentsent a commissioned Agent from God, a Servant to do Jehovahs bidding. Because He was such, it behooved Him, as a Servant, to be faithful to Him that sent Him. And Jesus felt this as a part of the Divine constraint, which impelled Him to say, I must work. I am a sent Man. I have to give an account to Him that sent Me.

O Brothers and Sisters, I wish we all felt this! For as the Father sent Christ, even so has Christ sent usand we are acting under Divine authority as Divine representatives, and must, if we would give our account with joy, be faithful to the communion with which God has honored us by putting us in trust with the Gospel of Christ. No man shall serve God aright if he thinks he stands upon an independent footing. It is recognizing your true position that will help to drive you onward in incessant diligence in the cause of your God.

But, dwelling very briefly on each of these points, I must remind you that our Lord did not regard Himself merely as an official, but He threw a hearty earnestness into the work He undertook. I see indomitable zeal glowing like a subdued flame in the very center of the live coal of the text. I must work the work of Him that sent Me. Not, I will, I intend, I ought, but I must. Though sent, yet the commission was so congenial to His Nature that He worked with all the alacrity of a volunteer.

He was commissioned, but His own will was His main compulsion. Not of constraint, but willingly the Lord Jesus became a Savior. He could not help it. It was within His very Nature a sacred necessity that He must be doing good. Was He not God, and is not God the fountain of benevolence? Does not Deity, perpetually like the sun, send forth beams to gladden His creatures? Jesus Christ, the God Incarnate, by irresistible instinct must be found bestowing good. Besides, He was so tender, so compassionate, that He must be blessing those that sorrowed.

He felt for that blind man. If the blind man lamented his darkness, yet not more than the Savior lamented it for the poor sufferers sake. The eyes which Christ fixed on that man were eyes brimming with tears of pity. He felt the miseries of humanity. He was not flinty-hearted, but tender, and full of compassion towards all suffering sons of men. Our Savior, therefore, was self-impelled to His gracious labors. His love propelled Him. He must do the work that He was sent to work.

It is a right thing when a mans business and inclinations run together. You put your son apprentice to a trade which is not congenial to his tastes and he will never make much of it. But when his duty and his own desires run in the same channel, then surely he is likely to prosper. So with Jesussent of God, but not an unwilling ambassadorcoming as cheerfully and joyously as if there had been no impetus but His own voluntary wish. He cries in gracious enthusiasm, I must, I must.

No man does a really good and great work till he feels he must. No man preaches well but he who must preach. The man sent of God must come under irresistible pressure, even like the Apostle of old, who said, Though I preach the Gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me, yes, woe is unto me if I preach not the Gospel. Or like the eloquent Eliphaz in the book of Job, who spoke last but bestand only spoke at all because he felt like a vessel wanting vent.

Our Savior became so grand a Worker because within His spirit desire kindled and burned and flamed till His Nature was all aglow. He was like a volcano in full action which must pour forth its fiery flood, though in His case the lava was not that which destroys, but that which blesses and makes rich!

Once again, another point in the Savior as a WorkerHe clearly saw that there was a fitting time to work, and that this time would have its end. In a certain sense Christ always works. For Zions sake He does not rest, and for Jerusalems sake He does not hold His peace in His intercessions before the Eternal Throne. But, my Brethren, as a Man, preaching, and healing, and relieving the sick on earth, Jesus had His day, as every other man, and that day ended at the set time. He used a common Eastern Proverb which says that men can only work by day, and when the day is over it is too late to work.

And He meant that. He Himself had an earthly lifetime in which to labor, and when that was over He would no more perform the kind of labor He was then doing. He called His lifetime a day. To show us that He was impressed with the shortness of it. We, too, often reckon life as a matter of years, and we even think of the years as though they were of extreme length, though every year seems to spin round more swiftly than before. And men who are growing gray will tell you that life seems to them to travel at a much faster rate than in their younger days.

To a child a year appears a lengthened period. To a man even ten years is but a short space of time. To God the Eternal a thousand years are but as one day. Our Lord here sets us an example of estimating our time at a high rate on account of its brevity. It is but a day you have at the longest. That day, how short! Young man, is it your morning? Are you just converted? Is the dew of penitence still trembling upon the green blade? Have you just seen the first radiance which streams from the eyelids of the morning? Have you heard the joyous singing of birds?

Up with you, Man! And serve your God with the love of your espousals! Serve Him with all your heart! Or have you known your Lord now so long that it is noon with you, and the burden and heat of the day are on you? Use all diligence, make good speed, for your sun will soon decline. And have you long been a Christian? Then the shadows lengthen, and your sun is almost down. Quick with you, Man, let both your hands be used! Strain every nerve, put every sinew to the stretch. Do all at all times, and in all places, what your ingenuity can devise, or your zeal can suggest to you, for the night comes wherein no man can work.

I love to think of the Master with these furious Jews behind Him, yet stopping because He must do the work of healing! Because His day was still not ended. He cannot die, He feels, till His day is over. His time is not yet come, and if it were, He would close His life by doing one more act of mercy. And so He stops to bless the wretched, and afterwards passes on His way. Be you swift to do good at all times. Be you steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord.

Knowing that the time is short, redeem the time, because the days are evil. Press much into little by continuous diligence. Glorify your God greatly while the short taper of your life burns on, and God accept you as He accepted His Son. Thus much upon Christ, the Master Worker.

II. Now I shall want your earnestness while I try to speak of OURSELVES AS WORKERS UNDER HIM. Here I must go over much the same ground, for first I must call to your remembrance that on us there rests personal obligation. Singular, distinct, personal obligation. I must work. I, I must work the works of Him that sent me. We are in danger nowadays of losing ourselves in societies and associations. We had need labor to maintain the personality of our consecration to Christ Jesus.

The old histories are very rich in records of deeds of personal daring. We cannot expect modern warfare to exhibit much of the same because the fighting is done so much by masses and so much by machinery. Even thus, nowadays, I am afraid our mode of doing Christian work is getting to be so mechanical, so much en masse, that there is barely room in ordinary cases for personal deeds of daring and singular acts of valor.

Yet, mark you, the success of the Church will lie in this lastit is in each mans feeling, I have something to do for Christ which an angel could not do for me, that the strength of a Church must lie under God. God has committed to me a certain work which, if it is not done by me, will never be done. A certain number of souls will enter Heaven through my agency. They will never enter there in any other way. God has given His Son power over all flesh to give eternal life to as many as He has given Him, and Christ has given me power over some part of the flesh. By my instrumentality they will get eternal life, and by no other agency. I have a work to do, and I must do it.

Dear Brothers and Sisters, our Church will be grandly equipped for service when you all have this impression, when there is no casting the work on the minister, nor on the more gifted Brethren, nor leaving all to be done by distinguished sisters. But when each one feels, I have my work, and to my work I will dedicate my whole strength to do it in my Masters name.

Now observe, secondly, the personal obligation in the text compels us to just such work as Christ did. I explained to you what it was. We are not called meritoriously to save souls, for alone He is the Savior, but we are called to enlighten the sons of men. That is to say, sin is not known to be sin by many. Our teaching and example must make sin to appear sin to them. The way of salvation by the substitutionary Sacrifice of Christ is quite unknown to a large part of mankind. It is ours simply and incessantly to be telling out that soul-saving story. This work must be done whatever we leave undone.

Some men are spending their time in making money, that is the main object of their lives. They would be as usefully employed probably if they spent all their lives in collecting pins or cherrystones. Whether a man lives to accumulate gold coins or brass nails, his life will be equally groveling and end in the same disappointment. Money-making, fame-making, and power-getting are mere pieces of play, mere sports and games for children.

The work of Him that sent us is a far nobler thing. It is permanent gain if I gain a soul. It is lasting treasure if I win the Lords approval. I am forever richer if I give a man one better thought of God, if I bring to a darkened soul the light from Heaven, or lead one erring heart to peace. If one spirit hastening downward to Hell is by my means directed to a blissful Heaven, I have done some work worth doing.

And such work, Brethren, we must do, whatever else we leave undone. Let us make all else in this world subservient to this which is our life work. We have our callings, we ought to have themthe man who will not work, neither let him eat. But our earthly calling is not our lifework. We have a high calling of God in Christ Jesus, and this must have the preeminence. Poor or rich, healthy or sick, honored or disgraced, we must glorify God. This is a necessity. All else may be, this must be.

We resolve, sternly resolve, and desperately determine that we will not throw away our lives on trifling objects, but by us Gods work must and shall be done. Each man will do his own share, God helping him. May the ever blessed Holy Spirit give us power and Grace to turn our resolves into acts. Let us not forget the Truth which I declared to you before, namely, that it is Gods work which we are called upon to do. Let us look to the text again. I must work the work of Him that sent Me.

I can discover no greater motive for earnestness in all the world than thisthat the work I have to do is Gods work. There is Samsonthe strength which lies in Samson is not his ownit is Gods strength. Is that, therefore, a cause why Samson should lie still and be idle? No, but it is a mighty sound of a trumpet to stir the blood of the hero to fight for the people of God. If the strength of Samson is not the mere force of sinew and muscle, but force given him of the Almighty One, then up with you, Samson, and smite the Philistines! Slay again your thousands!

What? Dare you sleep with Gods Spirit upon you? Up, man! To sleep if you were but a common Israelite were treason to your country, but when God is in you and with you, how can you be idle? No, put forth your strength and rout your foes! When Paul was in Corinth, and God worked special miracles by his hands, so that handkerchiefs which were taken from his body healed the sick, was that a reason why Paul should withdraw himself to some quiet retreat and do nothing?

To my mind there appears to be no more potent argument why Paul should go from house to house and lay his hands on all around, and heal the sick. So with youyou have the power to work miracles, my Brother. The telling out of the Gospel, accompanied by the spirit of God, works moral and spiritual miracles. Because you can work these miracles, should you say, God will do His own work? No, Man, but right and left, at all times and in all places, go and tell out the soul-saving story, and God speed you! Because God works by you, therefore work!

A small vessel, lying idle in dock, without a freight, is a loss to its owner. But a great steamship, of many hundred horsepower, cannot be suffered to remain unemployed. The greater the power at command, the more urgently are we bound to use it. The indwelling power of God is put forth in reply to faith and prayershall we not labor to obtain it? The fact that the Churchs work is Gods work rather than hers is no cause why she should indulge in sloth. If she had only her own strength, she might waste it with less of crime. But having Gods strength about her, she dares not loiter.

Gods message to her this morning is, Awake, awake! Put on your strength, O Zion. Put on your beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city. Would God that this message might come to every heart so that all of us would arise, because God is in our midst.

Brethren, notice in the text our obligation resulting from our position. We are all sent as Jesus was if we are Believers in Christ. Let us feel our obligation pressing upon us. What would you think of an angel who was sent from the Throne of God to bear a message and who lingered on the way or refused to go? It was midnight, and the message came to Gabriel and his fellow songsters, Go and sing over the plains of Bethlehem, where shepherds keep their flocks. Here is your sonnet, Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good will towards men.

Could you conceive that they halted, that they wished to decline the task? Impossible with such music, and with such a commission given from such a Lord! They sped joyously on their way. Your mission is not less honorable than that of the angels. You are sent to speak of good things which bring peace and good will to men, and glory to God. Will you loiter? Can you any longer be dumb? No, as the Lord Jesus sends you, go forth, I pray you, go at once, and with joy tell out the story of His love.

I could conceive an angel being almost tempted to linger, if sent to execute vengeance, and to deluge fields with blood for the iniquity of nations. I dare not think that he would hesitate even then, for these holy spirits do the Lords bidding most unquestioningly. But if the mission is of mercy, the loving spirit of an angel would leap for joy and be quickened by the sweetness of the errand as well as by the commission of his Lord. We, too, sent of God, if sent on hard service, are bound to go. But if sent on so sweet a service as the proclaiming of the Gospel, how can we tarry?

What? To tell the poor criminal shut up in the dungeon of despair that there is liberty! To tell the condemned that there is pardon! To tell the dying that there is life in a look at the crucified Onedo you find this hard? Do you call this toil? Should it not be the sweetest feature of your life that you have such blessed work as this to do?

If tonight, when the day is over, when you are in your chamber alone, you should suddenly behold a vision of angels who should speak to you in celestial accents and nominate you to holy service in the Church, you would surely feel impressed by such a visit. But Jesus Christ Himself has come to you, has bought you with His blood, and has set you apart by His redemption. You have confessed His coming to you, for you have been baptized into His death, and declared yourself to be His. And are you less impressed by Christs coming than you would have been by an angels visit?

Stir yourself up, my Brother! The hand of the Crucified has touched you, and He has said, Go in this your might. The eyes that wept over Jerusalem have looked into your eyes and they have said with all their ancient tenderness, My servant, go and snatch dying sinners like brands from the burning by publishing My Gospel. Will you be disobedient to the heavenly vision, and despise Him that speaks to you from His Cross on earth and from His Throne in Heaven? Blood-washed as you are, bloodbought as you are, give yourself up more fully than ever you have done to the delightful service which your Redeemer allots you. Bestir yourself and say, I, even I, must work the work of Him that sent me while it is day.

You little know what good you may do, my Brethren, if you always feel the burden of the Lord as you ought to do. I was led to think of that fact from a letter which I have here, which did my heart good as I read it. I daresay the dear friend who wrote it is presenthe will not mind my reading an extract. He had fallen into very great sin, and though often attending at this Tabernacle, and being frequently stirred in heart, his conversion was not brought about till one day riding by railway to a certain town.

He says, I entered into a compartment in which were three of the students of the Tabernacle College. Although I did not know them at first, the subject of temperance was introduced by myself. I found two of them were total abstainers, and one was not. We had a nice friendly chat and one of the abstainers asked me if I enjoyed the pardon of my sins and peace with God. I told him I regularly attended the Tabernacle, but I could not give up all my sins. He then told me how, in his own case, he had found it very desirable to be much in prayer and communion with God, and how he was thus kept from many besetting sins.

I concluded my business in the town, and was returning homeward. I was rather dull, as I had no money with me to pay for my ride home, and consequently had to walk all the way. I heard song-singing at a little Chapel. I entered, and was invited to a seat. It was H\_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Chapel. It turned out that these three students with whom I had come in the train some few hours before were there, and it was an occasion of deep concern to many, as one of the students, who was their pastor, was taking his farewell of his flock that evening, and many were in tears, himself also.

I asked one of the students to pray for me. He did so, and I tried to lift up my whole heart to God, and, as it were, leave all my sins outside. But I found them a ponderous weight. At last I believed in Jesus and exercised a simple faith such as I never knew before. I became quite contrite and humiliated. I found the Lord there. He is sweet to my soul. God has, for Christs sake, forgiven me all my sins. I am happy now. I shall ever pray for the students at the Pastors College, and never, I hope, begrudge my mite for the support of the same. God be praised for the students!

See you thus that a casual word about Christ and the soul will have its reward. I heard once of a clergyman who used to go hunting and when he was reproved by his bishop, he replied that he never went hunting when he was on duty. But he was asked, When is a clergyman off-duty? And so with the Christian, when is he off duty? He ought to be always about

his Fathers business, ready for anything and everything that may glorify God. He feels that he is not sent on Sunday only, but sent always, not called now and then to do good, but sent throughout his whole life to work for Christ.

But I must finish. The greatest obligations seem to me, to lie upon each one of us to be serving Christ, because of the desperate case of our ungodly neighbors. Many of them are dying without Christ, and we know what their end must bean end that has no enda misery that has no bounds. Oh, the woe which sin causes on earth! But what is that to the never-ending misery of the world to come!

Our time in which to serve the Lord on earth is very short. If we would glorify God as dwellers on earth, we must do it now. We shall soon, ourselves, be committed to the grave, or they whom we would gladly bless may go there before us. Let us, then, bestir ourselves! I felt much weight on my mind yesterday, from the consideration that we, as a nation, are enjoying peace, an unspeakable blessingthe value of which none of us can rightly estimate. Now, if we do not make, as a Christian Church, the most earnest endeavors to spread abroad the Gospel in these times of peace, before long this nation may also be plunged in war. War is the most unmitigated of curses, and among its other mischiefs, it turns the mind of the people away from all religious thoughts.

Now while we have peace, and God spares this land the horrors of war, ought not the Church of God to be intensely eager to use her opportunities? The night comes. I know not how dark that night may be. The political atmosphere seems heavily charged with evil elements. The result of the present conflict between France and Prussia may not be what some would hope, for it may again crush Europe beneath a despots heel. Now, while we have libertya liberty which our sires bought at the stake, and sealed with their blood, let us use it. While it is day let us work the works of Him that sent us. And let each man take for his motto the succeeding verse to my text, As long as I am in the world I am the light of the world.

Take heed that your light be not darkness. Take heed you conceal it not. If it is light, take heed that you despise it not, for if it is ever so little a light, it is what God has given you, and as much as you will be able to give God a joyful account of. If you have any light, though it is but a spark, it is for the world you have it. For the sons of men it is lent you. Use it, use it now, and God help you.

O that our light as a Church would shine upon this congregation! How I desire to see all my congregation saved! Let Believers be more in prayer, more in service, more in holiness, and God will send us His abundant blessing, for Jesus sake. Amen.

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THE BLIND BEGGAR OF THE TEMPLE AND HIS WONDERFUL CURE   
NO. 1977

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, AUGUST 14, 1887, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world. When He had thus spoken, He spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay, and said unto him, Go, wash in the Pool of Siloam (which is by interpretation, Sent). He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing.   
John 9:5, 6, 7.**

OUR Savior had been dealing with the Jews and the Pharisees who had bitterly opposed and even taken up stones to cast at Him. He felt much more at home when He could fix His eyes upon poor necessitous beings and bless them with healing and salvation. It is the lot of some of us to be often in controversy with the carnal professors of the present dayand it is a great relief to us to get away from them and their stonesand find out individual sinners and preach to them, in the name of God, the Gospel which spiritually opens the eyes of the blind!

At the gate of the Temple sat a blind beggar who must have been a notable character, for he was possessed of remarkable shrewdness and mother wit. From having long been there, he must have been well known to all who regularly frequented the Temple and to the wider circle of those who came from far to the great yearly gatherings. This man could not see Jesus, but, what was better, Jesus could see him. We read in the opening of the chapterAs Jesus passed by, He saw a man which was blind from his birth. Many other blind men there were in Israel, but Jesus saw this man with a special eye. I think I see the Savior standing still and looking at him, taking stock of him, listening to his quaint speeches, noting what kind of man he is and exhibiting special interest in him.

This morning there is one in the Tabernacle who cannot see Jesus, for he has no spiritual eyes, but I am convinced that my Master is now looking at him, searching him from head to foot and reading him with discerning eyes. He is considering what He will make of him, by-and-by, for He has the great and gracious intent that He will take this sinner, who is spiritually like the blind beggar, and enlighten him and give him to behold His Glory! I suppose that the blind beggar of the Temple hardly valued sight, for he had been blind from his birth. Those who have seen must greatly miss the light of day, but those who have never possessed sight at all can hardly have an idea of what that sense must be and, therefore, it cannot be so great a deprivation to them.

The person I am searching for at this time has no idea of the joy of true religion for he has no sense of spiritual life and light. He has never seen as yet and, therefore, he does not know his own misery in being blind. He has been blind from birth and, in all probability, he is content to be so, for he does not know the delight which waits upon Heaven-illumined eyes! Spiritual things to him are an unknown region, of which he has no conception. He is here, at this time, yet he is not looking for salvation, nor desiring it. But Jesus knows the value of sight! He knows the glories which heavenly light would bring home to the mind and He will not be narrowed in His action by human ignorance, but will dispense His bounty according to His own mind which is large as the boundless sea!

This beggar did not pray for sight. At least it is not recorded that he did so. He was a beggarit was his trade to beg. But among all his petitions, he did not ask for sight. Yet Jesus gave him sight! Know you not that glorious declaration of Free Grace, I am found of them that sought me not? Is it not a wonderful thing that Jesus often comes to those who sought Him not? He comes all of a sudden to them in the Sovereignty of His infinite compassion and, before they have begun to pray for the blessing, He has bestowed it upon them! His free love precedes their desires for it! When they wake up to a consciousness of the value of salvation, they find themselves in possession of itand so their first prayers are mingled with praises! I am persuaded that there are some before me now who are like the man born blindthey do not know what they need. They are not yet aware of the value of the blessing and, consequently, they have not sought it. But today they are going to receive it!

There was this circumstance in favor of the blind beggar, that he was in the way where Jesus was likely to go, for he was at the Temple gate. My Friend, you, too, are on hopeful ground at this time, for you are found in the place where my Lord has often been and where He is very likely to come again! We have prayed Him into this House hundreds of times and we have done so this morning! He has been glorified in this Tabernacle and His friends have so welcomed Him that here He delights to come! Oh that as Jesus passes by, He may stand still and look on you with eyes of infinite mercy!

What was our Lord doing? Truth to tell, He was under a Divine compulsion. He said, I must work the works of Him that sent Me. He was looking out for material to work uponmaterial in which the works of God should be made manifest. Here was the very man, prepared for Christ as clay is prepared for the modeler. Let him receive his sight and all Jerusalem would see the work of the Lord! And even dwellers in far-off lands would hear of it! This blind beggar was the very person the Savior was looking for. My Master walks up and down these aisles and He finds a great many who can see, or who think they can. These He passes by, for, the whole need not a physician. But as He goes along He comes, at last, to a poor dark creature, hopelessly, helplessly blind from his birthand He stops and says, This is the man. There is room for a miracle here. It is even so, O Lord! In those empty sockets, or in those withered eyeballs, there is space for healing power to exhibit itself! In that hard heart and stubborn will there is room for renewing Grace! The necessities of the sinner are the opportunities of the Savior and you, poor, guilty, lost and ruined sinneryou are the raw material for Christs Grace to work upon! You are the very man His forgiving love is looking for!

You who cannot see spiritual things, you who scarcely know what heavenly sight can mean and hardly have a desire to know. You are the very person in whom there is elbow room for Omnipotent Gracespace and scope for the matchless skill of our Saviors love! My Lord stops and looks at you. This will do, He says. This is the kind of man I want. Here I can work out My mission and life-purpose. I am the Light of the world and with this darkness I will deal, removing it at once. O Lord Jesus, You are in the highest Heaven now and yet You hear Your servants prayers from this poor earth! Come into this tabernacle and repeat the wonders of Your love! We do not ask You to open the natural eyes of the blind, but we ask You to give spiritual sight to the inly blind, understanding to the erring and salvation to the lost! Prove Yourself to be the Son of the Highest by saying, Let there be light. These poor blind ones do not pray to You, but we ask Grace for them! And surely Your own heart prompts You to answer us! Come at this hour and bless them, to the praise of the glory of Your Grace!

This case of the blind beggar is eminently instructive and, therefore, let us get at it at once in the hope that while we are considering the model case, we may see it repeated in spiritual form in our midst. Holy Spirit, bless our discourse to that end!

I. First, in this mans healing and in the salvation of every chosen soul, we shall see THE GREAT HEALER CONSPICUOUS. If anyone among us shall ever be saved, the Savior will be made great thereby. If we are pardoned, we shall not be honored by the forgiveness, but the royal hand which signed and sealed the pardon shall be greatly extolled. If our eyes are opened, we shall not be made famous for sight, but He that opened our eyes will be made illustrious by the cure. It was thus in this case and rightly so.

To begin with, in this mans mind, as soon as ever he received sight, a Man that was named Jesus came to the forefront. Jesus was to him the most important Person in existence! All that he knew of Him, at first, was that He was a Man that was named Jesus. And under that Character Jesus filled the whole horizon of his vision. He was more to him than those learned Pharisees, or than all his neighbors put together! Jesus was exceeding great, for He had opened his eyes. By-and-by, fixing his mind upon that figure, he saw more in it and he declared, He is a Prophet. He boldly said this when he was running great risks by doing so. To their faces, he told the carping Pharisees, He is a Prophet. A little further on he came to this, that he believed Him to be the Son of God and worshipped Him.

Now, my dear Friend, if you are saved by Jesus, your star must set, but the star of Jesus must rise and increase in brilliance till it becomes no more a star, but a sun, making your day and flooding your whole soul with light! If we are saved, Christ Jesus must and will have the glory of it. None on earth or in Heaven can rival Jesus in the esteem of souls brought from darkness to lightHe is everybody to them. Do you dislike this? Do you need a share of the spoils, a fragment of the glory? Go your way and be blind, for your condition can never be altered while you refuse to honor the Savior. He that opens a mans eyes deserves grateful praises forevermore.

After this man had received sight, his testimony was all of Jesus. It was Jesus that spat, it was Jesus that made the clay, it was Jesus that anointed his eyes. So will it be in your mind with the Gospel of your salvationit will be Jesus only. It is Jesus who became the Surety of the Covenant, Jesus who became the atoning Sacrifice. Jesus is the Priest, the Interposer, the Mediator, the Redeemer! We know Jesus as Alpha and Jesus as Omega. He is the First and He is the Last. In your salvation there will be no mistake about it and no mixture in ityou will have nothing to say about man, or mans merit, or mans willbut on the head which once was wounded with the thorns, you will put all your crowns. Jesus did it, did it all and He must be praised!

It is to be noted that the authority of Jesus issued the saving command. Go, wash. These were not the words of Peter, or James, or John, but the words of Jesus and, therefore, the man obeyed them. The Gospel message, Believe and live, is not obeyed till you perceive that it is proclaimed by the supreme authority of King Jesus, the Savior. O Sirs, He that bids you believe is that same Lord who can and will give you healing through your obedience to His command. Trust because He bids you! The warrant of the Gospel is the authority of Christ. Obey His command and you have obtained His salvation! The success of the Gospel command is produced by Him that spoke it. It is effectual because it comes forth from His mouth. Where the word of a king is, there is power and the Gospel is the Word of the great King and, therefore, those who listen to it find it to be the power of God unto salvation!

This man, when he had received sight, attributed it most distinctly and undividedly to Jesus. He said expressly, He has opened my eyes. Whenever he delivered his testimony, whether to his neighbors or to the Pharisees, there was no uncertain sound about ithe had been enlightened by Jesusand by Jesus alone. And to Him he gave all the gloryand he was right in doing so!

Come, then, lend me your ears. Oh, you who would find light this morning, give me your thoughts at this moment! Endeavor to realize that Jesus Christ is a living and acting Person. He is not dead! He has risen long ago. Being alive and exalted to the highest heavens, He is clothed with infinite power and majesty and is mighty to save. In a spiritual way, He is still among us, working according to His gracious Nature. To us He is not an absent Christ, nor a sleeping Christ, but He is still doing what He did when He was on earthonly He now works in the spiritual, whereas once He worked in the physical world. He is now present to save, present to open the eyes of the spiritually blind, present to bless you to whom I speak!

Understand that He is looking upon you at this moment. Standing in front of you, His shadow is now falling upon you. He is considering your case. Are you praying? He is listening. Has it scarcely got so far as a prayer? Is it but a desire? He is reading that desire. As it passes like a shadow across the camera of your soul, He is thinking of you. At this moment He is able to say the Word that shall take the film from your eyes and let in the everlasting Light of Grace. Do you believe this? If so, then cry to HimLord, grant me to receive my sight. He will hear you! Perhaps while I am speaking He will send the Light of God. To your intense delight you shall find yourself in a new world. Escaping from darkness, you shall enter into His marvelous Light!

Realize, further, that the great change that you need in order to salvation is beyond all mortal power. You cannot effect it yourself, nor can all the help of men and angels joined effect it for you. It is even beyond your own conception. As a carnal man, you do not know what spiritual things are and you cannot fashion an idea of them. A dead man cannot know what life is. Truly, if he could live again, he would have some knowledge of life derived from his former life, but as to you, it would be all novel and strange, for you have never lived unto God. You cannot conceive what heavenly sight is, for you were born blind. May the Lord do a new thing in you at this moment and bring you into a new Heaven and a new earth wherein dwells righteousness!

Remember that you must have this miracle worked upon you. If the blind man had remained blind, he might have continued a tolerably happy beggar. He seems to have had very considerable mental resources and he might have made his way in the world as well as others of the begging confraternity. But you cannot be happy or safe unless the Lord Jesus opens your eyes. There remains for you nothing but the blackness of darkness, forever, unless light from Heaven visits you. You must have Christ or die! Here is the blessedness of it, that at this moment He is still in the midst of us, able to save to the uttermost and willing, now, to repeat the miracles of His mercy to those who will trust in Him to do so. I think I can almost hear the prayer struggling in your bosom. Silent and unclothed in words, it sits on your lips. Let it speak! Say, Lord, open my eyes this day. He will do it! Blessed be His name! He has come on purpose to open the eyes of the blind!

II. Having spoken upon the great Healer, as He stands conspicuous in the miracle, I would now conduct your thoughts, in the second place, to THE SPECIAL MEANS OBSERVABLE in the miracle. Jesus could have healed this man without means, or He could have healed Him by other means, but He chose to work the cure in a manner which to all ages will remain a grand sermon, an instructive parable of Grace. He spat on the ground and made clay of the spittleand He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay. This is a picture of the Gospel.

It meets with many modern criticisms. In the first place, the mode of cure seems very eccentric. Spat and made clay with the spittle and the dust! Very amazing! Very odd! Thus odd and singular is the Gospel in the judgment of the worldly-wise. Why, says one, it seems such a strange thing that we are to be saved by believing. Men think it so odd that 50 other ways are straightway invented! Though the new methods are, not one of them, worth describing, yet everybody seems to think that the oldfashioned way of, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ might have been greatly improved upon. The way of justification by faith is peculiarly open to criticism and is about the last that this wise world would have selected!

Yet, eccentric as it may seem for Christ to heal with spittle and dust, it was the best and wisest way for His purpose. Suppose, instead, He had put His hands into His pocket and had taken out a gold or ivory boxand out of this box He had taken a little crystal bottle? Suppose He had taken out the stopper and then had poured a drop on each of those blind eyes and they had been opened? What would have been the result? Everybody would have said, what a wonderful medicine! I wonder what it was! How was it compounded? Who wrote the prescription? Perhaps He found the charm in the writings of Solomon and so He learned to distil the matchless drops. Thus you see the attention would have been fixed on the means usedand the cure would have been ascribed to the medicine rather than to God! Our Savior used no such rare oils or choice spirits, but simply spat and made clay of the spittle, for He knew that nobody would say, The spittle did it, or, It was the clay that did it.

No, if our Lord seems to be eccentric in the choice of means, yet is He eminently prudent. The Gospel of our Lord Jesusand there is but one is the wisdom of God, however singular it may seem in the judgment of the worldly wise! It may be thought strange, but it is the sum of all wisdom and those who try it, find it to be so. It would be impossible to improve upon it. Its adaptation to mans case is marvelousits suitability to its design is matchless! It blesses man while it gives all glory to God. No one makes the Gospel a rival to Christ, but in every case, by the Gospel, the power which blesses men is manifested as the power of God!

In the next place, the means may appear to some, offensive to the taste. Oh, I think I see some of the fine gentry! How they turn up their noses as they read, He spat! He spat on the ground and made clay of the spittle! It turns the stomachs of those delicate ones! So is it with the Gospel. The Agags who go delicately do not like it. How the men of culture sneer at the Gospel for which our fathers died! Hear how they decry the everblessed Word of our salvation. They say that it is only fit for old women and idiotsand such fossils of the past ages as the preacher who is now addressing you! We are all fools except these men of progress and our Gospel is disgusting to them. Yes, but stop a minute and disgust may cease. In the miracle before us, the means made use of was spitbut from whose mouth? It was the mouth of Jesus, which is most sweet! No fragrant perfume made of the rarest spices can ever equal the spit of that Divine mouth of His!

And clay? What if it is clay? Clay made by the spittle of the mouth of the Son of God is more precious than the terrible crystal, or the rarest powders of the merchant! Thus is it with my Masters Gospelit is offensive to those who are proud of themselves. It is offensive to carnal reason, to the idiotic self-complacency of those who, considering themselves to be wise, have become otherwise. But to you that believe, He is precious! How precious? No tongue can tell

*What if we trace the globe around,   
And search from Britain to Japan?   
There shall be no religion found   
So just to God, so safe for man.*

The Gospel is still to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness. But unto us who are saved, it is Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.

It is further objected that the Lord healed this man in such a commonplace way! To spit and make clay of the spittle, why, anybody could do that! Why not have used an imposing ceremony? Why not practice an eclectic method? If it had been one of the doctors of the age, he would have made a great performance of it. His prescription would have been a treat for learned men. Did you ever read Culpeppers, Herbal? I hope you have never taken any of the medicine which that learned herbalist prescribes. In one mess, you will find a dozen articles, each one of them monstrous, and in many a prescription you will find a score or more of herbs most curiously compounded. Such were the prescriptions of still earlier times. If they did no good, they did at least bewilder the patient! And now, today, what is the new Gospel that is proposed to us? It is the Gospel of culture. Culture! This, of course, is the monopoly of our superiors. It is only to be enjoyed by very refined persons who have been to college and who carry inside of them a whole universitylibrary and all!

The Gospel, which is made to be plain enough for wayfaring men, is, for that reason, despised. That Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners is too commonplace a teaching. That He bore our sins in His own body on the tree is rejected as an outrageous dogma, unfit for this intelligent age! Oh yes, we know the men and their contemptuous leer. Yet commonplace as our Lords medicine was, it was unique. All the philosophers of Greece and all the wise and rich men of Rome could not have compounded another dram of this healing application! Only the Christ possessed that matchless spitonly His fingers could make that special clay. Even thus, if the Gospel should seem commonplace, it is to be remembered that there is not another like it!

Tell me, you that are wise, can you find anything that will bear comparison with it? Christ in the sinners placemade sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in Himcan you match this? Jesus redeeming His people from the slavery of sin. You may call it a mercantile Atonement, if you please, and grow black in the face in your rage at the substitutionary Sacrifice, but you cannot equal it! The more abundant your ridicule of the Gospel, the more shall we cling to it, and the better shall we love it! For the very spittle of Christs mouth is dearer to us than the deepest thoughts of your most profound philosophers!

I think I hear another objector say that the remedy was quite inadequate. Clay made out of spittle would be positively inert and could exercise no healing power upon blind eyes. Just so, we are prepared to hear all this. The clay alone has no efficacy, but when Jesus uses it, it will answer His purpose. The man, after he had washed the clay into the pool, came seeing. The Gospel may appear as if it could not renew the heart and save from evil. To believe in the Lord Jesus Christ seems an unlikely means of producing holiness. Men ask, What can evangelical preaching do to put down sin? We point to those who were once dead in sin, who are made alive by faithand thus we prove the efficacy of the Gospel by facts. Oh, they say, can faith transform the character? Can belief subdue the will? Can trust conduct the mind to a high and elevated life? It does so! And though in theory it appears inadequate, yet as a matter of fact, it has made men into new creatures and has turned sinners into saints!

Another wise gentleman judges that clay upon the eyes would even be injurious. To stick clay over a mans eyes would not make him seeit would add another impediment to the light. So have I even heard it said that to preach salvation by faith is against good morals and may even encourage men in evil! Blind bats as they are, can they not see that the case is the very reverse? How frequently by the Gospel are harlots made chaste, thieves made honest, drunks made sober? By this very Gospel of faith which they say is against good morals the best of morals are produced! Why, in the next breath they denounce Believers as Puritans, too precise and religious by half! Nothing creates so many good works as that Gospel which tells us that salvation is not of works, but of the Grace of God!

Another objector declares that our Lords way of cure was opposed to the Law of God. Here is this Man named Jesus actually making clay or brick-earth on the Sabbath! Was not this a shocking infringement of the Law of God? It is insinuated that our Gospel of faith in Jesus makes men think lightly of the Law. We preach against the idea of merit and we say that good works cannot save men and, therefore, we are charged with lowering the dignity of the Law! This is not true, for our Gospel establishes the Law and fosters true obedience. When the Savior said, Go, wash, and the blind man went and washed, the Lord Jesus had taught him obedience, even the best kind of itnamely, the obedience of faith. Even so, though we are apparently in conflict with the Law when we declare that by the works of the Law shall no flesh living be justified, yet we establish the Lawfor faith brings with it the principle and mainspring of obedience. To trust God is the very essence of obedience. He that believes in Jesus has taken the first step in the great lesson of obeying God in all things. To see how Jesus suffered the Laws penalty and how He honored the Law for us, is to see that which makes the Law most glorious in our esteem.

So, I would say in leaving this pointDo not quibble at the Gospel. We sometimes tell servants that it is never wise to quarrel with their bread and butter. I would earnestly say to every anxious spiritDo not quarrel with the Gospel of salvation. If you are in a right state of mind as to your condition, I am sure you will not. When I found the Lord, I was driven into such a corner that whatever salvation might have been, I would have had it on Gods terms without a question! If you are the man that I am looking for. If you need to receive spiritual sight, you will make no conditions with Jesus! You will not ask for a perfumed ointment for your eyes, but you will gladly accept an anointing with clay from your Saviors hands. Whatever the Lord prescribes as the way of salvation, you will joyfully accept. In that cheerful acceptance lies a great part of the salvation, itself, for your will is now at one with God.

Let us pray the Holy Spirit to reveal to our hearts the Gospel and to make us love it, receive it and prove its power!

III. I would now lead you a step further. THE PLAIN COMMAND IS MOST NOTEWORTHY. Our Lord said to His patient, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam. The man could not see, but he could hear. Salvation comes to us, not by sight of ceremonies, but by hearing the Word of God! The ears are the best friends the sinner has remaining to him. It is by Ear-Gate that the Prince Immanuel comes riding into Mansoul in triumph. Hear, and your soul shall live.

The command was exceedingly specificGo, wash in the pool of Siloam. So is the Gospel exceedingly specificBelieve on the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved. It is notDo this or that work, but believe! It is notBelieve in a priest, or in any human being, but in Jesus. If this man had said, I will wash in Jordan, for it was there that Naaman lost his leprosy, his washing would have been useless. It was a little, insignificant affair, that pool of Siloam, whose waters flowed softlywhy must he go there? He did not ask for reasons, but he at once obeyed and, in obeying, he found the blessing. My Hearer, you have to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved! There are not 20 things to be done, but only this one. The very longest form of the Gospel runs thusHe that believes and is baptized shall be savedthe faith is to be openly confessed by obedience to the Lords prescribed Baptism. But the first matter is the faith. He that believes on Him has everlasting life. This is very specific! You can make no mistake in the matter.

It was also intensely simple. Go, wash in the pool. Go to the pool and wash the clay into it. Any boy can wash his eyes. The task was simplicity itself. So is the Gospel as plain as a pikestaff! You have not to perform 20 genuflections or standing up and sitting downeach one peculiarnor have you to go to school to learn a dozen languages, each one more difficult than the other! No, the saving deed is one and simpleBelieve and live. Trust, trust Christ! Rely upon Him, rest in Him. Accept His work upon the Cross as the atonement for your sin, His righteousness as your acceptance before God, His Person as the delight of your soul!

But the command was also distinctly personal. Go, wash. He might not send a neighbor or a friend. His parents could not go for him. It would have been idle for him to have said, I will pray about it. No, he must go and wash in the pool himself. So, too, the sinner must, himself, believe in Jesus. Hear me, dear Friend! Only your own faith will answer the purposeyour own eyes need opening and, therefore, you must yourself go and wash in the pool in obedience to Jesus. You must personally believe unto eternal life. You get into the notion, some of you, that you may sit still and hope that God will save you. I have no authority to encourage you in such a rebellious inactivity! Jesus bids you go and wash! How dare you sit still? When the father comes to receive his prodigal child, he finds him on the road. He was yet a great way off when his father saw him, but his face was turned in the right direction and he was making the best of his way to the fathers house. Our Father says to you, Awake, you that sleep, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give you light. Up with you, Man! Up with you! The pool of Siloam will not come to youyou must go to it! The waters will not leap out of their bed and wash your eyes, but you must stoop to them and wash in the pool until the clay is gone and you see. It is a very personal directionmind that you treat it so.

It was a direction which involved obedience to Christ. Why must I go there and wash there? Because He tells you. If you want Jesus to save you, you must do as He bids you. You must take Jesus to be your Lord if you take Him to be your Savior. Dear Heart, yield to Jesus Christ this morning! Never servant had such a Master! You may well bow down and kiss those dear feet which were nailed to the Cross for you. Yield yourselves to the rule of Jesus at once. The act of faith is the more acceptable because it is the hearts obedience to Jesus. Submit to Him by faith, I beseech you.

The command was for the time present . Jesus did not say, Go, wash in the pool tomorrow, or in a months time. If the beggar had been blind inwardly as well as outwardly, he might have said, My blindness brings me money. I will make a little more as a blind beggar and then I will have my eyes opened. He valued sight too much to delay. Had he delayed, he would have remained blind till Doomsday! If any of you think it would be inconvenient to be converted at once, I have no hope for you. I can preach to you no salvation but a present one! He who will not be saved today, will not be likely to be saved at all. Go, blind beggar, go and be blind forever unless you will have sight today. It may be now or never with you. Today is the day of salvation! Tomorrow is but the devils net. You will be hopelessly lost if you continue to delay!

The command in the blind mans case was very noteworthyGo, wash. And so is the spiritual command which is its parallelBelieve in the Lord Jesus. O Souls, hear the Word of God which bids you trust the Savior. He cries, Look unto Me and be you saved, all the ends of the earth. Oh, may God help you to do so at this very instant! Will you not? Blessed Spirit, lead them to do so, for Jesus sake!

IV. I come, in the close of the discourse, to invite you to see THE DELIGHTFUL RESULT CERTIFIED. I think I see this man, attended by his neighbors, going to Siloam. They had seen Jesus place the clay upon the mans eyes and they had heard Him say, Go to Siloam. They volunteer to go and act as guides to the blind. Curiosity inspires them. He reaches the pool. He goes down the steps. He is close to the water. He stoops his head. He washes his eyes. What will come of it? The clay is gone, but what else has happened? Suddenly the man lifts up his face and cries, I see! I see! What a shout went up from them all. What a wonder! What a marvel! Hosanna! Blessed be God! The man cries, It is true, I have washed and I can see!

This man could see at once . He washed and his blindness was gone! Eternal life is received in a moment. It does not take the tick of a clock to justify a sinner. O Soul, the moment you believe, you have passed from death to life! Quick as a flash of lightning the effectual change is worked, the eternal life enters and casts out death. Oh, that the Lord would work salvation now! This man could see at once. We read of another blind man, that he first saw men as trees walking and only after a time saw every man clearly. But this man saw clearly at once! Oh that you who hear me this day would believe and live at once!

This man knew that he could see . He had no question about that, for he said, One thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see. Possibly some of you have been decent people all your lives and yet you do not know whether you are saved or not. This is poor religion. Cold comfort! Saved and not know it? Surely it must be as lean a salvation as that mans breakfast when he did not know whether he had eaten it or not. The salvation which comes of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is conscious salvation. Your eyes shall be so opened that you shall no longer question whether you can see. He could see and he knew that he could see. Oh, that you would believe in Jesus, and know that you have believed and are saved! Oh, that you might get into a new world and enter upon a new state of things altogether! May that which was totally unknown to you before be made known to you at this hour by Almighty Grace!

And other people perceived that he could see. They could not understand it. Some said, This is he, but others would only say, It is like he. A man with opened eyes is very different from the same man when he is blind. If we were to take any friend we know who has no eyes and suddenly eyes were to be placed in his countenance, we should probably find his expression so altered that we should hardly think him the same person and, therefore, the cautious neighbors only said, He is like he. Yet they were all of them sure he could see! None of the Pharisees said to him, Are you sure you can see? Those twinkling eyes of his, so full of fun and witand sarcasmwere proofs most plain that he could see. Ah, your friends at home will know that you are converted if it is really so! They will hardly need tellingthey will find it out. The very way you eat your dinner will show it. It will! You eat it with gratitude and seek a blessing on it!

The way you will go to bed will show it. I remember a poor man who was converted, but he was dreadfully afraid of his wifenot the only man in the world that is in that fearand therefore he was fearful that she would ridicule him if he knelt to pray. He crept upstairs in his stockings that he might not be heard, but might have a few minutes prayer before she knew he was there. His scheme broke down. His wife soon found him out. Genuine conversion is no more to be hidden than a candle in a dark room! You cannot hide a cough. If a man has a cough, he must cough and if a man has Grace in his heart, he will show Grace in his life. Why should we wish to hide it? Oh, may the Lord give you such an eye-opening this day that friends and relatives shall know that your eyes have been opened!

Observe that the restored one never lost his sight again. This man did not become blind again. Christs cures are not temporary. I have heard of many cases of late of people who have been exceedingly happy because they fancied that they were perfectly restored. The cure lasted a week and then they were as bad as ever. Fancy can do great things for a season but Christs cures last forever. Never an eye that Christ opened ever went blind again! We believe in being born again, but not in becoming unborn. I know that whatever the Lord does shall be forever. O my Friends, I have nothing to preach but eternal salvation! Come to Christ and He will work in you an effectual cure. Trust Him wholly, for in Him there is everlasting life!

This man, when he received sight, was willing to lose everything in consequence. The Jews cast him out of the synagogue, but when Jesus found him, the man did not fret about the Jews. I think I can see his face when Jesus found himhow happy he was as he worshipped his Benefactor! Poor soul, poor soul, you have been cast out of the synagogue! Oh, he says, dont pity me. They may cast me out of 50 synagogues now that Christ has found me! What care I for synagogues now that I have found the Messiah? When I was in the synagogue I was a blind man and now I am out of the synagogue, but I have my sight! When you become a Christian the world will hate you and revile you, but what of that? Some will have no more to do with you. This may be the best turn they can do you!

We had a lady of title in our membership onceand a very gracious Sister she was. I had some little fear about her at first, lest the great ones should draw her away from the Truth of God. Soon after her Baptism, she remarked that a certain noble family had given her the cold shoulder and others who were very intimate had ceased to call. She took it as a matter of course and only remarked that it made her own course all the more easy, for she had not, now, the pain of hearing their ungodly conversation, nor even the responsibility of severing the connection! The world has done its best for the child of God when it has cast him out! Its excommunications are better than its communications! The outside of the worlds house is the safest side of it for us. That we love the Brethren and that the world hates us are two good evidences of Grace for which a man may be grateful. Let us go forth unto Christ outside the camp, bearing His reproach.

What a wonderful thing the Lord Jesus had done for this man and what a wonderful thing He is prepared to do for all who trust Him! It had been a work of creation. The mans eyes were no eyes, Jesus created sight in them! To heal a limb is one thing, but to make an eye, or to enable that which was only the mere fashion of an eye to become an organ of perception is a greater thing by far. To save a soul is a work of creation. We are created anew in Christ Jesus. It was also a work of resurrection. Those eyes had been dead and now the Lord Jesus raised them from the dead!

The Lord God Almighty can work creation at this moment. He can produce resurrection this day! And why should He not? This day we commemorate both of these Divine works. This first day of the week was the beginning of the creation of God. It is also the day in which our Lord rose from the dead, as the first fruits of them that slept. This Lords Day commemorates the beginning of creation and of resurrection. Let us pray the Almighty Lord to manifest among us the works of God this day! O Lord, regenerate, illuminate, pardon and save those who are here presentand thus glorify Your Son! Amen and amen!

**PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMONJohn 9.** HYMNS FROM OUR OWN HYMN BOOK916, 502, 505. Adapted from The C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307  
Sermon #1393 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

SPEAK FOR YOURSELFA CHALLENGE!   
NO. 1393

**DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, DECEMBER 9, 1877, DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**He is of age; ask him: he shall speak for himself. John 9:21.**

THOSE of you, dear Friends, who were present this morning, will remember that our subject was Jesus Christ Himself. [No. 1888, Vol. 23. Jesus Christ Himself.] We dwelt upon His blessed Person. Our faith is fixed on Him, our affections are drawn to Him, our hopes all bend toward Him. Though everything He said or did is precious, yet Jesus Himself stands first in our judgment. To know Him, to believe Him, to love Him is the very essence of our Christianity. Tonight we change our theme. There is an himself in our text this eveningan himself, tis true of a much humbler order. How do we each stand for himself?

Our individuality and the personal responsibilities which fall upon ourselves in reference to Christ must not be lost sight of. If, for instance, a spiritual miracle has been worked upon us and we are obliged to confess. No, if we are delighted to confess that He has opened our eyesthen we are bound, especially those of us who are of ripe understanding, who may be said to be of full agewe are bound to bear our own personal testimony for Him. The allegation and the appeal may alike apply to each one of us, He is of age; ask him: he shall speak for himself. Jesus Christ Himself bore our sins, as we heard this morning. He gave Himself for us. He served us, not by proxy, but by personal consecration.

He served us, not by alms doled out pitifully, but by His life surrendered as a Sacrifice to God cheerfully. If He has thus commended His love to us, what less can we do in return than bear our own brave, bold, personal testimony for Him? What a parallel there is between this mans case and our own. He had suffered from a grievous, personal evil. He was born blind! So we were born in sinsin had cast its blindness over our faculties from our very birth! We shall never forget the midnight of our nature. We could not see even the beauties of Christ Himself, though resplendent as the sun at noonday, so blind were we!

This man was personally delivered from his ailment and so have we been delivered, I trust. I know many here who can say that whereas they were blind, now they see! You have received, as the blind man did, a personal blessing, being endowed with sight. The blemish that blighted your life has been healed! It is not that somebody sees for you and tells you what he sees, but you see for yourself. It is not merely imputed to you that you see because you have been told what somebody else saw. No, you have no proxy in the matter, no sponsor in the business. You yourself are conscious that a work of Divine Grace has been worked upon you, whereas you were blind now you seeand you know it!   
The blind man was cured through personal obedience to Christs command. He heard a special call addressed to himGo, wash in the pool. He went and came back seeing! And many here present have heard the voice which says, Believe and live, and it has come to you, not as a general exhortation, but as a special direction. You have believed and you live! You have washed and you have come back seeing! Well now, all this is personal, therefore your Lord and Master has a right to expect a personal testimony from you of His power to save! You are of age. When any ask you, I trust you will speak for yourself. Speak up and speak out for your Master without hesitancy or fear!

I. THERE ARE TIMES WHEN SAVED MEN ARE POSITIVELY COMPELLED TO SPEAK FOR THEMSELVES. They must of necessity bear their personal witness. What else can they do when friends desert them? Father and mother were quite willing to acknowledge this young manthat he was their sonquite willing to bear their witness that he was born blind. But they would not go any farther. They could have gone farther if they liked, but they were afraid of that sentence of excommunication which the Jews had already agreed uponthat if any man confessed that Jesus was the Christ he should be put out of the synagogue.

So, feeling very little compunction in declining to take any responsibility themselves, for they had great and probably well-founded confidence in their sons power to take care of himself, they did, as it were, abandon him. They threw upon him the stress and burden of giving a plain answer which would have incurred such disgrace. They backed out of it. They had no wish whatever to become the subjects of persecution because their blind son had been blessed with sight. The young man who had been blind must, therefore, do battle, himself, for the good Lord who had bestowed so great a benefit on him. Ask him, said his parents, he will speak for himself.

There are times with many young people when their parents, if they do not frown upon their religion, at least turn the cold shoulder to them and show no sympathy with their faith or their feelings. Some of us are rejoiced when our sons are converted. We are not ashamed to stand by them and to defend them and to protect them whatever may come of it. But there are fathers and mothers who have no liking for the things of God and so their children, if they are converted, have a hard time of it. I have known even some who profess to be disciples of Christ hold back very suspiciously and leave others to champion the Masters cause when it has come to a hard push.

In a conversation you expected to hear that old gentleman speak up bravely for the truth of the Gospel but he did not. You knew he was a member of a Christian Church, yet he very cautiously held his tongue for a long time and then quietly said something about not casting pearls before swine. Probably he had not any pearls, or possibly he was a swine himself. How else could you account for such awful cowardice? But some have known in youthful ardor what it is to be compelled to come out so defiantly as to risk the charge of presumption because everybody else seemed to be deserting the doctrine! It is their duty to defend!

It is lamentable how many seem afraid of being compromised. Ask him; ask him; he will speak for himself, is their puny pretext while they prudently retire behind the bushes out of rifle range, never coming forward unless, perhaps, you should win the victorywhen they would most likely come up to share the spoils. Whenever a man is placed in such a condition that he finds himself deserted in the battle for Christ by those who ought to be at his back, then let him disdain retreat and say right gallantly, I am of age: I will speak for myself. In the name of God I will bear my witness. Christian men, however reserved and backward their natural disposition may be, are compelled to speak out when they are very much pressed.

These Pharisees took this man and questioned him rather closely. They put questions to him by way of examination and cross-examination. What did He do to you? How did He open your eyes? And so on. He does not appear to have been disturbed or disconcerted by the questions. He acquitted himself grandly. Self-contained, quiet, shrewd, immovablehis mind was made up and with a thorough mastery of the situation he was ready for them. He did not hesitate. Well now, I trust if ever you and I are brought to book and questions are put to us, even though it is with intent to entangle us, we shall never be ashamed to acknowledge our Lord or to defend His cause. Surely we might expect to be struck dumb if we were ever ashamed to speak of Christ when we are commanded to do it!

If it comes to a challenge, On whose side am I? shall I ever hesitate to say, I am with Immanuel, the crucified Savior? If ever they get us into a corner and say, You, also, were with Jesus of Nazareth, oh may God give us Grace to be prompt and not think twiceOf course I was, and of course I am still! He is my Friend, my Savior, my All in Alland by His Grace I will never blush to acknowledge His name! Christians must come out and bear, each man for himself, a clear and distinct testimony. When others revile and slander our Lord Jesus Christ, it becomes imperative of us to commend and extol Him.

They said to this man, Give God the praise. We know that this Man is a sinner. Then he spoke right gratefully with a heart bubbling up with thankfulness. He has opened my eyes! One thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see. But when they went the length of saying, As for this Fellow, we know not from where He is, he spoke up still more heroically. He turned upon his assailants and shamed them with their marvelous ignorance, that you know not from where He is. And he fought for his Master so cuttingly that they were compelled to throw away the weapons of debate and take up stones of abuse with which to stone him! Oh, if they speak ill of Christ, shall we be quiet? Does the oath make our blood chill and shall we never have a word of rebuke for the blasphemer?

Shall we hear the cause of Christ denounced in society and for fear of feeble man refrain our tongue or smooth the matter over? No, let us throw the gauntlet down for Christ and say at once, I cannot and I will not refrain myself. Now the very stones might speak. When my dear Friendmy best of friendsis thus abused, I must and will proclaim the honors of His name. I think Christian people in this country do not take half the liberty they might. If we speak a word of religion or open our Bibles in a railway

carriage or anything of that kind, they say, cants! They may play cards, I suppose, in a public conveyance with impunity. They may make night hideous with their howls. They may utter all sorts of profanities and sing lascivious songs at their sweet will, but we are cants if we take our turn!

In the name of everything that is free we will have our turn! And every now and then I like to sing, to their annoyance, one of the songs of Zion, for they sing the songs of Babylon loud enough to annoy us. Let us tell them that while we live in a land of liberty and rejoice that Christ has made us free, we shall no more be ashamed of His testimonies than they are ashamed of their iniquities! When they begin to sin in private and blush to utter a lewd word, then maybe the timeno, and not even then for us to keep our religion to ourselves. Thus you see there are times when menquiet, reserved menmust speak! They will be traitors if they do not!

I do not think this blind man was at all talkative. The brevity of his replies seems to indicate that he was a cautious speaker, but they drove him to it. He was like the stag at bay. He must fight, however gently disposed. And I think there is scarcely a Christian man or woman that has been able to go all the way to Heaven and yet quietly hide himself and run from bush to bush, creeping into Glory. Christianity and cowardice? What a contradiction in terms! I think there must have been times when you have felt inclined to say to yourself, Well now, cost what it may. I may become an outcast in societyI may be ridiculed by the rough and I may lose respect among the politebut for Jesus Christ and for His Truth I must bear witness. Then has it come true of you, He is of age; ask him: he shall speak for himself.

II. We pass on to another remark. IT IS ALWAYS WELL TO BE PREPARED TO SPEAK FOR YOURSELF. This man was evidently ready to do so. When his parents said, Ask him: he shall speak for himself, I think there was a little twinkle in the fathers eye as he spokemeaning to say, You will catch a Tartar. He can speak for himself. We have known him a good many years while he has been blind and he has always had a pretty sharp reply for anybody that thought him a fool! If you imagine, now, that you will get much out of him by way of food for your mirth or fun, you are mightily mistaken. He will be more likely to spoil you than you to spoil him.

And as they handed him over to the inquisitors, though they were unkind, I suppose they did not feel that he was a tender chicken that needed much of their care. They seemed to say, He is of age, he has come to years of maturity; ask him. Only ask him. He will speak for himself, we guarantee you. And so, indeed, he did! Now I want to have a band of Christian people here much of that sortwho, when asked anything about their holy faith can so answer that they are not likely to be often the butts of ridicule and scorn because they shall prove more than a match for their adversaries! But how, you will ask, are we to be prepared to speak for ourselves?

On the outset it is well to cultivate a general habit of open-heartedness and boldness. We have no need to intrude and push ourselves into peoples way and so become a nuisance and a bore to them. Far from it! Let us walk through the world as those who have nothing to conceal, conscious of the integrity of our own motives and the rightness of our heart before God. We need not to wear armor and sleep in it like the knights of old, knowing rather that the Truth of God unarmed is the best apparel. Let us show that we have nothing to cloak or cover, nothing to disguise or hidethat the Gospel has worked in us such an honesty and frankness of spirit that nothing can make us blush, no foe can cause us fear.

Let us tell what we believe as true because we can vouch for its truthfulness. Let us choke those who laugh at these things, not so much by our combat as by our character. Let us prove to them that we have a solid reason for our simple protestthat we have actually received the Divine Grace in which we earnestly believe! Our words will have weight when they see that the fruit of our piety accords with the flower of our profession. There is great power in this manner of answering the adversary. Take heed however, when you speak, to be sure of your ground.

This man was. Whether He is a sinner or not, he said, I know not. So he offered no opinion on a subject of which he could not be positive. But where he had hard facts on his side there was nothing vague in his statementOne thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see. This is an argument which the most astute fool would find it difficult to answer! As the blind man looked them full in the face it was enough to bewilder them! And there are some of you in whom such a change of character has been worked that you could truthfully say, I know I am not the man I used to be. My manner of life from my youth is well known to many, if they would testify. But now God, by the Gospel of His Son, has opened my eyes, renewed my heart, cleansed my leprosy and set my feet in the way of peace.

Even those who scoff at the Gospel are, in the cases of many of us, unable to deny the remarkable and beneficial change it has worked! There is a moral uprightness, here, about which we need be very rigid. Put your foot down and say, No, you cannot misjudge this. You may philosophize, if you like, but the old-fashioned simple Gospel of the children changed me and made me love that which before I hated, and hate that which before I loved. That is a thing you cannot deny. One thing I know. And it is well, like this man, to have the facts ready to recite. A man named Jesus made clay and anointed my eyes and sent me to the pool to wash. And I washed and I came seeing.

Let them have the plan of salvation, as you first perceived it, very succinctly and plainly put before them. It is often the very best answer you can give to those who question in order to carp and discuss with a view to disparage. Let them have it with the gush you had it at the time. As the Lord has dealt with your soul, so tell them what He has done for you! He must be a hard-hearted man who can sneer at the simple statement of your own conversion. The change it has worked in you will be a fact which he cannot argue with. Though he should think you deluded and call you an enthusiast, there is nothing so difficult for him to grapple with as your

candor and confidence. He opened my eyes. There is the point! He opened my eyes! And if He opened my eyes, then He was of God. God must have been in such a matter as that, for I was born blind.

With meekness and fear give a reason for the hope that is in you to all those who oppose you! Christians should at all times, also, be as this man wasquite ready to bear abuse. You were altogether born in sin. I do not suppose the blind man cared one atom what they had to assert or to insinuate on that score. Their scorn could not deprive him of his sight! He merely shook his head and said, I can see. I can see. I was blind, but now I see. Pharisees may abuse me, but I can see. They may tell me I am this, that and the other, but I can see. My eyes are open! So, child of God, you may often say to yourself, I may be ridiculed. I may be ridiculed as Presbyterian, or Methodist, or Baptist, or Schismatic, or whatever they likeit does not matterI am saved! I am a changed man. The Grace of God has renewed me! Let them call me what they like.

Some people are very sensitive of satire. They shrink from and seem upset at a jest and what men call, chaff, grates upon them. What a baby a man is who cannot brave a fools laugh! Stand upright, young man, and when you go back to that drapery establishment show a bold front. You that go to work at some of the big factories and have been quizzed and bantered because of your religion, gather up your courage and say, Here I am, five feet ten high, or six feet, or whatever else it may be, and shall I be ashamed to be laughed at for Christ? Pooh! You are not worth the boots you stand upright in if you are put down by their play. I have no doubt many a soldier in the barracks finds it hard to keep up his spirits when comrades taunt him with scoff and scorn in their rough way. But after all, dear Friends, should not common manliness nerve us with fortitude?

When we have got hold of a thing that we believe to be right, we should be greenhorns to let it go for fear of a giddy prank or a paltry grimace. Let them laugh! They will be tired of teasing us when they find out that our temper triumphs over their senseless tricks. Let them find merriment if they can, poor simpletons. I sometimes feel more inclined to smile than to be sad over the jokes that are coined at my expense. Their playful sallies may relieve some of the pitiful sorrows that light unawares on their lonely hours. Melancholy holds carnival in this mad world. Ghosts and goblins haunt the merriest brain! What if for once, now and then, they get a living object for their sport, and I, myself, become the butt of their buffoonery there is no fear that it will harm methe only danger is that it will hurt them. Be of that mind, dear Friends, and do not care for any of their silliness.

This man born blind whose eyes were opened was prepared to meet the Pharisees and speak up for himself because he felt intense gratitude to Him who had bestowed on him the priceless gift of sight. You see all through the narrative that though he did not know much about Jesus, he felt consciously that He was his true Friend and he stuck to Him through thick and thin. Now, you and I may not know much about our Lordnot one tenth of what we hope to knowbut He has opened our eyes! He has forgiven our sins! He has saved our souls! And, by His Grace, we will stick to Him, come what may.

If your gratitude to Him is always at its full heat, I am not afraid but whenever you are taunted, whenever, at any time, you are put to the test, you will be faithful to your Friend and able to say with a sound conscience

*Im not ashamed to own my Lord,   
Or to defend His cause   
Maintain the honor of His Word,   
The glory of His Cross.*

III. EVERY SAVED MAN AND WOMAN SHOULD WILLINGLY SPEAK FOR HIMSELF ABOUT CHRIST. I have said that you will be driven to it. I have also bid you to be prepared for it when you are driven to it. But now I have to urge that you ought willingly to do it. Are we not all debtors to Christ if, indeed, He has saved us? How can we acknowledge that debt if we are ashamed of Him? His testimony isHe that believes and is baptized, shall be saved. Does the Baptism save us? No, verily, but he that believes is bound to be baptized that he may thus confess His Lord! Baptism is the answer of a good conscience towards God. It is the disciples grateful response to his Masters gracious call. You know how it is put He that with his heart believes, and with his mouth makes confession of Him, shall be saved.

I may not lawfully forbear to confess if I inwardly believe. Why should I? If I owe so much to Him shall Ican Ithink of not confessing Him? I am sure if there were a commandment issued that we were not to acknowledge our Lord, that we were to tell no man, that we must hide the secret from kinsfolk, friends and neighborsto me it would be most distressing. But He does bid us acknowledge Him and bear our testimony to Him. We hail the command! We account it most seemly and fittingand we cheerfully obey it. Is it not so? How ought we each, willingly, to speak up for Christ because we, each one of us, know most about what He has done for us! No one here knows all that He has done for me. I think I hear you say, Tis true, but then you do not know what He did for us.

No, nowe are over head and ears debtors to Him. Oh, what mercy He has shown to some of us! If the world could know our state before conversion it might almost make our hair stand upon end to read the story of our lives. How the Grace of God has changed us! O what a change! What a change! Should ravens become doves and lions become lambs, your pretentious scholars might expound or mystify the phenomenon in a word or two of Greek terminology. But this conversion comes across us every day! And scientific men are silent, while scoffers meet it only to make mouths at it. The change is infinitely greater than when dry bones are raised and clothed with flesh! When stones begin to melt and run into streams, it is nothing in point of marvel to the regeneration we have experienced!

We must talk about it! We know more about it than others and we are bound to be the honest narrators of the wondrous narrative. The more individual testimonies are borne to Christ, the more weight there is in the accumulated force of the great aggregate! If I, in the mass, bear witness for Christ in the name of you all, saying, The Lord has done great things for us whereof we are glad, I hope there is some honor to Christ and

some influence to take effect. But if 10, 20, 30, 50 were to rise one after the other and say, The Lord has done great things for me, and each one were to tell his own tale, how much more conviction would be worked!

I have heard of a lawyer in the United States who attended a testimonial meeting among his neighbors. He was a skeptic, if not a thorough unbeliever, when he entered the place. He sat with his pencil and paper and took notes of the statements of his neighbors. When he, afterwards, reviewed the evidence, he said to himself, Now, if I had these 12 or 13 persons in the witness box on my side, I should feel quite sure of carrying my case. I live among them. They are not the most learned people I ever met with, but they are very honest, trustworthy people. They are plain spoken and though each one has told his tale, they all come to the same point and all bear witness to one factthat there is such a thing as the Grace of Godand that it does change the heart. Well, he said, I am bound to believe it after all this testimony.

And he did believe, by Gods Grace, and he became a Christian! Of this I am certainthat if Christian people were more often to tell their testimony to the power of Jesus Christ in their hearts, the cumulated witness would tell on many a thoughtless mind and multitudes would come to believe in Jesus! The Holy Spirit delights to acknowledge and bless such true stories as you can tell! Do I hear one and another of you say, They can do without my story? No, my Friend, I would answer we cannot dispense with your evidence because the diversities of their experience are as numerous as the individuals converted, although there is unity in the operation of the Holy Spirit.

Our Lord opened the eyes of many blind men. He unstopped the ears of many deaf people. He loosed the tongues of many that were dumb and we cannot count how many lepers He cleansed. But each patient could tell you his own symptoms and the minute particulars of his own healing. Your story, too, has its special interest while it contributes to the general narrative. At least you would be sorry if it were not so. The Lord shall count, when He writes up the people, that this man was born there. I know you would like your name to be mentioned, then, and I think it would be worth your while, now, to mention the mercies you have received in just the manner you received them.

To speak for myself, I believe that God, in converting me, manifested a way of His own that exactly suited my need. My case was so like yours as to produce sympathy, but so unlike yours as to provoke special gratitudeand thus it was, doubtless, with each one of you. Your career, your character, your circumstances differed in each instance. As a great master seldom paints the same picture twice, so the Master Artist, God, seldom, (I think never), works precisely the same in any two hearts. There is a difference and in that difference there is an illustration of the manifold wisdom of God. Therefore we need your story. Besides, your testimony may touch the heart of somebody like yourself.

Little Mary over yonder says, Well, I am nobody, only a nurse-maid. The Lord Jesus Christ has cleansed me and made me His. Tis true, but you can do without my tale. No, Mary, we cannot. Perhaps your testimony will exactly suit another little lass like yourself. A little maid waited on Naamans wife. Who but she could have told her mistress that there was healing for Naaman or that he could go to a Prophet in Israel and be made whole? Tell your story gently and quietly and at proper times, but let it be known. Oh, says the old man, but I am so feeble. You could dispense with my saying anything. No, father William, we cannot. You are just the man whose few words have full weight. You meet, every now and then, with choice opportunities of leading souls to the Savior.

I am too old to think about these things, says one. But you might tell how the Lord has dealt with you in your old age and maybe it will strike home. Why, you working men, if you were all to speak up for Christ, as I know many of you do, what an effect would be produced! What an influence you would have on others like you! Of course, when they hear us preach, they say, Oh well, you know, he is a parson. He says it professionally. It is his business to say it. But when you tell of what the Lord has done for you, it becomes the talkit is repeated over and over again! I know what Tom says when he gets home. He says to his wife Mary, What do you think of that Jack that I have been working with?

Why, he has been talking to me about his soul and he says his sin is forgiven him. And he seems such a happy man. You know that he used to drink and swear the same as I do, but oh, he is a wonderfully different man now! And I should say, from what I see, there must be something in it. Well, he asked me home, the other night, and his place is so different from ours. There, you hold your tongue, Mary will answer up pretty sharply! If you brought your wages home to me regularly every week, I could lay them out for you better. Ah, says he, and that is what I have been thinking. It is just because he is a religious man that he brings his wages home, and I think there is something real about his conversion, do you know?

He does not drink as I do. He does not mix up with all manner of larks and follies. I should not have thought so much of it had the parson spoke to me. But now I really do think there is something good and genuine in the Grace of God he talks about. You and I had better go next Sunday evening to the Tabernacle, or somewhere else, and hear about it for ourselves. Ah, there are many, many souls brought to Christ in that way! We

cannot do without your testimony then, Jack, because your conversation is suitable to your own class. And you, Your Ladyship, you say, I love the Lord, but I do not think I possibly could say anything in my circle and walk of life. Couldnt you? Ah, but I am sure you will easily surmount this little difficulty if you attain a little more growth in Divine Grace!

We had one among us whose rank entitled her to move in an upper sphere of society, but her choice enabled her to prefer the humble companionship of the Church. Her silvery locks, some of you well remember. She has left us now. She has gone home to Glory. Among the aristocracy her lot was cast. Yet with gentle, quiet, bland simplicity she introduced the Gospel wherever she went. Many and many have come to these pews to listen to your minister, who had never been here but for her calm, beautiful, unobtrusive, holy lifeand the nerve with which, anywhere, at

any time, she could sayYes, I am a Christian. What is more, I am a Nonconformist. And what you will think worse, I am a Baptist. And what you will think worst of all, I am a member of the Tabernacle. She never blushed to acknowledge our blessed Redeemers name, nor to acknowledge and befriend the lowliest of His disciples. Her faith you do well to follow! In whatever circle we move, let us strive to become centers of influence.

Thus have I tried to show you, dear Friends, that each one has a witness to beara privilege to be prized no less than a duty to be dischargedbecause a gift you have received qualifies you for a service you are asked to render. Suppose that the soldier, when he marched to battle were to say, I need not load my gun. I need not fire in the day of battle, seeing that on the right and on the left there are good marksmen picking off the enemy. Yes, but when you are in full musketry fire your bullet has got its billet and the billet for your bullet is not the billet for any other bullet! Therefore let it go, let it go! We must all fire, Brothers and Sisters! Not some, but all must fire and our charge must be this, One thing I know, whereas I was blind, now I see. Therefore do I bear witness to my Lord. Let who will, deny it, He has opened my eyes.

IV. Lastly, AS EVERY CHRISTIAN, BEING OF AGE, HAS TO SPEAK FOR HIMSELF, WE MEAN TO DO IT. WE MEAN TO DO IT. For my own part, I mean to do so. That which I believe to be true I have spoken to you from my youth up. I have offended a good many at times. I shall offend a good many more, I hope, because that is not a matter I have ever taken into consideration. Is this true? Is it a necessary truth? Is it essential that it be spoken plainly and published widely? Away it goes like a hand grenade flung into the midst of the crowd! May every minister of Christand I trust the rightness of the thing will be more and more recognizedtake courage to speak for his Master! Speak out, never with bated breath, but in the name of Him that sent himin the name of Godwith a courage that befits his commission!

A trembling lip and a coward countenance in a minister show him to be unworthy of the office which he pretends to sustain. We must set our faces like a flint and bear testimony to the Truth of Godto the whole Truth of Godand nothing but the Truth as far as God shall teach it to us. And will not you, my fellow members, and you Christian people here of all sortswill you not, also, take up this resolutionWe are of age and we mean to speak for ourselves? You cannot all preach. I hope you will not all try. What a world of tumult and disorder we should have if every man and woman felt a call to preach! We would have a Church all mouth and then there would be a vacuum somewhere. There would be no hearers left if everybody turned preacher!

No, it is not to seek precedence in public assemblies, but to exert influence in private society that you are called! By a good conversation, with a speech seasoned with salt, at home among friends, kinsfolk, or companionsto the dozen or to onemake known what love has done, what Grace has done, what Christ has done! Make it known! Make it known among your servants, among your children, among your trades people wherever you go, make it knownmake it known! Wear your regimentals wherever you go! I do not like to see a Christian soldier ashamed to show the scarlet. Oh, no, put it on! It is an honor to serve His Majesty. If there is anything in Christianity that you are ashamed of, get out of it!

Do not pretend to believe if you are afraid of betraying your professionbut if you receive the Gospel and believe it as the Revelation of Godnever blush to admit it, but be brave to avow it at all times and in all places. Well, says one, I am so retiring. I know you are, Brother. Come, then, drop a little of your modesty and distinguish yourself a little more for your manliness. Have I not, sometimes, told you of the soldier who was retiring in the day of battle, but they shot him for a coward? It will not do to be retiring when duty shall urge, or where danger shall summon you to the front. I have heard of a man with the face of a lion and the heart of a deer. Beware of a too retiring disposition. Disreputable things are sometimes disguised in polite words and so diffidence may be dastardly and caution may be cowardly.

Be valiant for your Lord and Master! Play not the traitors part by your silence as you would scorn to do it by your speech *Ashamed of Jesus?! That dear Friend   
On whom my hopes of Heaven depend!   
No! When I blush, be this my shame,   
That I no more revere His name.*

Break the ice, then, and speak to somebody about this blessed message before you go to rest. Will you resolve to do so? Take care that you defer not till your heart grows cool and the words you purpose freeze on your lips. No, but do it and the thing will grow upon you. Presently you will greet the opportunity as much as you now shrink from the necessity. It will bless your life. I think it is Horatius Bonar who says

*He lives long who lives well!   
All else is being flung away.   
He lives longest who can tell   
Of true things truly done each day.   
Be what you seem. Live your creed.   
Hold up to earth the torch divine!   
Be what you pray to be made.   
Let the great Masters steps be yours.   
Fill up each hour with what will last.   
Buy up the moments as they go.   
The life above, when this is past,   
Is the ripe fruit of life below.   
Waste not your being! Give to Him   
Who freely gave it, freely give.   
Else is that being but a dream,   
Tis but to be and not to live.*

Dear Friends, some of you who are Believers in Christ have never yet confessed Him! I hope that you will resolve from this night to declare yourselves His disciples and become His faithful followers. You are of age. Yes, says one, I am of rather full age, for I am over fifty. Others of you are older than that and though you are Believers in Christ you have never confessed Him! It will not do, Brothers and Sisters. It will not do. It will not do to die with. It does not do to think of now. When He comes, happy

shall they be that were not ashamed of Him! But when He comes in His Glory with all His holy angelstrembling shall take hold on those that thought and said they loved Him but never dared to bear reproach for His names sake or to suffer shame for the Gospel! I hope these reflections will make you very uneasy, and constrain you to say, Please God, I will join a Christian Church before this week is over. If you are a Believer in Christ, I charge you not to trifle with the voice of conscience, but to pay your vows to the Most High!

Alas! Alas! There are some that cannot speak for Christ in any way whatever, because they do not know Him! He never opened your eyes. Never try to talk of matters you do not understand, nor pretend to bear witness to mercies you have not experienced. Remember the Christ we preach is not only the Christ of history who was crucified, dead and buried, but He is a living Christ at this moment, still among us by His Spiritchanging our natures, turning and guiding the current of our thoughts and lives, purifying our wishes and motives, teaching us to love each other, admonishing us to be pure, entreating us to be gentle, giving us a heart to aspire after those things that are above instead of groveling among those things that are below!

Now, if you have never met this Christ, you cannot bear witness to His power. But He is to be found! Trust in Him! He is DivineHe is the Son of God! His blood is the blood of the great Sacrifice of which Moses spoke and of which all the Prophets bore witness. He is the last great Sacrifice of God. Come and trust Him. And when you trust Him, that trust shall be like the womans touching of the hem of His garment. No sooner had she touched Him than she was made whole, for virtue went out of Him. That virtue still goes out of His sacred Person whenever the simple touch of faith brings the sinner into contact with the Savior! May the Lord lead you to believe in Jesus and when you have believed through Divine Grace, come forward and confess His name! So shall you be numbered with His saints now and in Glory everlasting!

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SIMPLE BUT SOUND   
NO. 2955

A SERMON   
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 1905.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, IN THE YEAR 1863.

**One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see. John 9:25.**

DID it ever strike you how wonderfully calm and collected our Lord must have been at this time? He had been preaching in the Temple, talking to a multitude of Jews. They grew furious with Hima number of stones which were used in repairing the temple were lying about on the floor and they took up those stones to cast at Him. He, by some means, forced a passage and escaped out of the midst of themand when He came to the gate of the Temple with His discipleswho seem to have followed Him in the lane which He was able to make through the throng of His foesHe saw this blind man and, as if there had been no bloodthirsty foes at His heels, He stopped! He stopped as calmly as if an attentive audience had been waiting upon His lipsto look at the blind man. The disciples stopped, too, but they paused to ask questions.

How like ourselves! We are always ready to talk. How unlike the Master! He was always ready to act. The disciples wanted to know how the man came to be blind, but the Master meant to deliver the man from his blindness. We are very apt to be entering into speculative theories about the origin of sin or the cause of certain strange Providences, but Christ is always for seeking out, not the cause, but the remedynot the reason of the disease, but the way by which the disease can be cured! The blind man is brought to Him. Christ asks him no questions, but, spitting upon the dust, He stoops down and works the dust into mortar. And when He has done this, taking it up in His hands, He applies it to what Bishop Hall calls the eye-holes of the man (for there were no eyes there), and plasters them up so that the spectators look on and see a man with clay upon his eyes. Go, said Christ to the pool of Siloam and wash. Some kind friends led the man who was only too glad to go! Unlike Naaman, who made an objection to wash in Jordan and be clean, the blind man was glad enough to avail himself of the Divine remedy. He went. He washed the clay from his eyes and he received his sighta blessing he had never known before! With what rapture he gazed upon the trees! With what delight he lifted up his face to the blue sky! With what pleasure he beheld the costly, stately fabric of the Temple and, I think, afterwards, with what interest and pleasure he would look into the face of Jesusthe Man who had given him his sight!

It is not my objective to expound this miracle, tonight, but well it sets forth, in sacred emblem, the state of human nature. Man is blind. Father Adam put out our eyes. We cannot see spiritual things. We have not the spiritual opticthat has gonegone forever. We are born without it born blind! Christ comes into this world and His Gospel is despicable in mens esteem even as spittlethe thought of it disgusts most men. Gentility turns on its heel and says it will have nothing to do with it. And pomp and glory all say that it is a contemptible and base thing! Christ puts the Gospel on the blind eyesa Gospel which, like clay, seems as if it would make men more blind than beforebut it is through the foolishness of preaching that Christ saves them that believe! The Holy Spirit is like Siloams pool. We go to Him, or rather He comes to usthe convictions of sin produced by the Gospel are washed away by the cleansing influences of the Divine Comforter and, beholdwe who were once so blind that we could see no beauty in Divine things and no excellence in the crown jewels of God, begin to see things in a clear and Heavenly lightand rejoice exceedingly before the Lord!

The man no sooner sees than he is brought before adversaries and our text is a part of his testimony in defense of the Prophet who had worked the miracle upon him, whom, not as yet did he understand to be the Messiah.

One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see. Although the parables would furnish us an admirable topic, we prefer to keep to this verse and linger upon the various reflections it suggests.

I. We have before us, in these words, AN UNANSWERABLE ARGUMENT.   
Every now and then you and I are called into a little debate. Persons do not take things for granted in this age and it is quite as well that they should not. There have been ages in which any impostor could lead the public by the nose. Men would believe anything and any crazy maniac, man or woman, who might stand up and pretend to be the Messiah, would be sure to have some followers! I think this age, with all its faults, is not so credulous as that which has gone by. There is a great deal of questioning. You know that there is some questioning where there should not be any. Men who stand high in official positions and who ought long ago to have had their faith established, or to have renounced their position, have ventured to question the very things they have sworn to defend! There is questioning everywhere, but to my mind it seems, Brothers and Sisters, that we need not be afraid. If the Gospel of God is true, it can stand any quantity of questioning. I am more afraid of the deadness and lethargy of the public mind about religion than any sort of enquiry or controversy about it. As silver tried in the furnace is purified seven times, so is the Word of Godand the more it is put into the furnace, the more it will be purifiedand the more beauteously the pure ore of Revelation will glitter in the sight of the faithful! Never be afraid of a debate. Never go into it unless you are well armed and if you do go into it, mind that you take with you the weapon I am giving you tonight. Though you may be unarmed in every other respect, if you know how to wield this, you may, through Grace, come off more than a conqueror! The argument which this man used was this, Whereas I was blind, now I see.   
It is forcible because it is a personal argument. I heard a person, the other day, use a similar argument. I had been laughing at a certain system of medicineand really, it seems to me pardonable to laugh at all the systems, for I believe they are all almost equally as good or bad as the others. The person in question said, Well, I cant laugh at it. Why? I asked. Because, he said, it cured me. Of course I had no further answer. If this person had really been cured by such-and-such a remedy, it was to him an unanswerable argument! And to me, could he produce many other cases, it would be one that I would not wish to answer. The fact is, the personality of the thing gives it power. People tell us that in the pulpit, the minister should always say, We, as editors do in writing. We would lose all our power if we did! The minister of God is to use the first person singular and constantly to say, I bear eyewitness for God that, in my case, such-and-such a thing has been true. I will not blush nor stammer to say, I bear my personal witness to the truth of Christs Gospel in my own case. Lifted up from sin, delivered from bondage, from doubt, from fear, from despair, from an intolerable agony lifted up to unspeakable joys and into the service of my GodI bear my own testimony and I believe, Christians, that your force in the world will be mightily increased if you constantly make your witness for Christ a personal one!   
I daresay my neighbor over there can tell what Divine Grace has done for him. Yes, but to me, to my own soul, what Grace has done for me will be more of an establishment to me for my faith than what Christ has done for him! And if I stand up and talk of what Gods Grace has done for this or that Brother, it may do very well. But if I can say, I myself have proved it, here is an argument which drives in the nailyes, and clinches it, too! I believe, Christians, if you would prevail when you have to argue, you must do so by bearing a personal testimony to the value of religion in your own case, for that which you despise, you can never persuade others to value. I believed, therefore have I spoken, said the Psalmist. Luther was a man of strong faith and, therefore, he kindled faith in others. That man will never move the world who lets the world move him, but the man who stands firm and says, I know, I know, I know such-and-such a thing because it is burnt in my own inner consciousnesssuch a mans very appearance becomes an argument to convince others!   
Moreover, this mans argument was an appeal to mens senses and hardly anything can be supposed more forcible than that. I was blind, he said, you saw that I was. Some of you noticed me at the gate of the Temple. I was blind, now I see! You can all see that I can look at you you perceive at once that I have eyes, or else I could not see you in the way I do. He appealed to their senses. The argument which our holy religion needs at the present moment is a new appeal to the senses of men. You will ask me, What is that? The holy living of Christians! The change which the Gospel works in men must be the Gospels best argument against all opposers! When the Gospel was first preached in the Island of Jamaica, some of the planters objected grievously to it. They thought it an evil thing to teach the Negroes, but a missionary said, What has been the effect of your Negro servant, Jack, hearing the Gospel? And the planter said, Well, he was constantly drunk before, but he is now sober. I could not trust him, he was a great thiefbut he is now honest. He swore like a trooper before, but now I hear nothing objectionable come from his mouth. Well, said the missionary, then I ask you if a Gospel that has made such a change as that in the man must not be of God and whether you ought not rather to put your influence into its scale than to work against it? When we can bring forward the harlot who has been made chaste. When we can also show the drunk who has been made sober, or, better still, when we can bring the careless, thoughtless man who has been made sedate and steady the man who cared not for God, nor Christ who has been made to worship God with his whole heart and has put his confidence in Jesus we think we have, then, presented to the world an argument which they will not soon answer!   
If our religion does no more in the world than any other, well then, despise it! Or if men can receive the Gospel of Christ and yet live as they did before and be none the better for it, then tell us at once so that we may be undeceived, for our Gospel is not needed. But we bring forward proofs to you! I hope, my Brothers and Sisters, there are scores and hundreds here who are yourselves the proofs of what the living Gospel can do! Many and many a story could I tell of a man who was a fiend in human shape, a man who, when he came home from work, made it an hour of perilfor his wife and children fled to hide from him! And now that mansee him when he goes homehow he is welcomed by his wife, how the children run down to meet him! You shall now hear him sing more loudly than ever he cursed before! And he who was once a ringleader in the army of Satan has now become a ringleader in the army of Christ! I shall not say where he is sitting tonight. I should need many fingers if I had to point out all such who are here. The Lords is the Glory of it. That is the argument, Whereas I was blind, now I see. Do we not know of some who when they came to make their profession before the Church, said, If anyone had told me, three months ago, that I should be here, I would have knocked him down! If any man had said I would make a profession of faith in Jesus, I would have called him all the names in the world. I, become a canting Methodist? Not I! But Grace has changed the manhis whole life is now different. Those who hate the change cannot help observing it. They hate religion, they say, but if religion does such things as these, the more of it the better!

Now we need, dear Friends, in the dark lanes and alleys of London yes and in our great wide streets, too, where there are large shops and places of businesseswe need to give the groveling world this argument against which there is no disputing, that, whereas there were some men blind, now they see! Whereas they were sinful, now they are virtuous! Whereas they despised God, now they fear Him! We believe this is the best answer for an infidel age. What a deal of writing there has been lately about and against Dr. Colenso! You need not think of reading the replies to his books, for most of them would be the best means of sending people to sleep that have ever been invented! And, after all, they dont answer the manmost of them leave the objections untouched, for there is a speciousness in the objection which is not very easily got over. I think we would be doing much better if, instead of running after this heathenish bishop, we would be running after poor sinners! If, instead of writing books of argument and entering into discussions, we keep on, each in our own sphere, endeavoring to convert souls, imploring the Spirit of God to come down upon us and make us spiritual fathers in Israel, then we may say to the devil, Well, Sir, you have stolen a bishop. You have taken away a clergyman or so. You have robbed us of a leader or two. But, by the help of God we have razed your territories, we have stolen away whole bandshere they are, tens of thousands of men and women who have been reclaimed from the paths of vice, rescued from the destroyer and made servants of the Lord! These are your best arguments. There are no arguments like themliving personal witnesses of what Divine Grace can do!   
II. We will now change our view of the subject. Our text presents us with A SATISFACTORY PIECE OF KNOWLEDGEOne thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see.   
An affectation of knowledge is not uncommon. The desire for knowledge is almost universalthe attainment of it, however, is rare. But if a man shall attain the knowledge of Christ, he may take a high degree in the Gospel, a satisfactory degree, a degree which shall land him safe into Heaven! Put the palm branch in his hand and the eternal song in his mouthwhich is more than any worldly degrees will ever do. One thing I know. The skeptic will sometimes overwhelm you with his knowledge. You simple minds that have read but little, and whose business occupations take up so much of your time that you probably never will be very profound students, are often in danger of being attacked by men who can use long words, who profess to have read very great books and to be very learned in sciencesthe names of which you have scarcely ever heard. Meet them, but be sure you meet them with a knowledge that is better than theirs! Dont attempt to meet them on their own ground meet them with this knowledge. Well, you can say, I know that you understand more than I do. I am only a poor unlettered Christian, but I have a something in here that answers all your arguments, whatever they may be. I do not know what geology says. I may not understand all about history. I may not comprehend all the strange things that are daily coming to light, but one thing I knowit is a matter of absolute consciousness to methat I, who was once blind, have been made to see. Then just state the difference that the Gospel made in you. Say that once, when you looked at the Bible, it was a dull, dry book. That when you thought of prayer, it was a dreary piece of work. Say that now the Bible seems to you a honeycomb full of honey and that prayer is your vital breath! Say that once you tried to get away from God and could see no excellence in the Divine Character, but that now you are striving and struggling to get nearer to God. Say that once you despised the Cross of Christ and thought it a vain thing for you to flee tobut that now you love it and would sacrifice your all for it! And this undoubted change in your own consciousness, this supernatural work in your own innermost spirit shall stand you in the stead of all the arguments that can be drawn from all the sciences! Your one thing shall overthrow their thousand things if you can say, Whereas I was blind, now I see.   
Says one, I dont know how that can be. Let me suppose that someone has just discovered galvanism [electric shock] and I have had a galvanic shock. Now, 20 people come and say, There is no such thing as galvanism. We do not believe in it for a moment. And there is one gentleman who proves by Latin that there cannot be such a thing as galvanism. And another proves it mathematically to demonstration. And 20 others prove it in their different ways. I would say, Well, I cannot answer you in Latin, I cannot overthrow you in logic, I cannot contradict that syllogism of yours, but one thing I knowI have had a shock of it that I do know. And I take it that my personal consciousness of having experienced a galvanic shock will be a better answer than all their learned sayings. And so, if you have ever felt the Spirit of God come into contact with you, (and that is something quite as much within the reach of our consciousness as even the shock of electricity and galvanism), and if you can say of that, One thing I know, which cannot be beaten out of me, which cannot be hammered out of my own consciousness, that whereas I was blind, now I seeif you can say that, it will be a quite sufficient reply to all that the skeptic may bring against you!   
How often, dear Brothers and Sisters, are you assailed, not only by the skeptic, but by our very profound doctrinal brethren? I know some very great doctrinal friends, who, because our experience may not tally with theirs, will sit down and say, Ah, you dont know the power of vital godliness. And they will write very severe things against us and say that we dont know the great secret, and dont understand the inner life. You never need trouble yourself about these braggartslet them talk on till they are finished. But if you do want to answer them, do it humbly by saying, Well, you may be right and I may be mistaken, but yet I think I can say, One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see. And I have known them to sometimes go to the length of saying if we dont hold all their points of Doctrine and go the whole 18 ounces to the pound, as they doif we are content with 16 and keep to Gods weights and Gods measuresAh, those people cannot be truly converted Christians, they are not so high in Doctrine as we are. Well, we can answer them with this, One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see.   
And you young Christians sometimes meet with older Believers, very good people, too, and very wise, and they will put you into their sieves. Some of our Brothers and Sisters always carry a sieve with them and if they meet a young Brother, they will try to sift him and they will often do it very unkindlyask him knotty questions. I always compare this to a mans trying a newborn childs health by putting nuts into his mouth and if he cannot crack them, he will say, He is not healthy. Well, I have known very difficult questions asked about such things as sublapsarianism, or supralapsarianism, or about the exact difference between justification and sanctification, or something of that sort. Now, I advise you to get all that sort of knowledge you can but, putting all of it together, it is not nearly equal in value to this small bit of knowledge, One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see.   
I have studied many and many an old Puritan book and tried to enrich my mind with the far-sought lore of the writers of them, but I tell you there are times when I would give up everything I have ever learned, by nights and days of study, if I could but say for a certainty, One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see. And even now, though I have no doubt about my own acceptance in Christ and my having been brought to see, yet, compared with this piece of knowledge, I count all the excellency of human knowledgeyes, and all the rest of Divine knowledge, tooto be but dross and dung, for this is the one thing necessary, the one soul-saving piece of knowledge, One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see.   
My dear Hearer, do you see a beauty in Christ? Do you see a loveliness in the Gospel? Do you perceive an excellence in God, your Father? Can you read your title clear to mansions in the skies? You could not do this once. Once you were a stranger to these thingsyour soul was dark as the darkest night without a star, without a ray of knowledge or of comfortbut now you see seek after more knowledge but, if you still cannot attain it, and if you tremble because you cannot grow as you would, remember this is enough to know for all practical purposes, One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see.   
III. We will again change our view of the subject. This is a MODEL CONFESSION OF FAITH.   
This blind man did not do as some of you would have done. When he found his eyes, he did not use them to go and hunt out a quiet corner so that he might hide himself in ithe came out boldly before his neighbors and then before Christs enemies, and said, One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see. Why, there are some of you who, I hope, have Grace in your heart, but you have not courage to confess it! You have not put on your regimentals. I suppose you call yourselves members of the Church militant, but you are not dressed in the true scarletyou do not come forward and wear the Masters badge and openly fight under His banner. I think it is very unkind of you and very dishonoring to your Master. There are not many who speak for Him and it is a shame that you should hold your tongue. If He has given you eyes, I am sure you ought to give Him your tongue! If He has taught you to see things in a new light, I am sure you ought not to be unwilling to confess Him before men! After so much kindness in the past, it is cruel ingratitude to be ashamed to confess Him. You do not know how much you would comfort the ministerconverts are our sheaves and you who are not added to the Church, do, as it were, rob us of our reward! No doubt you will be gathered into Gods garner, but then we do not know anything about thatwe want to see you gathered into Gods garner

here! We want to hear you boldly say, Whereas I was blind, now I see.   
Besides, you cannot tell how much good you might do to others. Your example would move your neighbors. Your confession would be valuable to saints and might be a help to sinners. Your taking the decisive step might lead others to take it. Your example might be just the last grain cast into the scale and might lead others to decide for the Lord. I am ashamed of you, who were once blind, yet now see, but do not like to say so! I pray you lay the matter to heart and, before long come out and say, Yes, I cannot withhold it any longer. Whereas I was once blind, now I see!   
Well, says one, I have often thought of joining the church, but I cant be perfect. Now this man did not say, I was once imperfect and now I am perfect. Oh, no! If you were perfect, we could not receive you into church fellowship because we are all, ourselves, imperfectand we would fall out with you if we took you in. We dont want those perfect gentlemenlet them go to Heaventhat is the place for perfect ones, not here!   
Well, says someone else, I have not grown in religion as I should like. I am afraid I am not as saintly as I would desire to be. Well, Brother, strive after a high degree of holiness, but remember that a high degree of holiness is not necessary to a profession of your faith! You are to make a profession as soon as you have any holinessthe high degree of it is to come afterwards.   
Ah, says another, but I could not say much. Nobody asked you to say much. If you can say, Whereas I was blind, now I see, that is all we want! If you can but let us know that there is a change in you, that you are a new man, that you see things in a different light, that what was once your joy is now your sorrow, and what was once a sorrow to you is now your joyif you can say, All things have become new. If you can say, I feel a new life heaving within my bosomthere is a new light shining in my eyes. I go to Gods House now in a different spirit. I read the Bible and engage in private prayer after quite a different fashion. And I hope my life is different, I hope my language is not what it used to be. I try to curb my temper. I endeavor to provide things honest in the sight of all men. My nature is different. I could no more live in sin as I once did than a fish could live on dry land, or a man could live in the depths of the seathis is what we want of you.   
Suppose now a person getting up in the church meeting, (and there are scores and hundreds here who attend church meetings), and saying, Brethren, I come to unite with you. I know the Greek Testament. I have also read a good deal in Latin. I understand the Vulgate. I can now, if you please, give you the 1st chapter of Mark in Greek, or the 2nd chapter of Exodus in Hebrew, if you like. I have also, from my youth up, given myself to the study of the natural and applied sciences. I think I am master of rhetoric and I am able to reason logically. Suppose he then went on to say what he knew about business, what a skillful tradesman he had been and, after going through that should say, I have a great deal of theological knowledge. I have read the Fathers, I have studied Augustine, I could talk about all the ponderous tomes that were written in the ancient times, I am acquainted with all the writers on the Reformation and I have studied the Puritans through and through. I know the points of difference between the great Reformed teachers and I know the distinction between Zwingli and Calvin? I am sure, dear Friends, if a man were to say all that, before I put it to the vote whether he should be admitted to church membership, I would say, This dear brother has not any idea of what he came here for. He came here to make a confession that he was a living man in Christ Jesus and he has been only trying to prove to us that he is a learned man. That is not what we want. And I would begin to put to him some pointed questions something like this, Did you ever feel yourself a sinner? Did you ever feel that Christ was a precious Savior and are you putting your trust in Him?   
And some of you would say, Why, thats just what he asked poor Mary, the servant girl, when she was in the meeting five minutes ago! All that learned lumber is good enough in its place. I do not depreciate it. I wish you were all scholars. I love to see you great servants in the Masters cause, but the whole of that put together is not worth a straw compared with this, One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see. And this is all we ask of youwe only ask you, if you wish to join the church, to be able to confess that you are a changed character, that you are a new man, that you are willing to be obedient to Christ and to His ordinances. And then we are only too glad to receive you into our midst. Come out, come out, I pray you! You who are hiding among the trees of the forest, come forth! Whoever is on the Lords side, let him come forth! It is a day of blasphemy and rebuke. He that is not with Christ is against Him, and he that gathers not with Him scatters abroad. Come forth, come forth, you that have any spark of love for God, or else this shall be your doom, Curse you Meroz, curse you bitterly the inhabitants thereof, because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty.   
IV. And now, to conclude, my text may be used in another way, for it sets before us A VERY CLEAR AND MANIFEST DISTINCTION.   
You cannot, everyone of you, say, One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see. My Hearers, solemnly, as in the sight of God, I speak to you. Lend me your ears and may these few words of the Truth of God sink into your hearts! Are there not some of you who cannot even say, I was blind? You do not know your own blindness. You have the conceit to imagine that you are as good as most people and that if you have same faults, yet certainly you are not irretrievably lost! You have no idea that you are depraved, utterly depraved, saturated through and through and rotten at the core. If I were to describe you in Scriptural language and say, You are the man, you would be shocked at men for giving you so bad a character! You are amiable, your outward carriage has always been decorous, you have been generous and benevolent and, therefore, you think there is no need for you to be born-againno necessity for you to repent of sin! You think that the Gospel is very suitable for those who have gone into foul, open sin, but you are too good, rather than too bad! O my Hearers, you are stone-blind and the proof that you are so is thisyou do not know your blindness! A man who is born blind does not know what it is to lose sight! The bright beams of the sun never made his heart glad and, therefore, he does not know his misery! And such is your state. You do not understand what it is that you have lost. What it is that you need. I pray God to do for you what you cannot do for yourselvesmake you feel now, once and for all, that you are blind! There is hope for the man who knows his blindness there is some light in the man who says he is all darknessthere is some good thing in the man who says he is all foul. If you can say *Vile and full of sin I am*   
God has begun a good work in you! You know that when the leper was afflicted with leprosy from head to foot, the priest looked at him and if there was a single spot where there was no leprosy, he was unclean, but the moment the leprosy covered him everywhere, then he was made cleanand so you, if you know your sin so as to feel you utterly ruined, lost estate, God has begun a good work in youand He will put away your sin and save your soul. Alas, there are many who do not know that they are blind.   
And yet I know, to my sorrow, there are many of you who do know that you are blind, but you dont yet see. I hope you mayI hope you may. To know your blindness is well, but it is not enough. It would be a dreadful thing for you to go from an awakened conscience on earth to a tormenting conscience in Hell. There have been some who have begun to find out that they are lost here and then have discovered that they are lost hereafter as well. I pray you, do not tarry long in this state! If God has convinced you of sin, I pray you do not linger! I prayed tonight that the Lord would save us, and He is now waiting. The way of salvationoh, how many times I have preached this! And how many times more will it be necessary to tell you over and over again the same thing? The way of salvation is simply thistrust Christ and you are saved! Just as you are, rely upon Him and you are saved. With no other dependence, with no other shadow of a hope, Sinner, venture on Him. Venture wholly, venture now! I hear the wheels of the Judges chariot behind you. He comes! He comes! He comes! Flee, Sinner, flee! I see Gods bow in His awful hand and He has drawn the arrow to its very head. Flee, sinner! Flee while yet the wounds of Christ stand open! Hide yourself there as in the cleft of the Rock of Ages. You have not a lease of your life, you cannot tell that you shall ever see another Sabbath to spend in pleasure! No more warnings may ever ring in your ears. Perhaps you will never have even another week-day to spend in drunkenness and blasphemy. Sinner, turn! God puts this alternative before some of you tonightturn or burn! Turn you, turn you from your evil ways, for why will you die? One of the two it must bedie or turn! Believe in Christ or perish with a great destruction. He that being often reproved hardens his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy. And you who are awakened and convicted tonight, I pray you to trust Christ and live!   
The whole matter is very simple, Whereas I was blind, now I see. Do you, tonight, see that Christ can save you? Do you believe that He will save you if you will trust Him? Then trust Him and you are saved! The moment you believe, you are saved, whether you feel the comfort of it or notyes, and the thought arising from the full belief that you are saved will yield you the comfort which you will never find elsewhere! Have I trust in Christ, O my Soul? You know, O Lord, I have! You know I have

*Other refuge have I none,   
Hangs my helpless soul on You.*   
It is written, He that believes on Him is not condemned. Then I am not condemned. Perhaps I feel at this present moment no joy, but then the thought that I am not condemned will make me feel joy, by-and-by. Yet I must not build on my joy, I must not build on my feelings, but simply on thisthat God has said, He that believes and is baptized shall be saved. I, believing in Christ am saved. And that is true of you, alsoyou in the aisle over yonder. You by that door there, and you behind me here. It is true of every man, woman, or child in this place who has now come to put trust in Christ! It is true of the man in the smock frock who did not intend to come here tonight, but who, seeing the people, strolled in and who has been saying in his heart, I will believe. I will trust Christ. Well, then, you are saved, your sin is blotted out, your iniquity is forgiven, you are a child of God, the Lord accepts youif you have really trusted Christyou are an heir of Heaven! Go and sin no more! Go and rejoice in pardoning love. And God bless you, for Jesus sake! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **MARK 10:46-52; JOHN 9:1-7.**

We have several records of blind men being cured by the Lord Jesus Christ. One of them is in Mark 10:46-52.   
Mark 10:46. And they came to Jericho: and as He went out of Jericho with His disciples and a great number of people. For now His march to the battle was like a triumphal march, which was, by-and-by, to be attended with the waving of palms and the shout of Hosannasas He went out of Jericho with His disciples and a great number of people.   
46, 47. Blind Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, sat by the highway side begging. And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth. That is all that the crowd called HimJesus of Nazareth.   
47. He began to cry out, and say, Jesus, You son of David, have mercy on me! He had advanced much further than the mass of the people. To him it was not Jesus of Nazareth, but it was Jesus, You Son of David.

49-50. And many charged him that he should hold his peace: but he cried the more a great deal, You son of David, have mercy on me! And Jesus stood still, and commanded him to be called. And they called the blind man, saying unto him, Be of good comfort, rise; He calls you. And he, casting away his garment, rose and came to Jesus. Blind as he was, he found his way to the SaviorI suppose the ears directed by the voice helped him to do so.

51. And Jesus answered and said unto him, What will you, that I should do unto you? The blind man said unto Him, Lord, that I might receive my sight. His request was plainly put, but it was most respectfully and even adoringly addressed to Christ.

52. And Jesus said unto him, Go your way; your faith has made you whole. You will find that it is often the Saviors way to thus give the credit of His own work to the patients faith. Your faith, He says, has made you whole. Whereas, you and I, if we do a good thing, are very anxious that nobody else should take the credit for it. We are very willing to have all the honor put upon ourselves, but Jesus does not say, I have made you whole, though that was true enough, but, Your faith has made you whole. And why is it, do you think, that Christ takes the crown off His own head to put it on the head of Faith? Why? Because He loves Faith and because Faith is quite certain not to wear that crown, but to lay it at His feet! Of all the Graces, Faith is the surest to deny herself and ascribe all to Him in whom she trusts.

52. And immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus in the way. Another of these records is in John 9:1-7.  
John 9:1-7. And as Jesus passed by, He saw a man which was blind from his birth. And His disciples asked Him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind? Jesus answered, Neither has this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him. I must work the works of Him that sent Me, while it is day: the night comes when no man can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the Light of the world. When He had thus spoken, He spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay, and said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, (which is by interpretation, Sent). He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing. I will not say anything now about this miracle, as it will form the subject of my sermon. [The exposition was before the sermon.]

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PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #3536 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

A THREEFOLD SLOGAN   
NO. 3536

A SERMON   
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 1916.   
DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.   
One thing is necessary. One thing I know. One thing I do. Luke 10:44. John 9:25. Philippians 3:13.   
[The original title of this sermon was A THREEFOLD MOTTO.]

I HAVE one thing in viewone thing on which I want to rivet your attention. Forbear with me if I detain you a few minutes before announcing a text. It has been said that a man of one book is terrible in the force of his convictions. He has studied it so well, digested it so thoroughly and understands it so profoundly, that it is perilous to encounter him in controversy. No man becomes eminent in any pursuit unless he gives himself up to it with all the powers and passions of his naturebody and soul. Michelangelo had never been so great a painter if his love of art had not become so enthusiastic that he frequently did not take off his garments to sleep by the week togethernor had Handel ever been such a great musician if his ardor for celestial sounds had not led him to use the keys of his harpsichord till, by constant fingering, they became the shape of spoons. A man must have one pursuit and consecrate all his powers to one purpose if he would excel or rise to eminence among his fellows.

When streams of water divide themselves into innumerable streams, they usually create a swamp which proves dangerous to the inhabitants of the neighborhood. Could all those streams be dammed up into one channel, and made to flow in one direction, they might resolve themselves into a navigable river, bearing commerce to the ocean and enriching the people who dwelt upon its banks. To obtain one thing, one comprehensive blessing from Heaven, has been the objective of many a saintly prayer, like that of David, Unite my heart to fear Your name. The advice of Paul was, Set not your affection upon things on earth, not, your affections, as it is often misquoted. The Apostle would have all the affections tied up into one affectionand that one concentrated affection not set upon earthly thingsbut upon things above, where Christ sits at the right hand of God! The concurrence of all our powers and capacities with one single impulse, to obtain one objective and to produce one result, is one great aim of the Gospel of Jesus Christ!   
The one thing concerning which I am now about to talk very seriously to you will require three texts to elucidate it. There are three pithy passages of Holy Scripture which I shall endeavor to press home on your heart and conscience.

I. ONE THING NECESSARY.   
Our first text is to be found in the Gospel according to Luke 10:44, One thing is necessary. This one thing, according to this passage, is faith in Christ Jesus, the sitting down at the Masters feet, the drinking in of His Word. If I may expand for a minute the one thing, without seeming to make 20 things of that which is but one, I will refer it to the possession of a new life. This life is given to us when, by the power of the Holy Spirit, we are created anew in Christ Jesus. And it develops itself in a simple confidence in Jesus, in a hearty obedience to Jesus, in a desire to be like Jesus and in a constant yearning to be near to Jesus. One thing is necessarythat one thing is salvationworked in us by the Holy Spirit, through faith which is in Jesus Christ our Lord. The new heart, the right spirit, a filial fear of God, love to Jesusthis is the one thing necessary. How I trust you all know how to distinguish things essential from things convenient, and that you are more concerned about necessary things than about things merely attractive, or, at most, but an accessory to your welfare! The little child may admire the field which is covered with red and blue flowers. The farmer cares nothing for these flowershe delights in the wheat that is ripening for the sickle. So our childish minds are often fascinated with the flaunting flowers of fortune and fashioncraving after wealth, fame and worldly distinctionbut our better reason, if it is allowed to speak, will prefer the necessary things, the things which we must have, or else must perish. We may do without earthly goods, for thousands have been happy in life and triumphant in death without any of the luxury which riches can purchase. The hearts love of his fellow creatures has been fairly won by many a humble man who never courted popular applause. The patience of the poor has often counted for fine gold, while the pride of the affluent has passed for nothing but foul dross. Even lack of health, Heavens priceless blessing to mortals here below, has not hindered some precious sufferers from serving their generation, glorifying God in a martyrdom of pain and bequeathing treasures of piety to a grateful posterity. Ten thousand things are convenient. Thousands of things are desirable. Hundreds of things are to be sought for, but there is one thing, only one thing, the one thing we have described to you, of which our Savior speaks as the one thing necessary.   
And, oh, how necessary it is! Necessary for your childrenthey are growing up about you and much joy they give youfor you can see in them many budding excellences. To your partial eyes they give promise of goodness, if not of greatness! They will be the comfort of your declining years. You have carefully watched their education. Not a whit of their moral habits have you failed to overlook. To give them a fair start in the world has been your fond desire till their portion is the fruit of your providence. From perils you would protect them. Lest they should have to rough it, perhaps, as much as their father before them, you would pilot them through the straits. Good! But, dear parents, do remember that one thing is necessary for your children, that they may commence life, continue in life and close life honorably. It is well that they should be educated. It is well that morality should be instilled into them, but this is not enough! Alas, we have seen many leave the purest parental influences to plunge into the foulest sins! Their education has become but a tool for iniquity, and the money with which they might have helped themselves to competence has been squandered away in vice. One thing is necessary for that bright-eyed boy! Oh, if you can take him to the Savior, and if the blessing of the Good Shepherd shall alight upon him and renew him while yet a child, the best will have been done for himyes, his one chief need supplied! And if that dear girl, before she comes to womanhood, shall have been led to that blessed Savior who rejects none that come to Him, she will have received all she shall need for time and for eternity! Quicken your prayers, then, dear parents. Think of your children, to seek their welfare more intelligently. Be more importunate in intercession on their behalf! Truly, this is the one thing necessary for them.

One thing, too, is necessary for that young man just leaving home to go out as an apprentice and learn his trade. That is a trying time for an untried hand. The heart may well flutter as one, young and inexperienced, reflects that he is now about to sail, not on a coasting voyage, but to put fairly out to sea. Before long it will be seen whether those fair professions had the Truths of God as a foundation. He will get to Londonmany of you have passed through this ordeal! The Metropolis, what a maze it seemed to you at first, and with what amazement you surveyed it! What with propensities within your breast, and profuse attractions outsidetemptation held you spell-bound! What could not be done in the villagewhat you dared not think of in the little market town, seems easy to be done unobserved in the great city! Hundreds of fingers point you to the haunts of pleasure, the home of vice, the path to Hell! Ah, mother and father, you present the Bible as your parting gift. You write the youths name on the flyleaf. You offer your prayers and you shed your tears for him. Steals there not over you the conviction that the one thing he needs you cannot pack in his trunk, nor can you send it up to him by a post office order? The one thing necessary is that Christ should be formed in his heart the hope of glory! With that he would begin life well. A sword of the true Jerusalem metal, that will not break in the heat of the conflict, will be serviceable all his journey through. Do I address some young man who has not forgotten his mothers kind remarks when he left home? Let me just echo them, and say to him, One thing you lack! Oh, seek it, seek it now! Before going out of this house, seek till, through Grace, you obtain this one thing necessary which shall bear you safely to the skies!   
But one thing is necessary, not merely for those youngsters at home, or for those about to go abroad in the world. One thing is necessary for the business man. Ah, he says, I need a great many things. But what, I ask, is the one thing? You speak of the necessary. You call ready cash the indispensable. Give me this, says the man of the world, and I dont care about anything else! Recommend your religion to whom you please, but let me have solid gold and silver, and I will be well content. Ah, Sirs, you delude yourselves with phantoms! You fondly dream that wealth in your hands would count for more than it has ever done for your fellows. You must have seen some men make large fortunes whom you knew to be very miserable. They have retired from business to get a little rest, and yet they could find no rest in their retirement! You must have known others who, the more they got, the more they have wanted, for they have swallowed a horseleech, and it has cried, Give, give! Of course, you never suspected that the money did the mischief, or that the precious metal poisoned the heart. But are you in quest of happiness? It lies not in investments, whether in government bonds or mortgages, or stocks or debentures, or gold or silver. These properties are profitable. They can be used to promote happiness. As accessories to our welfare, they may often prove to be blessings, but if accredited with intrinsic worth they will eat as does a canker! Money circulated is a medium of public benefit, while money hoarded is a means of private discomfort! A man is but a muckraker who is forever seeking to scrape everything to himself. A miser is bound to be miserable. Before high Heaven, he is an object to make the angels weep! One thing is necessary for you merchants, brokers and warehousemen to keep you from sinking under your anxieties and losses, or to preserve you from becoming sordid and selfish through your successes and lest your greed should increase with your gains! One thing is necessary that your life may be a true life, or else, when it comes to its end, all that can be said of you will amount to this, He died worth so much. Must that be your only memorial? When you depart from this world, the poor and needy will not miss you. Widow and orphans will not grieve for you! The Church militant will not mourn! The bright spirits above will not be waiting to greet you. The grand climax of your careera will! A testament sworn under a very large sum! What shall it profit any man what fortune he may have amassed, if he loses his soul?   
Do you think that riches possessed in this world will procure any respect in the nether regions? I have heard that in the old Fleet Prison, the thief who was put into jail for stealing ten thousand pounds thought himself a gentleman in comparison with those common fellows who were put in for some paltry debt of 20 or 25 pounds! There are no such distinctions in Hell! You who can boast your talents of gold and talents of silver, if cast away, shall be as complete wrecks as those who never had copper or sliver, but lived and died in privation and poverty! You need one thing, and if you get this one thing, your wealth shall prove a blessingotherwise it will be a curse! With this one thing your sufficiency for the day guaranteed to you by promise shall make you as one of Heavens favorites, fed by the hand of God, always needy, but never neglected. You aged folkthere are some such hereshall I have to remind any of you that one thing is necessaryyes, most necessary to you? Death has already put his bony palm upon your head and frozen your hair to the whiteness of that winter in which all your strength must fail, and all your beauty fade. Oh, if you have no Savior! You will soon have to quit these transitory scenes. The young may die, but the old must. To die without a Savior will be dreary and dreadful! Then, after death, the judgment! Brave old man, how will your courage stand that outlook, if you have none to plead your cause? Oh, aged woman, you will soon be in the scalesvery soon must your character be weighed. If it is said of you, Tekel, she is weighed in the balances and found wanting, there will be no opportunity to get right or adjust your relations to God or to your fellow creatures. Your lamp will have gone out. There will be no chance of rekindling it! If lost, forever lostforever in the darkforever cast away! Little enough will it avail you, then, that you have nourished and brought up children. It will not suffice you, then, that you paid your debts honestly. Vain the plea that you attended a place of worship and were always respected in the neighborhood! ONE THING is necessary! Lacking that, you will turn out to have been a fool! Notwithstanding many opportunities and repeated invitations, you have rejected the one thingthe one only thingwhat an irreparable mistake! Oh, how you will weep as one disappointed! How you will gnash your teeth as do those who upbraid themselves! You will mourn forever, and your self-reproach shall know no end!   
I wish I could move you, as I desire, to feel as I feel, myselfthat this one thing is necessary to every unconverted person here present. Some of you have already got this one choice thing that is so necessary. Hold it fast! Never let it go! Grace gave it to youDivine Grace will keep it for youGrace will hold you true to it. Never be ashamed of it. Prize it beyond all cost! But as for you who have it notI think I hear your funeral knell pealing in my ears, and as you speed away, your spirits made to fly for very fear, right into the arms of Justice, I think I hear your bitter cry, The harvest is past, the summer is ended and we are not saved! I would gladly pluck you by the skirts, if I could, and say to you, Why not seek the one thing necessary without more ado? Get it now! It will not in any way hurt you. It will make you happy, here, and blessed hereafter. It is as necessary for this life as for the next, as necessary for the exchange as for the sick chamber, as necessary for the street and for the shop as for the dying bed and for the Day of Judgment. One thing one thing is necessary! And now allow me to stop before taking you a stage further. Allow me, as it were, to change horses. I must take another text   
II. ONE THING KNOWN.   
It is in the Gospel according to John, the 9th Chapter, and the 25th verse, and these are the words, One thing I know.   
The man who was born blind, whose eyes were opened at the pool of Siloam, said, One thing I know. This simple statement I want to turn into a pointed question. Among the many things, dear Friends, that you are acquainted with, do you know the one thing that this poor man knew, Whereas I was blind, now I see? Here is a wealth of selfknowledge in this single avowal. Little enough, I daresay, he knew about other people, but he knew a great deal about himself! He was well aware that he once was blindand he was quite positive that he now could see. Oh, can you say it with sincerity, I know that I was once blindI could see no beauty in Christ, though I thought I saw great beauties in the world. Then I could not love God. I did not hate sin. I had no repentance, nor had I any faith. I was blind, but nowoh, blessed changenow I see my sin and weep over it! Now I see a Savior, and I trust Him! Now I see His beauties and I admire Him! Now I see His service and I delight to spend my strength in it! One thing I know. What a marvelous experience of a marvelous change this implies! Nor can its importance be overrated. There is no going to Heaven unless you undergo a change which shall make you entirely new and make all things entirely new to you. A young convert once said, I do not know what is happeningeither the world is changed, or else I am, for nothing seems to me to be the same as once it was. Ah, this old Bible, what a dry Book it used to be, but, oh, how it abounds in marrow and fatness now! Prayerwhat a tedious duty, once, but what a delightful exercise now! The going up to Gods House on the Sabbathused it not to be a weariness of the flesh? How much better to be in the fields! Yet now, how delightful we feel, to assemble with the Lords saints! With what pleasure we hail the festal morn! All things are altered. Behold, all things are become new! What we once hated, we love, and what we loved, we hate! Is it so, dear Heareris it so with you?

Do not, I pray you, be content with mere reformation. Were you before a drunk, and are you now a teetotaler? Goodvery good! Yet, good as it is, it will not save your soul! Dishonest and knavish you once were, but truthful and trustworthy you may now beyet rely not upon it for salvation! In former days, unchasteby stern resolve you may have given up the favorite lustbut even that will not save you! Those who never fell into your foul sloughs need the change, too. You must be born-again. You must have an entire renewala radical change! It is not cutting off the limbs of a tree, nor shifting it to another place, that will convert a bramble into a vine. The sap must be changed. The heart must be renewed. The inner man must be made completely new. Is it so with you? Why, I think if some of us were to meet our old selves walking down the street, we would hardly know ourselves! Tis true, old self has taken good care to knock at our door pretty often since. Of all the knocks we hear, not even excepting that of the devil, there is none we dread so much! The knock of the old man when he says, Let me in with my corruptions and lusts, and let me reign and have my own way. No, old man, you were once ourselves, but go your way, for we have put off the old man with his deeds, and put on the new manwe cannot know you, for one thing we know now that we knew not beforewhereas we were blind, now we see!   
Need I linger any longer upon this point? Let it suffice if I leave it as a kind of awakening question upon the heart and conscience. There are not 20 things, but there is ONE THING you have to enquire about. Do you know for sure this one thingthat you are not now what you used to be? Do you know that Jesus has made the difference? That Jesus has opened the eyes that were once without sight? That you now see Jesus, and seeing, you love Him? Our third subject is   
III. ONE THING DONE.   
The text is in the 3rd Chapter of the Epistle to the Philippians, at the 13th verse. There the Apostle Paul says, One thing I do.   
Pray observe that I did not introduce doing first. That would not be appropriate. We do not begin with doing. The one thing necessary is not doing. Coming to Christ and trusting Him, must take the lead. Not until after you have got the one thing necessary, and know that you have got it, and are conscious that, whereas you were blind, now you see, can you be fit to take the next stepone thing I do. And what is that one thing? Forgetting the things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. It seems, then, that the Apostle gave his whole mind up to the glorifying of God by his spiritual life. He was never content with what he was. If he had a little faith, he sought for more. If he had a little hope, he aimed to obtain more. If he had some degree of virtue, he coveted more. Oh, Christians, never be satisfied with being merely saved! Up with you! Away! Off! Go onward to the high mountains, to the clearer light, to the brighter joy! If saved and brought, like the shipwrecked mariner, to shoreis that enough? Yes, for the moment it is enough to guarantee the purest satisfaction and the warmest congratulations. But the mariner must seek a livelihood as long as he lives. He must put forth his energies. Whatever avocations open up before him, he must vigorously seek such favors of fortune as may possibly be within his reach. Just so, let it be with you. Saved from the deep which threatened to swallow you up, rejoice that you are preserved from death, but resolve that the life vouchsafed to you shall be active, earnest, vigorous, fruitful in every good deed and work! Be diligent as your traders are! See how they wake their servants up in the morning, how they scold them if they are not diligent. This man must be hurried to one place, and that man to another. How sharp they speak! How quickly they move about! They will do their business and they spare no pains to increase it. Oh, that we were half as diligent in the service of God! Here we are driveling away our time. We do not put out all our talents, augment our faith, or enlarge our coast. Why are we so indolent in going to that great giver of every good and perfect gift for fresh supplies? Why do we not wait upon Him to be enriched? Would to God that we were as diligent in spiritual as we are in temporal things! Oh, that we were burning with a holy covetousness for the best gifts God can bestow and the choicest blessings saints can receive!   
Paul was anxious to do more good, to get more good, to be more good. He sought to win souls. He needed to make Christs name known. An ardent passion inflamed him! A high enthusiasm inspired him. Tentmaking, it is true, was his trade, but tent-making did not monopolize quite all his heart, and soul, and strength! Does your secular vocation absorb all your thoughts? Though Paul was proud of his industry, and could say conscientiously, My own hands have ministered to my necessities, yet preaching was the one thing he pursued as his life-work. He was a workman, just as many of you arebut where were his tools? They were ready to hand when he needed them. And did they, do you think, ever creep up into his heart? I believe never. For us to live, said he, is Christ. That was as true, I will guarantee you, when he was tentmaking, or picking up sticks on the island of Malta, as when he was talking heavenly wisdom to the worldly-wise, addressing the Athenians on Mars Hill or when he discoursed touching the resurrection of the dead to the Jews, or when he expounded the way of justification to the Gentiles! He was a man of one idea, and that one idea had entirely possessed him! In the old pictures they put a halo around the head of the saints. But, in fact, that halo encircles their hearts and penetrates every member of their bodies. The halo of disinterested consecration to Christ should not be about their brows, alone, to adorn their portraits, for it encompassed their entire being, their spirit, soul and body! It environed them, their whole being. This one thing I do, was the slogan of early saints. Let it be your slogan!   
Beloved, I address you as the saints of this generation. My earnest desire is that you should not come behind in Grace or in gifts. When the Believers of all ages muster, and are marshaled, may you be found among the faithful and true. If not among the first or second class of worthies in the army of the Son of David, yet good soldiers of Jesus Christ! Our God is a loving Father. He likes to praise His people. To this end do be clear about the one thing you need, the one thing you know, and the one thing you do! So will you stand well in that day. Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **JOHN 9.**

Verses l-3. And as Jesus passed by He saw a man who was blind from his birth. And His disciples asked Him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind? Jesus answered, Neither has this man sinned, nor his parents, but that the works of God should be made manifest in him. We are not to look upon such afflictions as any indication of special sin on the part either of the person or the parent. Of course, sin lies at the root of all our suffering as a great generic fact, but not so that we may attribute such an affliction to any one sin. The disciples, you see, dear Friends, are thinking about difficult problems. Their Master is thinking about how, practically, to meet the difficulty, and to this day there are a large number of Christians, professors and even ministers who occupy their time about questions which really are to no profit. If they could be answered, nobody would be the holier or the better! What does it matter to us what is the origin of evil? Far more important to turn the evil out than it is to find out how it came in! Very frequently, you know, after there is a terrible calamity or accident, we have an inquiry as to how it was done, and then we think the thing is all attended to. It would have been better, perhaps, to have an inquiry, before it was done, as to how it could be prevented. Our Lord has that wisdom that practicalness. He begins to deal with the evil rather than to raise questions about it. Yes, and He sees in that evil a good coming out of it! He says that this man was blind, that the works of God might be made manifest in him.

4-7. I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day: the night comes, when no man can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world. When He had thus spoken, He spat on the ground and made clay of the spittle, and He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay. And said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, (which is by interpretation, Sent). He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing. Our Lord used instrumentality. It did not appear, however, to be very likely to achieve His purpose. The clay seemed more likely to blind than to give sight, yet if the Lord chooses to use the poor and weak instruments that seem nothing better than dust and spittle, He has the glory of the grand result! If He takes the humble ministry of His servants and uses it in the pulpit, or in the Sunday school, or anywhere else, He has all the more Glory and is the less likely to be robbed of it because He uses such unlikely means.

8, 9. The neighbors therefore, and they who before had seen him that he was blind, said, Is not this he that sat and begged? Some said, This is heWe are sure of it.

9. Others said, He is like heThey were cautious bodies.   
9. But he said, I am he. He knew there was no mistaking his witness!   
10, 11. Therefore said they unto him, How were your eyes opened? He answered and said, A man that is called Jesus made clay, and anointed my eyes, and said unto me, Go to the pool of Siloam, and wash: and I went and washed, and I received sight. Very straightforward, very concise, very accurateand when we make answer about our conversion, it is always well to take this for a copynot too many flourishes, no coloring. He even leaves out about the spittle, but he gives it all as he can recollect it. So when you are talking about the Lords love to you and His way of converting you, it is quite sufficiently remarkable, without any touch of rouge. Let it be given just as it is.

12. Then said they unto him, Where is He? He said I do not know. Enough for him to know what he did knowthat his eyes were opened and how it was done! So sometimes I have known persons come upon the new convert with a question which has rather baffled him, and he has been troubled because he could not answer it. Do not let it trouble you! You are not expected to know everything. The very best and most honest thing is to say, I do not know   
13-14. They brought to the Pharisees him that before was blind. And it was the Sabbath Day when Jesus made the clay, and opened his eyes. So you may be sure that the Pharisees would be down upon Him for that, because, according to the Rabbis, the making of the clay to put upon this mans eyes would be a kind of brick-makingand they would bring Him in guilty of brick-making directly! So did these men pervert things and make men guilty where no offense had been committed whatever.   
15. Then again the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight. He said unto them, He put clay upon my eyes, and I washed, and do see. He is shorter with them. Some tales grow in telling. His gets shorter. Besides, he has to deal with captious peopleand then the least said, the sooner mendedand this shrewd man thought so.   
16, 17. Therefore said some of the Pharisees, This Man is not of God, because He keeps not the Sabbath. Others said, How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles? And there was a division among them. They said unto the blind man, again, What say you of Him, that He has opened your eyes? He said, He is a Prophet. He could see that.   
18-24. But the Jews did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind, and received his sight, until they called the parents of him that had received his sight. And they asked them, saying, Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How, then, does he now see? His parents answered them and said, We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind. But by what means he now sees, we know not; he is of age; ask him. He shall speak for himself. These words spoke his parents because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had agreed already that if any man did confess that he was the Christ, he would be put out of the synagogue. Therefore said his parents, He is of age; ask him. Then again called they the man that was blind, and said unto him, Give God the praise: we know that this Man is a sinner. How piously these Pharisees can talkand generally in the name of God, all sorts of mischief begins. When men are persecuting the Son of God, yet still they take the name of God upon their lips. Did they not burn the martyrs to the glory of God? Oh, yes, and so did these men thus slander Christ by saying, We know that this Man is a sinner, and yet they spoke about giving God praise!   
25. HeOur shrewd friend of the opened eyes.   
25-27. Answered and said, Whether He is a sinner or not, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see. Then said they to him again, What did He do to you? How did He open your eyes? He answered them, I have told you already, and you did not hear: therefore would you hear it again? Will you also be His disciples? The man is sharp, acute, cutting.   
28, 29. Then they reviled him and said, You are His disciple; but we are Moses disciples. We know that God spoke unto Moses: as for this Fellow, we know not from where He comes. The word, fellow, is supplied by the translators. There is no such word there because they did not know a word bad enough with which to express their scorn.   
30-33. The man answered and said unto them, Why herein is a marvelous thing, that you know not from where He comes and yet He has opened my eyes. Now we know that God hears not sinners: but if any man is a worshipper of God, and does His will, him He hears. Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind. If this Man were not of God, He could do nothing. He proves! He administrates! The thing is as clear as possible, and yet they refuse to see it.   
34. They answered and said unto him, You were altogether born in sins. It is the old rule, Abuse the plaintiff. Nothing could be said. Now abuse the man! He has answered you and his arguments are too difficult for you. Now throw hard words at him. You were altogether born in sins.   
34. And do you teach us? Wonderful, that, us. Do you teach us? Folly, ignorance and pride go together. This man, in the simplest and most unaffected manner, had told his tale and urged his argumentand now they abuse him and exalt themselves. Do you teach us? No, great Pharisees, he does not teach you, for you will not learn!   
34. And they cast him out. That is the last argument. Out with him! Now we have defeated him.   
35. Jesus heard that they had cast him out: and when He had found him. What a blessed thing to be cast out, if Christ finds us! Many and many have been put out of the synagogue and treated with contempt, but then outside Jerusalem they found their Lord, for there He died outside the camp, and His people need not be ashamed to go after Him bearing His reproach. When He had found him.   
35-38. He said unto him, Do you believe in the Son of God? He answered and said, Who is He, Lord, that I might believe in Him? And Jesus said unto him, You have both seen Him, and it is He who is talking with you. And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped Him. He does not appear to have been a Unitarian, therefore, and if those persons had their eyes opened, they would do the same. He said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped Him.   
39. And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind. Christ is the turner of the tables. Did not the virgin mother sing, He has put down the mighty from their seats, and He has exalted them of low degree. He has filled the hungry with good things, but the rich He has sent away empty? So He always does.   
40. Jesus said unto them, If you were blindReally could not see.   
41. You would have no sin. If you really did not know better, were totally and altogether without knowledgethen you would have no sin compared with what you now have.   
41. But now you say, We see; therefore your sin remains. You acknowledge that you have sinned with your eyes open and, therefore, your sin is all the greater.

Adapted from the C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Version 1.0, Ages Software.   
PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #2950 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

TRUE AND NOT TRUE   
NO. 2950

A SERMON   
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, AUGUST 24, 1905.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, MAY 23, 1875.

**Now we know that God hears not sinners.   
John 9:31.**

I HAVE taken my text out of its context for a certain purpose. Part of the purpose will be answered immediately if I say how wrong it is to take any passage of Scripture away from that which comes before it, and that which follows after itfor you may, if you are so inclined, prove anything you like from the Bible if you wrench a line from its context and hold it up by itself. You can, indeed, act in the same way with any other book. You may take an expression from any human beings writings, as some people do from these Divine writings, and make the author say what he never meant. That is how many treat the Word of God. For instance, a man may say that he can prove from Scripture that God has forsaken and forgotten His people. By turning to Isaiah 49:14, we find that Zion, in an unbelieving fainting fit said, The Lord has forsaken me, and my Lord has forgotten me. It was not true, but was one of the lies of unbelief. If you take from their context the words in Psalm 14:1, There is no God, you will have the opposite of what David wrote, The fool has said in his heart, There is no God. If you pick out a sentence from the New Testament, without the context, you may say that Scripture declares that our Lord Jesus Christ was a gluttonous man and a wine-bibber because His enemies falsely said so. And you may declare that it is your duty to worship the devil, because Matthew records that he said to Christ, Fall down and worship me. You see at once the absurdity and wickedness of wresting the Scriptures in that fashion.

Now take the words that I have chosen for my text, We know that God hears not sinners. Who said that? A man who was born blind, to whom Christ had given sight! And who believed it? A set of still blinder Pharisees! He was arguing with them and he wished to convince them, so he used an argument which was especially suitable to them. It was their Pharisaic belief that God would not hear sinners. Very well, he said, but God has heard Christ and, therefore, according to your own belief, Jesus Christ, who has opened my eyes, cannot be a sinner. It was a capital argumentum ad hominen, as we sayan argument to the men themselves. But we are not going to accept everything that this man said. We are not bound to do so, for he did not speak under any sort of Inspiration. The Evangelist was Inspired to record what the man said, but we would be very foolish if we believed all that he said, shrewd as he proved himself to be.

Is it true that God hears not sinners? It is true and it is not true. It is true, most true as this man meant it, but it is utterly false in the sense in which some persons have understood it. So I am going to speak, first, upon how it is true that God hears not sinners. And, secondly, upon how it is not true.

I. First, then, IT IS TRUE THAT GOD HEARS NOT SINNERS IN THE SENSE IN WHICH THIS MAN USED THE EXPRESSION, namely, that if Christ had been an impostor, it is not possible to conceive that God would have listened to His prayer and given Him the power to open the blind mans eyesfor that would have been, for God, the Just and the True to set His seal to a lie, and that cannot be. The man was quite accurate in arguing, If this Jesus of Nazareth is a deceiver, how is it that (as the man supposed) He has asked God to open the eyes of one born blind, and God has done it, thereby as good as saying that this Deceiver was true? It is not supposable that the Most High could have done anything of the kind! It can never be believed that God will listen to the prayers of men who ask Him to support their lies and assist them in the propagation of that which is contrary to His own Kingdom. That was the primary sense in which, I have no doubt, the man meant his statement and in that sense it is true. God will back up the right and the true, and stand by the Christ whom He, Himself, has sentbut He will not support imposture and falsehood!

In another sense it is true that God hears not sinners, that is to say, He will hear none of usno sinner among us, (and who among us is not a sinner?) in and of ourselves. If heard, it must be through the interposition of the Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, for up to the immediate Presence of the thrice-holy God the guilty sinner cannot come by himself. The fire of the Divine Holiness would burst forth and utterly destroy the presumptuous rebel who might attempt such an intrusion! But Jesus meets us just where we arewe give our prayers into His hands and He perfumes them and cleanses us with His own most precious bloodand then He presents both ourselves and our prayers before His Fathers face. God could not hear those prayers of ours, neither could He have respect unto us or to our offering, apart from the mediation of Christ! He mustto use the language of one of our hymn-writerslook through Jesus wounds on us and then, but not till thencan He regard us favorably. As a matter of absolute justice, irrespective of the Mediator, God could not and would not hear any prayer from any sinful being in the universe!

Our text is also quite true if we read it as meaning that God hears not wicked prayers. Perhaps someone asks, What are wicked prayers? There are many sorts, but I will only mention one or two kinds. Those are wicked prayers which men offer formallyI mean such as we often hear when solemn sounds are evidently uttered by thoughtless tongues when men bow their heads in the posture of devotion, but their hearts are gadding abroad after vanitywhen they bend the knee, morning and night, and repeat a form, but there is no heart in it. All that is an insult and a mockery to the Most High. What would we think if somebody presented a petition to us and asked us to listen to it, yet did not mean it, but merely mocked us with empty sounds? Unless your heart is in your prayer, it is a wicked one, and God will not answer it! He must hear it, but it will be only in indignation and He will say to you, What have I done that you should thus provoke Me to My face and bring to Me mere empty shells when the kernel of the heart is altogether absent?

That is also a wicked prayer which a man offers simply because it is the custom to offer it and there is something to be gained by it. All attendance upon religious ordinances, for the sake of thereby getting pecuniary profit or social position, must be abominable in the sight of Godyet there are many who have a keen eye for the loaves and fishes that Christ or His Apostles have to distributeand they say a prayer for what they can get. And they would swear an oath for twice as much, or perhaps for half as much, equally satisfied whichever they might do as long as the wages were pretty sure and liberal! It is detestable that religion should ever be a hobbyhorse for gain or for position. We know that God hears not such prayers as those. Sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal must be more musical in the ears than the mere chattering of formalists, or the pretended prayers of those who hope to gain thereby. He hears not prayers in which men sin as they pray and insult Him when they appear to be devout.

It is quite certain, as you will see from various passages of Scripture which I will presently quote to you, that God does not and will not hear the prayers of those who continue in their sins even while they pray. There are thousands of persons who would very much like to go to Heaven and they are dreadfully afraid of going to Hellbut then if they do go to Heaven, they would like to take their sins with themat least most of the way. They would cut their acquaintance just a few yards before the brink of the River of Death, but they feel that they must keep those sweet sins of theirs! And yet they hope to go to Heaven! If this is what any of you are doing, be you sure of this, that God will not hear your prayers! He will hear your supplications if you repent of and forsake your sinsbut if you come before Him arm in arm with your sinful lusts, He will drive you from His Presence! A man prays for forgiveness, yet continues to drink to excesscan God answer a prayer of that kind? It cannot be! He will never pander to our base passions by allowing us to indulge in sin and yet to hope for mercy. I believe that there are many persons who do pray, after a fashion, for Divine Grace, Christ and Heaventhey have never yet obtained an answer and they never will as long as they continue to dally with their beloved sins! These must be given up! Even if they are like their right arms, they must be cut off, or like their right eyes, they must be plucked out, for it is utterly impossible to keep sin and yet go to Heaven! In this sense, God hears not sinners.

Do you wish to be saved from sin? Do you pray to be saved from intemperance, from dishonesty, from lying, from unchastity? Do you ask to be saved from everything that makes you unlike your God? Then He will hear such prayers as those, but to pray for pardon, yet continue to rebelto pray for forgiveness, yet still go on to provoke Himsuch a prayer as that must be a stench in the nostrils of the Most High! You will find, in Isaiahs first chapter, 15th verse, that the Lord says, When you make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood. There is a similar passage in Jeremiah 14:12, where the Lord says concerning the people who would not turn from their evil ways, When they fast, I will not hear their cry; and when they offer burnt offering and an oblation, I will not accept them: but I will consume them by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence. Thus have they loved to wander, they have not refrained their feet, therefore the Lord does not accept them; He will now remember their iniquity and visit their sins.

Another true meaning may be attached to this passage, God hears not sinners, that is to say, God does not hear hypocrites. Job knew this and so did his friends. It hardly needs a Revelation of God to make us know that is true! If a man tries to play fast and loose with Godif he pretends to be the Lords servant and, all the while he is the servant of sinGod will not grant the request that is made by his double tongue. Listen to these words of JobWhat is the hope of the hypocrite, though he has gained, when God takes away his soul? Will God hear his cry when trouble comes upon him? Will he delight himself in the Almighty? Will he always call upon God? No. Hypocrites will not always call upon God and God will not always hear them when they do call upon Him! I may truly say that He will never hear them, for He abhors the sacrifice that is presented to Him without the devout heart of the offerer.

We have further proof that our text has much truth in it if we think of another class of sinners that God will not hear, namely, the unforgiving. When we pray, Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us, we expressly ask that God will not forgive us till we have forgiven our fellow men. You may kneel till your knees grow to be part of the very flooryou may weep till you make your bed to swimbut no answer of peace shall ever come from God to you as long as you retain one black malicious thought against your fellow man, however much he may have offended you! Perhaps this explains why some of you who have been awakened of late, have not been able to find peace with God. If it is so with you, my Friend, you must first take your hands from the throat of your brother who owes you that little debt and then may you hope that God will allow you to find mercy at His hands concerning your far greater debt to Him! Bring not your sacrifice unto the Lord, pollute not His altar with itnodishonor not the floor of Gods House by treading upon it while you cherish an unforgiving spirit! Go to your brother and say to him, I freely forgive you for the wrong you have done me. Let this quarrel be ended, for I cannot meet my God till I can first meet you, for, He that loves not his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen?

I may here remark, by the way, that God will not hear even His own people when they are living in known sin. You must have noticed that remarkable declaration in Psalm 66:18If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me. Have you not found it so, my Brothers and Sisters who have been favored with the Presence of God? When you have backslidden, when you have grieved the Spirit of God, have not your prayers returned empty to you? You used to ask and receive! When you kept up constant, familiar communion with the Most High, you had but to express your desire and it was granted to you. But you grew cold, worldly, carelessand now, when you pray, it is like speaking into a bronze cauldronyour words reverberate, they resound in your own ears! But they do not reach the ears of God. You go to the Mercy Seat and groan, but you bring your requests away with you. They are not supplied and so, groaning, and groaning, and groaning yet again, prayer has become a toilsome task with you, for no answer follows your supplication! Ask the Lord to cleanse your heart, my Brother, then your power in prayer will come back to you. If you walk contrary to God, He will walk contrary to youand your power in prayer will fail you when you in any way give place to sin. I do not think that the blind man who had been cured by Christ meant that, but it is true, and it is necessary that I should mention it.

There is another class of sinners whom God will not hear. In Proverbs 28:9 we read, He that turns away his ear from hearing the Law, even his prayer shall be abomination. That is to say, if a man will not hear God, God will not hear him. You have a Bible, but you will not read it. Then, when you pray, you must not expect God to give you audience. You will not attend the means of Grace when you might do so. If anybody tries to explain the Gospel to you, you tell him to hold his tongue, for you are determined not to know anything about the way to Heaven. Well then, Friend, you may say what you like about praying, but while Gods Gospel is treated by you with such disrespect as this, you cannot expect that God will grant your requests. Shut your ear to God and He will shut His ears to you! But incline your ear and come to Him and, sinner as you are, your soul shall live, for God will hear you!

Further, God will not hear those who continue to harden their hearts against Him. There are some people who have often been impressedand they have had great difficulty in throwing off those impressions. The battering-ram of the Gospel has been hammering at the doors of some of your hearts and it has given such tremendous blows that you have thought that the door must be wrenched from its hinges, and the posts must be torn from their sockets! But you have managed to strengthen your inside defenses and to keep up the barrier. Soul, let me solemnly warn you that you may do that once too oftenyou may put one bolt too many on that door and, one of these days the Lord will turn away from you and sayBecause I have called and you refused. I have stretched out My hands and no man regarded; but you have set at nothing all My counsel, and would none of My reproof, I also will laugh at your calamity. I will mock when your fear comes. The Lord will not always strive with men! He waits long in matchless patience, but He will not always wait the day shall come when the refusers shall cry, Lord, Lord, open unto us, but He will say, Depart from Me! I never knew you. And they will hear the fatal sentence, Too late! Too late! You cannot enter now. We know that God hears not sinners when once they depart out of this life. Once driven by death beyond the verge of mercy, once shut up in Hell, this mans words will be most emphatically true concerning them, We know that God hears not sinners.

II. Having thus shown you that there are some senses in which this declaration is true, I am going onto the other side of the question and shall show you that THERE ARE SENSES IN WHICH THIS TEXT IS NOT TRUE, but the very reverse of true.

First, it is not true that God hears not those who have been, and still are, in a measure, sinful because, my Brothers and Sisters, if He did not hear sinners, He would not hear any human being, for, all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Solomon truly said, There is no man that sins not. And David wrote, under the Inspiration of the Spirit, There is none that does good, no, not one. We have all erred and gone astray from the right road. And when we approach God in prayer, we must feel this and confess it. It is not true, therefore, that the Lord does not hear those who have sinnedthose who still call themselves sinners though they are saved by Sovereign Grace. Look at the long line of His people and note how He has heard their prayers. Many beside David have said, This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him and saved him out of all his troubles. Even after His people have gone astray from Him, He has heard them when they have repented and returned unto Him. The 51st Psalm is a sinners prayer, is it not? Yet how graciously the Lord listened to it and restored His penitent servant to His favor! If I thought that God did not hear sinners, that is to say, those who have any sin then would it be of no use for me to open my lips in prayer, or to lift my eyes to Heaven! But, blessed be His name, not only has He heard some of us, sinners though we are, but He has washed us from our sins, clothed us with the righteousness of Christ and we are accepted in the Beloved! And now when we plead with Him, we prevail! We delight ourselves in Him and He gives us the desire of our heart. We still dare not say that we are not sinners, for though we strive after perfection and shall never be satisfied with anything short of itand believe that we shall assuredly have it through Jesus Christ our Lordyet we have not at present obtained it. We labor after it, not as though we had attained it, or were already perfect, for we still confess that there is iniquity about our holy things, unholiness in our holiness, unbelief in our faith and something to be repented of in our repentance. Yet the Lord graciously hears us, blessed be His name, so that it is not absolutely true that God hears not sinners.

Neither is it true that God does not sometimes hear and answer the prayers of unregenerate men. I am going to speak upon a subject as to which there may be a difference of opinion, but I cannot help thatI am merely relating what I regard as facts. While I was but a child and knew not the Lord in a saving sense, I was taught by my parents that God heard prayer and I distinctly remember, as a boy, offering a prayer upon a very unimportant matter. If I were to tell you what it was, it would make you smile, but to me, as a child, it was a very great matter and I prayed to God many times about it. I know that I was not then bornagain, neither had I true faith in the Lord Jesus Christbut I did devoutly believe that God would hear me, in that matter, and I asked Him again and againand He gave me my desire. The result upon my mind was wonderfully beneficial, for it confirmed my belief in the existence of God and helped to arm me against any doubts of the infidel kind that might afterwards assail me, for the first and what was to me a very remarkable answer to my prayers, always anchored me fast!

On one occasion, in my early ministry, I mentioned this circumstance when I was addressing some Sunday school children in a chapel where the Brethren were of the very sound sortthey believed in Calvinistic Doctrine, not as I do, reckoning sixteen ounces to the pound, but allowing eighteen or nineteen ouncesand these extra ounces were not good for the people to feed upon! While I was speaking to the children, upstairs in the gallery were some of these divines and this remark of mine quite shocked them. They considered me to be as bad as Andrew Fuller, and to them he was, doctrinally, about the most horrible person that could be! So, outside the Chapel gate, I was assailed with questions about God hearing the prayers of unregenerate people. I was very young at the time and was rather bothered by those old fellows, but I found a very valiant defender. A poor woman, wearing a red cloak, pushed her way into the throng and addressed the old men thus, Fools, and slow of heart to believe what the Holy Spirit has written in the Word. I looked in astonishment at her, wondering what she was going to say. Did you never read, she said, that God feeds the young ravens which cry? Are they regenerate? Do they pray spiritual prayers? Is it not the most natural prayer in the world that comes from a hungry young raven? And if God hears them and satisfies their desires, do you not think that He will hear a man who is made in His own image, even though he is unregenerate? The woman won the day for me and I went away rejoicing!

I know that God hears the sincere and earnest prayers even of unregenerate persons concerning common things. I read, yesterday, a story of Mr. Samuel Medley, of whose hymns we have many in our hymn books, especially that one about Gods loving-kindness. Mr. Medley, in his younger days, was an officer on board one of his majestys men-ofwar. There was a very sharp fight in which a number of French vessels were destroyed and young Medley was busy taking the minutes upon the quarter deck. One of the officers, passing by the place where he was sitting, said, Mr. Medley, you are wounded. He had not perceived it, but the blood was streaming down his leg and he had to be taken down to the hospital. After the surgeon had examined him, he said to him, You will have to lose your leg. I am afraid you cannot live unless amputation takes place. Now Mr. Medley had a godly mother and father, and other gracious people in his family, but he was a godless, Christless sinneras wild as he could be. Yet he turned his face to the wall of his little bedroom and sought the Lord to spare him that leg. When the doctor came to him the next morning, he said, I never saw such a case as this before. There has been more healing done in the last twelve hours than I ever knew to take place in a leg in my life! I think you will not need to have it off, after all. That remarkable answer to prayer made a deep impression on young Medleys heart and I believe that biographies will show that, in many cases, God has heard the prayers of unregenerate persons because He meant to eventually save themand hearing their prayers led them to believe in Him and helped them to exercise that real spiritual faith which brought salvation to their souls.

Let me say, however, that God sometimes hears the prayers of intensely wicked men out of no love to them. You remember how He heard the cry of the children of Israel when they said, Who shall give us flesh to eat? The Lord sent them quails in great abundance but, while the flesh was yet between their teeth before it was chewed, the wrath of the Lord was kindled against the people, and the Lord smote the people with a very great plague. Again and again, the Lord granted the requests of Pharaoh, cruel Pharaoh, hard-hearted, proud Pharaoh who was afterwards destroyed in the Red Sea! Jehovah removed one plague after another from him, thus giving him (oh, dreadful thought!) an opportunity to exhibit the hardness of his heart and to increase it by sinning against the answered prayer! I beseech any man or woman here who, though not yet converted, has asked God for something and has received an answer to that petition, not to abuse that answer! I pray you to follow it up! It may be that there are designs of matchless love in store for you and that loving you with an amazing love, even while you are dead in sin, God has given you a token that it is even so! But if, after having presented your request to the Lord and had it granted, you continue to be His enemy and even grow worse, it may be that the next communication from God to you will be the fatal sentence out of the lips of Infinite Justice, You did pray to Me, but you never sought anything but temporal things. And now, since you have rejected Me and have not sought the treasures of My Grace, and have sinned against light and knowledge, I will depart from you and leave you to that final hardness of heart which will irrevocably seal your doom.

Finallyand here I want to throw the whole force of my message it is not true that God will not hear sinners when they pray to Him for mercy, confessing their sins and believing in Jesus Christ His Son. I have known three or four persons, quite recently, who have been perplexed with this idea. They have said, It is no use for us to pray, for God hears not sinners. My dear Friend, how can you, in the teeth of Gods Word, believe that statement, understanding it in the sense you give to it? For, if it were so, we would be under the Law, not under the Gospel! And then it would be necessary for us to be righteous before we could ask God for anythingthat is the teaching of Sinai, not of Calvary! It is the glory of the Gospel that God does hear sinners and that He does grant their requests! For you to say that He will not hear a sinner when he confesses his sin and forsakes itand cries to Him for mercyis to contradict the Gospel! Remember the Gospel of Jesus Christ is not sent to the righteous, but to sinners! It is not meant for the good, but for the bad for those who are unrighteous, ungodlyin fact, sinners.

Look, for instance, at Manasseh who, made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to err, and to do worse than the heathen. The Lord rebuked him, yet he would not listen. But when he was carried away to Babylon, in his affliction, He sought the Lord, his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers, and prayed unto Him: and He was entreated of him and heard his supplication, and brought him again to Jerusalem into his kingdom. Look also at the dying thief upon the cross and let not the thought that God hears not sinners ever enter into your heads! There was a sinner dying as a malefactor, yet he said to Jesus, Lord, remember me when You come into Your Kingdom. And Jesus said to him, Today shall you be with Me in Paradise. Never say that God hears not sinners! Have you not read the parable of the publican who would not lift up so much as his eyes unto Heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner? God did hear him, but He did not hear the Pharisee who thanked God that he was not as other men were!

Do you say that God hears not sinners? Read again the familiar story of the prodigal son. Here he comes, fresh from the swine-trough, filthy without and within, ragged, disgraced. But he has scarcely had time to say, Father, I have sinned, before he is heard even more fully than he has prayed and the kiss of acceptance is on his lips and the best robe has covered him! It is a lie, concocted in the bottomless Pit, to say that God hears not sinners. If they do but cry, O God, forgive us for Jesus sake, He must hear themit would be contrary to His Nature to turn away from them! Why, Sirs, to deny this is to fly in the face of all the invitations and promises of the Word of God! Take this one, for instance, Seek you the Lord while He may be found, call you upon Him while He is near; let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon. What does that mean but that God invites sinners to pray to Him and bids them come to Him, plainly implying that He will not reject them? Then there is that gracious invitation, Come now, and let us reason together, says the Lord: though your sins are as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool. Does that mean that God will not hear sinners? Why, my Lord Jesus came into the world on purpose to hear sinnersHe came here to seek and to save sinners!

Last Friday night I was speaking at Moody and Sankeys meeting at Bow Road Hall and I used an illustration which I will use now. I said that if somebody were to ring my doorbell at one or two oclock in the morning, and I put my head out the window and asked, What do you want? and the answer came, My wife is very ill, and I have come to ask you to take her case into your hands, I would say, Bless you, good man! I am not a doctor. Why have you come to me? The man would not be welcome at all, for it is not my business to prescribe for the sick! But there is another house, not very far from mine, where there is a red lamp over the doorfor there is a doctor living there. If the man will ring the bell at that house and say what he wants, he will be welcome and the doctor will say, I will be there directly, for it is my business to try to heal the sick.

Now, my Lord Jesus Christ has, as it were, a red lamp over His door. He is the Physician for sin-sick souls! It is His business to cure them. A doctor who never had any patients would be a poor doctor, would he not? And Jesus Christ (I say this with the utmost reverence), could not be a great Savior if there were no great sinners! And He could not be a great Savior if there were not a great many sinners to be saved! Anybody who is not a sinner cannot help Christ in this business. A man who is not ill would have to say to a doctor, I do not need your skill, for there is nothing the matter with me. But the man who is ill is the one the doctor wantsand the more ill he is, the more does he add to the fame of the physician if a cure is worked upon him. As for you who think yourselves very good people, Christ does not want you! You do not want Him and He does not want you. But you sinful people, you who know that you are sinners, you who, when I read my text, said, Ah, that is a death-blow to all our hopes, you are the very people whom Jesus Christ wants! He came into the world to save sinnersjust the sort of people that you are! So let the news be published over the whole earth that whoever believes on Him is not condemned! He has shed His precious blood for those who are condemned through sin, that the condemnation might pass away from them through their believing on Him!

It is gloriously true that God hears sinners, all sinners who come unto Him through Jesus Christ, His Son! Let the blind man say what he likes, we have tried it, and proved it for ourselvesand I hope that hundreds of you will prove, at this very moment, that He does hear sinners because He has heard you!

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON:\*   
**LUKE 24:49-53; ACTS 1:1-12.**

Luke 24:49. And, behold, I send the promise of My Father upon you: but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high. The promise of the Father was, as you know, the gift of the Holy Spirit. By this gift, our Lords rising again into Glory was celebrated. The Holy Spirit was the Heavenly largess of the great King by which He did honor to the return of His Son to His ancient Throne. The Apostles and the other disciples were to wait for this gift. They might have to wait for some days, but it is better to wait for Divine equipment than to go out to holy service in our own strength! All that you do will have to be undone unless it is done in the power of the Holy Spirit. But tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high. Has that command ever struck some people who profess to be serving the Lord? Are there not men who preach whom God never sent to preach? The best advice we could give them would be, Tarry. Are there not some who teach and some who take office in the church whom God has never endued with gifts or Graces for such work? Powerless workers stand in the way of true workersthey block up the path of those whom God sends to serve Him.

50. And He led them out as far as to Bethany. The ruling passion was strong in the hour of His departure. Well did He know that place, Bethanythe place of love where He had received a welcome such as He had experienced nowhere else on earthwhere lived Mary, Martha and Lazarusthere did He bid Good-bye to His disciples!

50. And He lifted up His hands and blessed them. He never had lifted up His hands to strike them, or to invoke curses upon them. Those hands were filled with blessings and the last thing that was seen of Jesus by human eyes was His hands uplifted in the act of blessing!

51, 52. And it came to pass, while He blessed them, He was parted from them and carried up into Heaven. And they worshipped Him. Then they were not UnitariansThey worshipped Himand there were angels present at the time who would have been sure to have rebuked them if it had been a wrong thing for them to worship Him. Indeed, they themselves, both as Jews and as Christians, would have felt in their inmost soul that they could not worship anyone but Godand Christ is Godso they did well to worship Him.

52. And returned to Jerusalem with great joy. Back to the place of His murderback to the place where they were likely to be murdered themselves.

53. And were continually in the Temple, praising and blessing God. Amen. So bold were they that the very central spot for the worship of Jehovah we made the place where Christs Divine Sovereignty was proclaimed!

Acts 1:1-3. The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach until the day in which He was taken up, after He, through the Holy Spirit, had given commandments unto the Apostles whom He had chosen: to whom also He showed Himself alive after His passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God. The Resurrection of Christ, as we have often said, is the best attested of all historical facts. There is not half as much reason to be sure that Napoleon Bonaparte was ever taken to St. Helena as to believe that Jesus Christ was raised up from the dead by the Glory of the Father. If the Resurrection of Christ is not credible, there remains nothing credible in history! I go further than that, and say that the news of yesterday, which you read in this mornings paper, you had no right to believe if you do not believe in Christs Resurrection, for the evidence in its favor is not half as strong as the evidence concerning the Resurrection of Christ from the dead. Remember that this feat was attested by men who could not be deceived concerning it and who sealed with their blood, as well as with their unfaltering testimony, their solemn belief that they had touched Him, that they had spoken to Him, that they had listened to Him, that they had eaten with Him and had seen Him eat of a broiled fish and of a honeycomb after He rose from the grave. We know that Christ has risen from the dead! That is one of the great cornerstones of the Christian faith. Fall back on that in every time of doubt and your fears will speedily disappear.

4-6. And being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, said He, you have heard of Me. For John truly baptized with water; but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days hence. When they therefore were come together, they asked of Him, saying, LORD, will You at this time restore again the Kingdom to Israel? They had not got rid of their old ideas concerning a kingdom visible among men! They still clung to the idea of a temporal kingdom for Israel. There was a Kingdom already established by Christ, but in the sense in which they understood the word, they were sadly in error.

7-8. And He said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father has put in His own power. But you shall receive power after the Holy Spirit is come upon you; and you shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. As indeed they were, for they went everywhere testifying to what they had seen and heardand very many were the conversions that followed. We need the same power to rest upon us, now, that rested upon them when the Holy Spirit came upon them!

9-10. And when He had spoken these things, while they beheld, He was taken up; and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward Heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel. Luke wrote before concerning the two men in shining garments who said to the women at the sepulcher, Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen. These two men in white apparel now ask an equally appropriate questionWhy do you stand gazing up into Heaven?

11-12. Which also said, You men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into Heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into Heaven, shall so come in like manner as you have seen Him go into Heaven. Then they returned unto Jerusalem from the mountain called Olivet which is from Jerusalem a Sabbath days journey.

\* [This Exposition belongs to last weeks Sermon [#2949, Volume 51OUR LORDS POSTURE IN ASCENSION Read/download the entire sermon, free of charge at http://www.spurgeongems.org.] but there was no space available for its insertion there, and no Exposition appears to have been given before the preceding discourse.]

HYMNS FROM OUR HYMN BOOK313, 319.   
Adapted from The C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Version 1.0, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307  
PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #1065 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

THE HEALING OF ONE BORN BLIND   
NO. 1065

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, AUGUST 11 1872, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind.   
John 9:32.**

THAT was quite truethere was no instance recorded in Scripture or in profane history at the time when this man spoke, of any person who was born blind having obtained his sight. I believe it was in the year 1728 that the celebrated Dr. Cheselden, of St. Thomass Hospital, for the first time in the worlds history achieved the marvel of giving sight to a man who had been blind from his youth up. And since then the operation of couching the eyes has been several times successfully performed upon persons who were born blind.

This man was, however, quite correct in the statement that then, and in his day, neither by skillful surgery nor even by miracle had birthblindness been healed. There was no doubt this man was a great student in the matter of blindnessit touched so nearly his own consciousness since he himself dwelt beneath its perpetual shadow. He was the one man in the city who understood the subject thoroughly. But, alas, by all his researches he found no ground for hope. Having learned the whole history of blindness and its cure, this man had come to the assured conviction that none ever had been healed who were in his plighta mournful conclusion, indeed, for him.

Our Lord Jesus did for him what never had been done before for any man. This pleasing fact seems to me to be full of consolation to any persons here present who labor under the idea that theirs is a most peculiar and hopeless case. It probably is not so solitary and special a case as you think, but even if we grant your supposition, there is no room for despair since Jesus delights to open up new paths of Grace. Our Lord is inventive in love! He devises new modes of mercy! It is His joy to find out and relieve those whose miserable condition has baffled all other help. His mercy is not bound by precedents. He preserves a freshness and originality of love.

If you can find no instance in which a person like yourself has ever been saved you should not, therefore, conclude that you must necessarily be lost. Rather, you should believe in Him who does great wonders, yes, and marvels unsearchable in the way of Divine Grace! He does as He wills, and His will is love. Have hope that inasmuch as He sees in you a singular sinner, He will make of you a singular trophy of His power to pardon and to bless. It was so with this mans eyesif never eyes that had been born blind were opened before, Jesus Christ would do itand the greater would be the glory brought to His name by the miracle.

Jesus does not need showing the wayHe loves to strike out paths for Himself and the greater the room for His mercy the better He likes the road. I purpose this morning gathering instruction from the particular expression which the healed man here used. May the Holy Spirit make the meditation truly profitable to us. And, first, I shall ask you to observe the peculiarity of his casehe was a man born blind. Then, secondly, the specialties of his cure shall occupy a little of our attention. And, thirdly, we shall make a few remarks upon the singular condition of the healed man from the moment that his eyes were opened.

I. First, then, THE PECULIARITY OF HIS CASE. It was not an instance of need of lightthat might both speedily and easily have been remedied. There was light enough all around him, but the poor creature had no eyes. Now, there are millions of persons in the world who have little or no light. Darkness covers the earth and gross darkness the people. It is the Churchs business to spread light on all sides and for this work she is well qualified. We ought not to suffer any person to perish for lack of knowing the Gospel. We cannot give men eyes, but we can give them light. God has placed among us His golden candlesticks and expressly said, You are the lights of the world.

Now, I believe that there are some persons who have eyes who, nevertheless, see but little for need of light. They are children of God but they walk in darkness and see no light. God has given to them the spiritual faculty of sight, but as yet they are down in the mines, in the region of night and death shade. They are imprisoned in Doubting Castle where only a few feeble rays struggle into their dungeon. They walk like men in a mist, seeing and yet not seeing. They hear doctrines preached which are not the pure Truth of God, the winnowed corn of the Covenant and, while their eyes are blinded with chaff and dust, they themselves are bewildered and lost in a maze.

Too many in this murky light weave for themselves theories of doubt and fear which increase the gloom. Their tears defile the windows of their soul. They are like men who hang up blinds and shutters to keep out the sun. They cannot see, though Grace has given them eyes. May it be yours and mine by explanation and example, by teaching with the language of the lips and the louder language of our lives, to scatter light on all sides that those who dwell in spiritual midnight may rejoice, because for them light has sprung up!

Again, this was not the case of a man blinded by accident. Here, again, the help of man might be of much service. Persons who have been struck with blindness have again recovered. Notably is this recorded in Bible history when Elijah struck a whole army with blindness, but afterwards prayed to God for them and they received their sight at once. There is much that we can do in cases where the blindness is rather to be traceable to circumstances than to Nature. For instance, everywhere in the world there is a degree of blindness caused by prejudice. Men judge the Truth before they hear it! They form opinions about the Gospel not having studied the Gospel itself!

Put the New Testament into their hands, entreat them to be candid and to investigate it with their best judgments and to seek guidance from the Holy Spirit, and I believe many would see their error and amend. There are some true spirits whose mental perceptions are blinded by prejudice who would be helped very graciously to see the Truth if we would tenderly and wisely put it before them. The prejudices of education sway many in this country. We are to the backbone a very conservative people, tenacious of established error and suspicious of any long neglected truth. Our countrymen are not soon moved to receive the most obvious truth unless it has been in vogue for ages.

Perhaps it is better that we should be so than that we should be whirled about with every wind of doctrine and should run after every novelty, as some other nations do. But for this cause the Gospel has in this country to combat a mass of prejudice. Such were my fathers, such ought I to be. Such our family has always been, therefore such will I be and such shall my children be. No matter how sure may be the Truth of God that is brought before some mens minds, they will not even give it a hearing because old men, good men and men in authority have decided otherwise. Such persons assume that they are right by inheritance and orthodox by ancestrythey cannot learn anythingthey have reached the fullness of wisdom and there they mean to stop.

The Church of God should try to remove all prejudices from human eyes from whatever sources they may come. Such opthalmia we may be able to cureand it is within our province to attempt it. Like Ananias, we may remove the scales from the eyes of some blinded Paul. When God has given eyes we may wash the dust out of them. Mingle with your fellow men. Tell them what the faith is that has saved you, let them see the good works which the Grace of God produces in youand as the Gospel at first removed from mens eyes the scales of Judaism, of the Greek philosophy and of the Roman prideso doubtless in this land and in this age it will make short work of the prejudices which some are doing their best to foster.

But this was not the case of a man who was blind by accident and consequently not a type of an understanding darkened by prejudice. The man was blind from his birth! His was the blindness of Nature and, therefore, it baffled all surgical skill. And, concerning the blindness caused by human depravity, the blindness that comes with us at our birth and continues with us till the Grace of God causes us to be born-again, I may say that since the beginning of the world it has not been heard that any man has opened the eyes of one whose spiritual blindness was born with him and is a part of his Nature!

If it is something from without that blinds me, I may recover. But if it is something from within which shuts out the light, who is he that can restore my vision? If from the beginning of my existence I am full of follyif it is a part of my nature to be without understandinghow dense is my darkness! How hopeless is the fancy that it can ever be removed except by a Divine hand! Let us think and say what we will, we are, every one of us, by nature born blind to spiritual things! We are not capable of perceiving God, not capable of perceiving the Gospel of His dear Son, not capable of understanding the way of salvation by faith in such a practical way as to be saved by it. We have eyes but we see not! We have understandings but those understandings are pervertedthey are like balances put out of gear, or a compass which forgets the pole. We judge, but we judge unrighteously. By nature we put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! We put darkness for light, and light for darknessand this is inbred in our nature, worked into our very constitution. You cannot get it out of man because it is a part of the manit is his Nature.

If you ask me why it is that mans understanding is so dark, I reply, because his whole nature is disordered by sinhis other faculties, having been perverted, act upon his understanding and prevent its acting in a proper manner. There is a confederacy of evil within which deceives the judgment and leads it into captivity to evil affections. For instance, our carnal heart loves sinthe set of our unrenewed soul is towards evil. We were conceived in sin and shaped in iniquity and we as naturally go after evil as the swine seeks out filth. Sin has a fascination for us! We are taken by it like birds with a lure, or fishes with a bait.

Even those of us who have been renewed have to watch against sin because our nature so readily inclines to it. With much diligence and great labor we climb the ways of virtue, but the paths of sin are easy to the feetis not that because our fallen nature inclines in that direction? You have only to relax your energy and to loose your soul from its anchor-hold and it drifts at once downwards towards iniquity, for so the current of Nature runs. It needs much power to send us upward, but we go downward as readily as a stone falls to the ground! You know it is so! Man is not as God made himhis affections are corrupt.

Now it is certain that the affections very often sway the judgment. The balances are held unfairly because the heart bribes the head. Even when we fancy that we are very candid we have insensible leanings. Our affections, like Eves, seduce the Adam of our understanding and the forbidden fruit is judged to be good for food. The smoke of the love of sin blinds our mental eyes. Our desire is often father to our conclusionwe think we are judging fairly but we are really pandering to our baser nature. We think this thing to be better because we like it better! We will not condemn a fault too severely because we have a leaning that way ourselves! Neither will we commend an excellence, because it might cost our flesh too dearly to be able to reach itor the not reaching it might strike too severe a blow upon our conscience. Ah, while our natural love of sin covers the minds eye with cataracts and even destroys its optic nerve, we need not wonder that the blindness is beyond removal by any human surgery!

Moreover, our natural pride and self-reliance revolt against the Gospel. We are, every one of us, very important individuals. Even if we sweep a street-crossing we have a dignity of self which must not be insulted. A beggars rags may cover as much pride as an aldermans gown. Selfimportance is not restricted to any one position or grade of life. In the pride of our nature we are all accounted by ourselves to be both great and good, and that which would in any way lowers us we repudiate as unreasonable and absurd. We cannot see it and are angry that others should! He who makes us suspect our own nothingness asks us to believe a doctrine hard to be understood. Pride will not and cannot understand the doctrines of the Cross because they ring her death-knell.

In consequence of our natural self-sufficiency we all aspire to enter Heaven by efforts and merits of our own. We may deny human merit as a doctrine but flesh and blood everywhere lusts after it. We need to save ourselves by feelings if we cannot by works and to this we cling as for dear life. Then the Gospel comes with its sharp axe and says, Down with this tree! Your grapes are gall. Your apples are poison. Your very prayers need to be repented of! Your tears need to be wept over, your holiest thoughts are unholy! You must be born-again and you must be saved through the merits of Another, by the free, undeserved favor of God. Then straightway all our manliness, dignity and excellence stand up in indignation and we resolve never to accept salvation on such terms! That refusal assumes the shape of a need of power to understand the Gospel. We do not and cannot understand the Gospel because our notions of ourselves stand in the way! We start with wrong ideas of self and so the whole business is confusion and we ourselves are blinded.

Again, Beloved, one reason why our understanding does not and cannot see spiritual things is because we judge spiritual things by our senses. Imagine a person who should take a foot rule as his standard of everything which exists in Nature and conceive that this man with his foot rule in his pocket becomes an astronomer. He looks through the telescope and he observes the fixed stars. He is told when he takes out his foot rule that it is quite out of place in connection with the heavenshe must give up his feet and inches and calculate by millions of miles.

He is indignant. He will not be deluded by such enthusiasm. He is a man of common sense and a foot rule is a thing which he can see and handlewhy, millions of miles are mere matters of faith, no one has ever traveled themand he does not believe in them! The man effectually closes his own eyes! His understanding cannot develop within such limits. Thus we measure Gods corn with our own bushel. We cannot be brought to believe that, as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are His ways higher than our ways, and His thoughts than our thoughts. If we find it hard to forgive, we dream that it is the same with God.

Every spiritual Truth of God is acted upon in the same way. We propose to measure the ocean of Divine love in thimbles and the sublime Truths of Revelation we estimate by drops of the bucket. We shall never be able to reach the thoughts and things of God while we persist in judging after the sight of the eyes, according to the measure of an earth-bound, carnal mind. Our understanding also has become unshipped and out of gear from the fact that we are at a distance from God and that, consequently, we do not believe in Him. If we lived near to God and habitually recognized that in Him we live and move and have our being, we should accept everything that He spoke as being true because He spoke it. And our understanding would be clarified at once by its contact with Truth and God.

But now we think of God as a remote personwe have no love to Him by nature nor any care about Him. It would be the best news some sinners could hear if there were information given that God was dead! They would rejoice above all things at the thought that there was no God. The fool always says, no God, in his heart, even when he does not dare say it with his tongue. We all by nature would be glad to be rid of Godit is only when the Spirit of God comes and brings us near to God and gives us faith in our heavenly Father that we joy and rejoice in Himand are able to understand His will.

Thus, you see, our entire nature, fallen as it is, operates to the blindness of our eyes and therefore the opening of the eye of the human understanding towards Divine things remains an impossibility to any power short of the Divine. I believe there are some Brothers whose notion is that you can open a sinners blind eye by rhetoric. As well hope to sing a stone into sensibility! They dream that you must enchant man with splendid periods and then the scales will fall from his eyes. The climax is a marvelous engine and the preposition is more wonderful still! If these will not convince men, what will? To finish a discourse with a blaze of fireworkswill not that enlighten?

Alas, we know well enough that sinners have been dazzled a thousand times by all the pyrotechnics of oratory and yet have remained as spiritually blind as ever they were! A notion has been held by some that you must argue the Truth of God into mens minds. They say that if you can put the doctrines of the Gospel before them in a clear, logical, demonstrative form they must give way. But, truly, no mans eyes are opened by syllogisms. Reason alone gives no man power to see the light of Heaven. The clearest statements and the most simple expositions are equally in vain without Divine Grace!

I bear witness that I have tried to make the Truth of God as plain as a pike-staff, as our proverb is, but my hearers have not seen it for all that! The best declaration of Truth will not, of itself, remove birth-blindness and enable men to look unto Jesus. Nor do I believe that even the most earnest Gospel appeals, nor the most vehement testimonies to its Truth will convince mens understanding. All these things have their place and find their use but they have no power in and of themselves to savingly enlighten the understanding. I bring my blind friend to this elevated spot and I bid him look upon yonder landscape. See how the silver river threads its way amid the emerald fields. See how yonder trees make up a shadowy woodhow wisely yonder garden, near at hand, is cultivated to perfectionand how nobly yonder lordly castle rises on yon knoll of matchless beauty.

Look! He shakes his headhe has no admiration for the scene. I borrow poetical expressions, but still he joins not in my delight. I try plain words and tell him, There is the garden and there is the castle, and there are the woods and there is the riverdo you see them? No, he cannot see one of them and does not know what they are like. What ails the man? Have not I described the landscape well? Have I been faulty in my explanations? Have I not given him my own testimony that I have walked those glades and sailed along that stream? He shakes his headmy words are lost. His eyes, alone, are to blame.

Let us come to this conviction about sinners, for, if not, we shall hammer away and do nothing! Let us be assured that there is something the matter within the sinner himself which we cannot cure. Let us do what we will with him and yet we cannot get him saved unless it is cured. Let us believe this, because it will drive us away from ourselves and it will lead us to our God. It will drive us to the Strong for strength and teach us to seek for power beyond our own. And then it is that God will bless us, because then we shall be sure to give all the glory to His name!

But I must leave the caseit is the case of a deep-seated blindness of Nature which cannot be touched by human skill.   
II. Now, secondly, we shall dwell a little upon THE SPECIALITIES OF THE CUREnot exactly of this mans cure, but of the cure of many whom we have seenand the first is, it is usually accomplished by the most simple means. The mans eyes were opened with a little clay put into them and then washed out at the pool of Siloam. God blesses very slender things to the conversion of souls. It is very humbling, sometimes, to a preacher who thinks, Well, I did preach a pretty fair sermon that time, to find God does not care a pin about him or his sermon and that a stray remark he made in the street which he hardly thought was of any value whatever was what God has blessed!   
That man, when he thought he succeeded best, had done nothing! And when he thought he had succeeded worstthen God blessed him. Many a soul has had his eyes opened by an instrumentality which never dreamed of being so useful and, indeed, the whole way of salvation is, in itself, extremely simple, so as to be well compared to the clay and spit which the Savior used. I do not find many souls converted by bodies of divinity! We have received a great many into the Church but never received one who became converted by a profound theological discussion.   
We very seldom hear of any great number of conversions under very eloquent preachersvery seldom indeed! We appreciate eloquence and have not a word to say against it by itselfbut evidently it has no power spiritually to enlighten the understanding and neither does it please God to use the excellency of words for conversion. When Paul laid aside human wisdom and said he would not use the excellency of speech, he only laid aside what would not have been of much service to him. When David put off Sauls armor and took the sling and the stone, he slew the giant and giants are not to be conquered today any more than they were then, by champions arrayed in Sauls armor. We must keep to the simple things, to the plain Gospel plainly preached. The clay and the spit were not an artistic combinationtaste was not charmed by them, or culture gratifiedyet by these and a wash in Siloam eyes were opened! Even thus it pleases God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe!   
But, secondly, in every case it is a Divine work. In this case it was evidently the Lord Jesus who opened the mans eyes, literally, and it is always His work by the Holy Spirit spiritually. He gives a man to know spiritual things and to embrace them by faith. No eye is ever opened to see Jesus except by Jesus. The Spirit of God works all our good things in us. Do not let us get away from this belief on any account. The exigencies of some mens doctrinal systems require them to ascribe some measure of power to the sinnerbut we know that he is dead in sin and altogether without strength. Beloved, alter your system of divinity but do not disavow the Truth of God which is now before us, for it stands confirmed by our own daily experience as well as revealed in the Word of God. It is the Spirit that quickens and enlightens. Blindness of soul yields only to that voice which of old said, Let there be light.   
Next, this opening of the eyes is often instantaneous and when the eye is opened it frequently sees just as perfectly as if it had always been seeing. I saw, a few hours ago, what I verily believe was the opening of the eyes of one seeking soul. Two enquiring ones came to me in the vestry. They had been hearing the Gospel here for only a short season but had been impressed by it. They expressed their regret that they were about to remove far away but they added their gratitude that they had been here at all. I was cheered by their kind thanks but felt anxious that a more effectual work should be worked in them, and therefore I asked them, Have you in very deed believed in the Lord Jesus Christ? Are you saved?   
One of them replied, I have been trying hard to believe. No, I said, that will not do. Did you ever tell your father that you tried to believe him? They admitted that such language would have been an insult. I then set the Gospel very plainly before them in as simple language as I could, but one of them said, I cannot realize it, I cannot realize that I am saved. Then I went on to say, God bears testimony to His Son, that whoever trusts in His Son is saved. Will you make Him a liar now, or will you believe His Word?   
While I thus spoke, one of them started as if astonished and she startled us all as she cried, Oh, Sir, I see it all, I am saved! O do bless Jesus for me, for showing me this and saving me, I see it all. The esteemed sister who had brought me these young friends knelt down with them while with all our hearts we blessed and magnified the Lord. One of the two sisters however, could not see the Gospel as the other had done, though I feel sure she will. Did it not seem strange that both hearing the same words, one should come out into clear light and the other should have to wait in the gloom? The change which comes over the heart when the understanding grasps the Gospel is often reflected in the face and shines there like the light of Heaven!   
Such newly-enlightened souls often exclaim, Why Sir, it is so plain! How is it I have not seen it before now? I understand all I have read in the Bible now, though I cared not for it before. It has all come in a minute and now I see what I never perceived before. I simply give one instance because it is one among thousands which one has seenin which the eyes have opened instantly. I can only compare the enlightened sinner to a person who has been shut up in a dark prison and has never seen the light and suddenly his liberator opens a window and the prisoner is staggered and amazed at what he sees when he looks abroad on hill and flood.   
To the Believer, Heaven-given sight is so superlative a gift and what is revealed to him so amazes him that he scarcely knows where he is! Very frequently, when Christ opens the eyes it is done in a moment and done completely in that moment, though in other instances it is a more gradual lightmen are at first seen as trees walkingand then by decrees film after film is taken from the spiritual eye. Now you must not wonder if light comes so suddenly that it should be quite a new sensation to the man and therefore should surprise him. Do you remember the first breath of spiritual life you ever drew? I think I remember it still.   
Do you remember the first sight you ever had of Christ? Oh, you must recollect it! There is fixed in the memories of some of us the first time we saw the sea and the first time we gazed upon the Alps, but these were nothing! We felt they were still but pieces of this old world and we had only seen a little more of what we had seen before. But conversion opens up a new world! It teaches us to peer into the invisible and to see the things not seen of mortal eyes. When we receive new eyes, we see a thousand things which utterly astound and at the same time delight us. Do you wonder if young converts get excited? I neither wonder nor blameI wish we had a little more excitement in our gatherings for worship.   
Who hears now-a-days the cry, What must I do to be saved? Or who hears a soul saying, I have found Him of whom Moses in the Law and the Prophets did write? Let us give plenty of liberty to the work of the Spirit of God and believe that when He comes men will not always act after the sober rules of decorum but will break through them and even be suspected of being drunk because they speak as men in their ordinary minds are not likely to do! It is a strange and marvelous thing to men when the Spirit of God opens their eyes and we must not wonder if they scarcely know what they say and forget where they are!   
One thing is certain that when the eyes are open it is a very clear thing to the man himself. Others may doubt whether his eyes are opened but he knows they areabout that he has no question. One thing I know, whereas I was blind, now I see. When the Lord in His infinite mercy visits a spirit that has been long shut up in the dark, the change becomes so great that he does not need to enquire, Am I changed or not? but he himself is assured of it by his own consciousness. Once give the man the eyes to see and he possesses a faculty that is capable of abundant use. The man who could see the Pharisees, could, by-and-by, see Jesus. He who has his eyes opened can not only see the trees and fields around him, but he can behold the heavens and the glorious sun!

And once give a man spiritual light, he has at once capacity for seeing Divine mysteries. He shall see the world to come and the glories yet to be revealed. Those newly-created eyes are those which shall see the King in His beauty and the land that is very far off. He has the faculty for seeing everything which shall be beheld in the day of the revelation of our God and Savior Jesus Christ! Oh, what a marvelous work is this! May everyone of us know it personally! I put the question, Do we know it? Have we thus had our eyes opened?   
III. I must close with a third point, which is thisTHE CONDITION OF THE HEALED MAN. When his eyes were opened, first he had strong impressions in favor of the Glorious One who had healed him. He did not know who He was, but he knew He must be something very good. He thought He must be a Prophet and when he came to know Him better he felt that He was God and he fell down and worshipped Him. No man has had his eyes opened without feeling intense love to Jesusyes, and I will add without believing in His Deitywithout worshipping Him as the Son of God!   
We do not want to be uncharitable, but we have a little common sense left. We never can see how a man can be a Christian who does not believe in Christ! Or how a man can be said to believe in Christ who only believes in the smallest part of Himreceives His Humanitybut rejects His Godhead. There must be a real faith in the Son of God and he is blind and dark, still, who does not fall down like the man in this story and worship the living Godbeholding the Glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ and blessing God that he has found both a Prince and a Savior in the Person of the Lord Jesus who has laid down His life for His people.   
Oh, I am sure if your eyes are opened, you love Jesus this morning! You feel your heart leap at the very thought of Him! Your whole soul goes after Him! You feel, if He has opened your eyes, those eyes belong to Him and your whole self, too! This man, therefore, became from that moment a confessor of Christ! They questioned him and he did not speak bashfully and conceal his convictions, but he answered the questions at once. Stephen was the first martyr, but this man was the first confessor, assuredly, and before the Pharisees he put it out plainly and straight to their faces, in simple language.   
And so, Beloved, if the Lord has opened our eyes we shall not hesitate to say so. He has done it, blessed be His name! Our tongue might well be smitten with eternal silence if we were to hesitate to declare what Jesus has done for us. I charge you who have received Grace from Christ Jesus to become confessors of the faith, to acknowledge Christ as you ought to do! Be baptized and united with His people and then, in whatever company you are, however others may speak for Him, or against Him, take your stand and say, He has opened my eyes, and I bless His name.   
Now this man becomes an advocate for Christ as well as a confessor, and an able advocate, too, for the facts, which were his arguments, baffled his adversaries. They said this and that, but he replied, Whether it is so or no it is not for me to say, but God has heard this Man, therefore this Man is not a sinner as you say He is. He has opened my eyes, therefore I know where He must have come from. He must have come from God.   
We have been arguing for a long time against infidelity with arguments which have never achieved anything. I believe that skeptics glean their blunted shafts and shoot them at the shield of Truth again. I fear that the Christian pulpit has been the great instructor in infidelity, for we have taught our people arguments which they never would have known if we had not repeated them under the notion of replying to them. But, Beloved, you will never meet infidelity except with facts. Say what it is God has done for you and prove it by your godly lives. Against the holy lives of Christians, unbelief has no power! Stand in serried phalanx, each man with his sword of holy living, covered in the power of the Holy Spirit, and the assaults of your foes, however desperate their malice, will utterly fail! God grant us, like this man, to learn the art of arguing for Christ by personal testimony!   
Well, then, it came to pass that this man with his eyes opened was driven out of the synagogue. Speckled birds are always hunted away by their fellow birds. One of the worst things that can happen to a man, as far as this world is concerned, is to know too much. If you will barely keep abreast with the times you may be tolerated. But if you get a little ahead of the age you must expect ill-treatment. Be blind among blind menit is the very dictate of prudence if you would save your skin. It is a very unsafe thing to have your eyes opened among blind men. For they will not believe in your assertions and you will be very dogmaticand as they cannot see, you have no common ground for argumentand you will fall at once to quarrelling.   
And if the blind men shall be in the majority, the probabilities are you will have to go out of door or window and make yourself company elsewhere. When God opens a mans eyes to see spiritual things, straightway others say, What is this fellow talking about? We do not see what he sees. And if the fellow is very simple he turns round to these blind men and says, I will explain to you now. Dear Friend, you will lose your pains for they cannot see! If a man is born blind, you need not talk to him about scarlet and mauve and magentahe cannot understand youhe does not know anything at all about it. Go on, for it is no use reasoning with him! The only thing you can do with him is to take him where he can get his eyes opened. To argue with him is utterly uselesshe has not the faculty.   
If you knew a person to be devoid of taste you would not quarrel with him because he said sugar tasted like salthe neither knows what sweet means nor what salt meansbut only uses words without understanding them. And a man who is without Grace in his heart does not and cannot know anything about religion. He catches up the phrases but he knows as much about the Truth of God itself as a botanist knows about botany who has never seen a flower, or as a deaf man knows of music. Do not try to reason with such peoplebelieve that they are incapable of learning from you by reasoningand go to Gods Holy Spirit, with this cry, Lord, open their eyes! Lord, open their eyes! Be very patient with them for you cannot expect blind men to see and must not be very angry with them if they do not.   
But be very prayerful for them and bring the Gospel to them in the power of the Holy Spirit. And then who knows but their eyes may be opened? But wonder not if they say you are a fanatic, an enthusiast, a Methodist, Presbyterian, cant, hypocritethose are the kind of words which the spiritually blind fling at those who can see. You say you have a faculty which they have notthey, therefore, deny the faculty because they would not like to admit that you have the best of themand they put you out of the synagogue.   
But notice, when this man was put out, Jesus Christ found him. It was a blessed loss for him, then, to lose the Pharisees and find his Savior! O Brothers and Sisters, what a mercy it is when the world casts us out! I remember an estimable lady of title, who is now in Heaven, who, when she was united with this Church was forsaken by all those persons of rank who had formerly associated with her. And I said to her, and she joined in the sentiment, What a mercy you are rid of them. They might have been a snare to you. Now (I said) you will have no further trouble from them. Yes, and she added, For Christs sake I could be content to be accounted as the off-scouring of all things. The society of the world never was any benefit to us and it never will be! Trying to be very respectable and to mingle in elevated society, and all that, is a snare to many Christians. Prize men for their real worth and not for their gilt! Believe those to be the greatest men who are the holiest men, and those to be the best company who keep company with Christ.   
It is a great blessing to the Church when it is persecuted. For the matter of that we might be glad to have back the days of Diocletian again. The Church is never purer on the wholenever more devoutand never increases more rapidly than when she enjoys the bad opinion of society! But when we begin to be thought very excellent people and our Church is honored, esteemed, and respectedcorruption sets inwe get away from Christ and prove again that the friendship of this world is enmity with God.   
The Lord grant that we may have our eyes so opened that our testimony may bring upon us the charge of singularity, and, then, if put away from the company of those who cannot see the Lord, may we live all the closer to Him and this shall be a great gain to us. The Lord bless you, Beloved, for Jesus Christs sake. Amen.

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THE QUESTION OF QUESTIONS   
NO. 2141

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY, MAY 4, 1890, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

INTENDED FOR READING   
ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, APRIL 20, 1890.

**Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when He had found him, He said unto him, Do you believe on the Son of God? John 9:35.**

THE eyes of the Lord Jesus are always on His chosen and He knows every circumstance which occurs to them. Jesus heard that they had cast him out. Our Lord had done too much for this man to forget him. Where Divine Grace has worked a great work its memory lingers. As it is written, You will have a desire to the work of your hands. In this let us take comfortif anything has happened to grieve usJesus has heard of it and will act accordingly. Our Lord sought for the outcast one. Unasked, He had opened his eyes. Unsought, He looks after him in his hour of trouble. He was not easy to find but our Lord is great at searching out His lost sheep and He persevered until He found him. If we, at any time, should seem cast off from Christ as well as cast out by proud religionists, He will find us when we cannot find Him. Blessed be His name!

Our Lords objective was to do this man real servicehe had been cast out of the synagogue and he, therefore, needed comfortand it would be a grand thing so to comfort him as to lead him onward and upward in the Divine life! Our Lords way of comforting was to ask a question which would lead to heart-searching and suggest spiritual advance. It is not the way that you and I might take, but His ways are not our ways, neither are His thoughts our thoughts. Wisdom is justified of her methods. It is the best thing, when a man is in soul trouble, to make him look to his own condition before God and specially to his faithfor when he finds that he is right on the main pointthis assurance will be to him a wellspring of comfort.

We are sure that our Lord took the very best means to bring this man to well-grounded confidence when He said to him, Do you believe on the Son of God? He helped him, by this question, to make a considerable advance in faith, for although the poor man had believed in Jesus up to the measure of his knowledge, his knowledge had been slender. But now he was to learn that the opener of his eyes was the Son of God! This is such faith as the Person of our Lord deserves, but such as many have never rendered to Him and for lack of this they miss the great power of His Grace.

The man was excommunicated and was then placed under the ban of the Jewish Churchbut trust in the Son of God would quickly remove from him any alarm which he might feel on that account. He that enjoys

the favor of the Son of God will not tremble at the frown of the Sanhedrim! Oh, that the Lord would comfort many this morning while I press upon each one of you this one personal question, Do you believe on the Son of God? To young and old, to rich and poor I shall direct this solemn enquiry.

It is not a perplexing question upon an abstruse point, but a simple and urgent enquiry relating to everybody here present. It is not a problem profound and intricatea question of free will or predestination, of postmillennial or premillennial adventsit is a practical questionpressing and present and one that concerns every man in his everyday life at this very moment. I wish each one of you to think that I now put my hand on your shoulder and look you in the face and say earnestly, Do you believe on the Son of God? This is not a question out of which angry controversy can possibly arise, for it has to do with yourself and yourself only!

Whatever discussion there may be will be confined within your own bosom. It concerns yourself, only, and it is put in the singular, Do you believe on the Son of God? It was put by Jesus Himself to this man consider, then, that Jesus puts it to you, also this morning, even to you, apart even from your spouse or friend.

I. I shall begin pressing home the question, by the help of the Holy Spirit, by making the remark that THE QUESTION NEEDS TO BE RAISED. It must not be taken for granted that you believe on the Son of God. Oh, yes, I am a Christian, says one. I was born in a Christian country. I was taken to Church while a babe and was duly christened and I now repeat the creed. Surely this is sufficient proof of my faith! Or possibly you say, My mother took me to the Meeting House before I could walk and ever since I have never quit the ways of old-fashioned Nonconformity.

All this may be so, but it is not to the point. Do you believe on the Son of God? This is a spiritual and vital question which cannot be thus set aside. You reply, My moral character has always been correct. In business I have always discharged my liabilities and I have always been ready to help every charitable institution. I am glad to hear all this. Still, it does not touch the matter now in handthis query goes deeper than outward conduct. Hear it againDo you believe on the Son of God?

Numbers of moral, amiable, generous and even religious people have not believed on the Son of God. Excuse me, I cannot let you slip through in the crowd. I must lay hold upon you with a holy vehemence that even forgets courtesy for the moment and I must say to the best of you, Do you believe on the Son of God? Though this man had been scrupulously obedient, yet our Lord asked the question! It may be I speak to some who say, I have been at all times obedient to the duties of religion. Whatever I have found to be commanded of God in His Word I have carefully carried out.

Was it not so, also, with this man born blind? The Savior put clay upon his eyes and told him to go to the pool of Siloam and wash off the clay the man did exactly as he was told. He did not go to another pool, but to the pool of Siloam. And he did not attempt to get the clay from his eyes by any other process than that of washing. He was very obedient to Christ, yet the Lord said to him, Do you believe on the Son of God? No outward observances, however carefully carried out, will obviate the need of the enquiry, Do you believe on the Son of God?

I am afraid some of you have not been very careful in fulfilling outward ordinances and for this you are blameworthybut if you had been scrupulously exactno outward observances, however carefully followed out, can exempt you from the question, Do you believe on the Son of God? This man, in addition, had passed through a very remarkable experience. He could say, One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see. He could never forget those long nights while a child, a youth and a man. All those years no ray of light had ever gladdened himto him night and day were much the same. He had sat in deep poverty all through that dreary darkness and learned no art but that of begging.

As the cooling water touched his eyes and washed away the clay, the sunlight streamed in upon the midnight and he saw! He had undergone all that change and yet the Savior said to him, Do you believe on the Son of God? So, my dear Hearer, you may be a very altered man and yet you may not be a believer on the Son of God! You, my dear Sister, may be a very different woman from what you used to beand when you tell your experience it may be very remarkable and well worthy of being recorded in a bookand yet this question must be pressed upon you!

Whatever your experience may be, do not forget self-examination. Say not, I never need question myselfsuch experience as I have had settles my position. I am not so childish as to look within or have a doubt about my faith. So remarkable a case as mine may not be suspected. Talk not sofor if our Lord, who knew the change this man had undergone, yet said to him, Do you believe on the Son of God? I also must take liberty to press home, upon the most remarkable person here, the same personal enquiryDo you believe on the Son of God?

This man, in addition to his reception of bodily sight, had exercised a degree of faith in the Lord Jesus. If you follow the chapter through you will see that he had some sort of faith in Christ while he was blind, or he would not have gone to Siloam to wash away the clay. And when he saw, he did not doubt that Jesus had really made him wholeand he avowed the fact. He also said, He is a Prophet. He went further still, for he said, If this Man were not of God, He could do nothing. He had believed as far as his light helped him to believe so that the germs of faith were in him. Yet our Lord Jesus Christ pressed him with the enquiry, Do you believe on the Son of God?

Beloved Friends, you, too, may never have been troubled with skepticism. It may be you have not even examined the grounds of your faith because you have never been tempted to suspect them. You have taken in the Gospel from your youth as clearly true and so you have believed it without being much perplexed. I am thankful that you have done so. Still, do you believe in Jesus Christ as the Son of God? Is Jesus God to you? Do you trust Him as able to do anything and everything for you? Is He to you able to save to the uttermost them that come unto God by Him? If not, may the Lord help you to take this higher step, for short of this you have

not received the true Christ of God!

It is of very small use to say, Oh, yes, I believe in Christ, the noblest of examples. I believe in Christ, the most instructive of Prophets. Do you believe in Him also as the Sacrifice, as the Priest, the Savior, the Salvation? And gathering all up in one, do you believe in Him as the Son of God? Do you believe in the Son of God, as revealed in Holy Scripture? Furthermore, this man had spoken out bravely for Christ, as you saw in the chapter which we read just now. He spoke out like a Trojan, said one. Say, rather, like a Spartan. He was cute, shrewd, sharp, and unanswerable.

The learned doctors were nowhere in comparison with the blind beggar whose eyes had been opened! He stood up for the Man who had given him sight and allowed no charge to lie against Him. His statements were short but full and his answers were, themselves, unanswerable. Who would have thought that a blind beggar could have fashioned such a logical argument as he did? Yet to this bold confessor the Savior had to say, Do you believe on the Son of God?

Ah, my Friend! As a preacher you may be able to declare the Gospel very clearly to others and you may enforce it with powerful arguments but, Do you believe on the Son of God? Even in your case the question must be plied. Some of you may remember that story which is told in one of Krummachers books. I half forget it myself, but it was somewhat on this wise. The preacher had delivered himself of a solemn discourse and was waited upon, on the following Monday, by one of his hearers, who said, Sir, if what you said last Sunday was true, what will become of us?

Now, if he had said, What will become of me? the preacher would have explained still further to him the Gospel in the usual way. As it was, he parried the word, us. But his visitor almost unconsciously, said, Alas, dear Sir! If these things are so, what shall we do? The Lord used that plural pronoun to the awakening of the preacher who had not been converted though he thought he had been! Oh, that we who speak for God may also hear the Lord speak to us! I know the good preacher and love him right well, who, when he was himself preaching, as he had done for years, was saved through the personal application of his own sermon.

He is a minister of the Church of England but he did not know the Lord. While he was preaching the Lord applied to his heart with power a Gospel Truth which so affected him that he spoke with the accent of conviction which is natural to the renewed man. At last a Methodist, who was in the church, shouted out, The parsons converted! Hallelujah! and all the people broke out with cries of praise. The preacher himself joined in the universal joy and they sang together, Praise God, from whom all blessings flow!

Oh, what a mercy it is when the waiter at the Lords feast is himself fed! Should not those who are to bear the healing balm to the sick be themselves healed? I have not been ashamed to speak in my Lords name, nor have I blushed to defend His cause before His enemies. Yet I would remember that I may have done all this and yet I may not know the King to whom I have been a herald. O Friends, how terrible it would be to have cast out devils in His name and yet to be unknown of Him! Therefore, we press the question, Do you believe on the Son of God?

This man had gone further, still, for he had suffered for Christ. He had been put out of the synagogue for bearing witness to the power of Jesus but none the less for this he had to hear the questionDo you believe? Yes, you, dear Friend, may have been laughed at by your relatives for your religiousness. You may have had to quit a good situation because of your determination to be honest, temperate and pure. You may at the present moment stand under the ban of some cold-hearted Church because you have been more earnest than was desired. But as much as I appreciate your fidelity, you must excuse me if I buttonhole you in the Lords name and say, as Christ did to this man, Do you believe on the Son of God?

It is one thing to play the hero before our fellowmen and another to be true in the secret chamber of our own soul. You are bold in your confession but do you really believe in the Lord Jesus? Can that bold confession be supported by your life? I hope you are not a Defender of the Faith after the manner of Henry the Eighth who wore the title but was by no means worthy of it! Come, my eloquent Friend, do you live as you talk? Do you feel, yourself, as you would make me feel? Do you believe on the Son of God? You will see, dear Friends, from the run of my talk, that I am not for letting anybody here escape the personal question.

My venerable Friend who has been an officer of this Church longer than anybody else will not refuse to ask himself this question. My beloved Sister in Christ who has conducted a Bible class for years and that other who has been so useful in the schoolsneither of these will refuse to answer this searching word, Do you believe on the Son of God? I must dare to make enquiry of yonder minister. My father in Christ whose shoe lace I am not worthy to unlooseI must even ask of you, as I do ask of myself, Do you, for yourself, in very deed, believe on the Son of God? This question must thus be raised and raised for everybody because many people nowadays do not believe on the Son of God.

There are many about who would be mightily offended if we denied their right to the name of Christian, who, nevertheless, know not the Son of God. These folks admire a man who will concoct a sermon to show that they may be Christians and not believe on Jesus as God. I shall preach no such sermon until I lose my reasonbut I shall press upon this unbelieving age this vital questionDo you believe on the Son of God? Man, if you do not so believe, your faith falls short of that which Christ would have you possess and you had need take heed lest it fall short of landing you in Heaven.

With a Savior less than Divine you have a religion less than saving. How is it with you? Will you believe on the Son of God, alone, or run with the vain multitude who see nothing in Him but a man? I think every man here will say, You need not apologize, dear Sir, for asking the question, for it is one we have to ask ourselves. Indeed, I know it is so. Who is there that lives after so pure a sort that he never has to try this issue? We have heard persons cry out against the hymn

*Tis a point I long to know*

***Oft it causes anxious thought:   
Do I love the Lord or no?   
Am I His, or am I not?***

But if a man never has an anxious thought about his state, I should have a great many anxious thoughts about him! One of our poets has well said

*He that never doubted of his state   
He may, perhaps, he may too late.*

There are so many things about us all which we need to mourn over and these set us asking the questions, Is my faith the faith which works by love and purifies the soul? Do I truly believe on the Son of God? At times we rejoice in an absolute certainty as to our faith in Christ and the Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God. But at other seasons we are exercised with great searchings of heart and no question causes us greater anguish than thisDo I believe on the Son of God? It will be woe to us if, after all our profession, experience and effort we should, after all, have no more than the name of faith and the notion of faithbut be found devoid of the life of it in our souls. Yes, the enquiry of our text is a question which ought to be raised.

II. But, secondly, THE QUESTION CAN BE ANSWERED. I am sure it can be answered, or our Lord would not have asked it, for He was never so unpractical as to go about the world asking men questions about themselves which it was not possible to answer. Do you believe on the Son of God? is an inquiry to which you can give the answer if you willYes, or, No. I beg to press you to practical action upon it.

It were, indeed, a most unhappy thing if this question could not be answered. Suppose we were condemned to live in a state of perpetual doubt as to our being believers in the Lord Jesus? This would involve an awakened man in a condition of constant anxiety. If I am not sure whether I am in the favor of God or not, I am in a condition of decided sorrow. I remember hearing a Christian minister say one day in company that no man could be sure that he was saved. Then I wondered what he had to preach that was worth preachingfor if we cannot know that we are saved, then we cannot be sure that we are at peace with Godand this is to be in jeopardy every hour!

There can be no peace to the mind of the awakened man if he does not know that he is saved. It is like one at sea who is half afraid that his ship is out of the track and may soon strike upon rock or quicksand, but is not quite sure whether it is so or not. The captain should take no rest till he has taken his bearings and found out his position in reference to the dangers of the sea and the hope of reaching the desired haven. To leave his position a moot point would be to continue in fear and to court danger. To leave your faith in question is to imperil a vital point. He must be sadly seared in conscience who can leave this hinge of the souls condition unexamined.

There is a possibility of knowing to a certainty that you believe on the Son of God. Did I say there is a possibility of it? Thousands have attained to this certainty. You can know that you believe on the Son of God as surely as you know that there is a Queen of England or as surely as you know that you, yourself, existand this without falling into fanaticism or presumption! Many among us are so habituated to faith in the Lord Jesus that we could no more question the existence of faith in our own hearts than we could dispute the fact that our hearts beat! Such assured persons shirk no examinationfor them the more examination the better for their hope has firm and deep foundations. They can give a reason for the hope that is in them.

As sure as mathematical certainty is the confidence of the Believer in the Lord Jesusfor we know whom we have believedand we are persuaded that He is able to keep that which we have committed to Him. There are Believers in our Lord Jesus who have gone on for the space of 30 years without a doubt of their faith in Him because that faith has been in daily, happy exercise upon Him. You can answer the question, Do you believe? because you are at this moment believingdistinctly and intensely believing. Those who abide in the Light of Gods Countenance and feel the Holy Spirit within them, bearing witness with their spirits, are in no doubt as to their possession of faith!

If we feel a burning love to God, a growing hatred of sin, a struggle against the evil which is in the world and somewhat of the likeness to Christ, we may safely infer that these fruits of faith come from the root of faith. By the work of the Holy Spirit upon life and heart we know and are sure that we have believed in Jesus as the Son of God. I hope I speak to many this morning who are enjoying assurance and know that they have passed from death unto life. It is with some a matter of consciousness. How do I know that I live, breathe, stand, walk? I cannot explain to you the mode by which I arrive at certainty on this matter, but I am quite sure that I do live and breathe, and so on. Indeed, the power to question the fact implies it!

So a Believer may be sure that he believes that Jesus is the Son of Godand while he may not be able to give logical proofyet he may be, none the less, conscious in his own soul that it is so. And he is correct in his assurance, for even the very power to be anxious after Divine Grace is an evidence of Divine Grace. If there is any question about whether you have been a Believer or not for the last 20 years, do not fight that questionbegin at once to believe, the Lord helping you! Turn your eyes to the Cross and trust yourself wholly with Christ from this good hour, and then you will believe, and the act will shine out its own proof! Say from your heart

*Just as I amwithout one plea   
But that Your blood was shed for me   
And that You bid me come to You   
O Lamb of God, I come!*

Thus coming you will know that you

have come and by continuing to come you will grow assured that you have come! Let not the past be the main enquiry, but settle the immediate present. May the Holy Spirit cause the sacred fire to burn and then you will feel the flame before long. To say, I do now believe on the Son of God, is the best way of answering the question about your condition. If you want further help to solve the question, there are marks and evidences of true faith by which you can readily test yourself. Do you enquire, Do I believe on the Son of God? Then answer thisIs Christ precious to you? For unto you who believe He is precious. If you love and prize Him as the most precious thing on earth or in Heaven, you could not have this appreciation of Him if you were not a true Believer.

Tell me again, have you undergone the change called the new birth? Have you passed through a process which could be described as being brought out of darkness into marvelous light? If so, your new birth is a sure evidence of faith, for these things go together. Faith is a proof of regeneration and regeneration is also a proof that you have faith in the Son of God. Again, are you obedient to Christ? For faith works by love and purifies the soul. Is it so with you? Has sin become bitter? Do you loathe it? Has holiness become sweet? Do you follow after it? I do not ask whether you are perfectbut is the whole current of your soul towards being perfect?

Can you say that if you could live entirely without sin it would be the greatest delight you could have? That absolute perfection would be Heaven to you? Ah, then it shows which way your mind goes! It shows that there is a change of Nature for no unrenewed heart pines after perfect holiness! Your heart is bending towards Christs perfect rule and sovereignty and I am sure that you have believed that He is the Son of God. You are resting upon Him with a true and living faith if you take up His Cross heartily and follow Him.

Again, do you love God? Do you love His people? We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the Brethren. Do you love His Word? Do you delight in His worship? Do you bow in patience before His rod so that you take up the bitter cup and say, Your will be done? These things prove that you have faith in Jesus. Look well to them. But supposing, after using all enquiries and tests, you still say, Sir, this is a grave question and requires great care. I have not settled it yet? Then follow this man in his method. When he was asked, Do you believe on the Son of God? he turned to the Lord and replied with another question to the Lord Jesus.

We may resort to Jesus for aid . He who had once been blind eagerly asked, Who is He, Lord, that I may believe on Him? Turn, then, O Enquirer, in the moment of your distress and cry, Lord Jesus, I beseech You teach me to know You better, that I may have more faith in You. Go to Jesus for faith in Jesus! Moreover, there are certain great Truths upon which faith feeds and, to be sure that you have faith you had better think of these Truths of God. May the Lord be pleased especially to reveal Himself to you so that you may know Him and thus may believe on Him! O Soul, you will not long be in any doubt if you perceive those glorious things which concern your Lord! Know who He is and what He is, and what He has done and this will enable you to believe in Him as the Son of God.

As men were accustomed, when hardly pressed before the courts to say, I appeal unto Caesar, so do you appeal unto Christ Himself and rest assured that in Him you will find deliverance! If your faith is hidden from yourself it is not hidden from Himand if you cannot call it forth by thoughts of the work of Grace within, turn your mind towards your Savior and Covenant Head in Heavenand faith will open itself as the cups of the flowers open to the sun. The question can be answered.

III. Thirdly, THE QUESTION SHOULD BE ANSWERED AND SHOULD BE ANSWERED AT ONCE. If I could, I would concentrate all your thoughts upon this one investigation which to each man so vitally concerns himselfDo you believe on the Son of God? Answer this from your own soul. I am no father confessorbe father confessors to yourselves. Let each man give his verdict at the bar of his conscience. Answer, also, as in the Presence of Christ for, like the man in the narrative, you are in His Presence now.

Answer for yourself before the heart-searching, heart-trying God. Answer it to men, also, for this your Savior deserves of you. Be not ashamed to say outright, I do believe on the Son of God. This fact must not be hidden away in a corner. Remember how our Lord in Holy Scripture always puts open confession side by side with faith as a part of the plan of salvation? You will never find anywhere in the Word of GodHe that believes and takes the Lords Supper shall be savedbut you do find it written, He that believes and is baptized shall be saved. Why does baptism take such a prominent place? Partly because it is the ordained form of open confession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

The passage is parallel with that other, He that with his heart believes and with his mouth makes confession of Him, shall be saved. What less can Christ expect than an outspoken faith if there is any faith at all? Will you bring to Him who redeemed you a cowardly faith? To Him that intercedes for you a dumb faith? To Him that opened your eyes a faith which dares not look your fellow men in the face? No! No! Speak! And speak out and let the world know that He who died on Calvary is to you, if not to anybody else, the Son of God! The question ought to be answered answered before menand answered at once. Do not delay, but make haste to keep your Lords command.

The question ought to be answered at once because it is of first importance. If you do not believe on the Son of God, where are you? You are not alive unto God, For the just shall live by faith. You cannot stand, for it is written, You stand by faith. You cannot work for God, for it is faith that works by love. Where is your justification if you have no faith? We are justified by faith. Where is your sanctification? Does not the Lord say, Sanctified by faith that is in Me? Where is your salvation without faith? Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved. You cannot be or do anything acceptable without faith for, without faith it is impossible to please God.

You are in an evil case and will soon be in a worse one unless you can sayI believe that Jesus is the Son of God, and I trust Him as my All in All. He that does not believe on the Lord Jesus Christ is under present condemnation for, He that believes not is condemned already. Condemned alreadyand therefore this question must be answered immediatelyunless you are content to abide under wrath and content to live unreconciled to God! While sitting here you are in danger of the wrath to come. Can you be at ease? Remember, you are losing time while you are in ignorance as to your faith. If you are not believing in Jesus you are spending your days in death and in alienation from God.

If it is a question whether you have believed on the Son of God, it is no question that you are losing comfort and happiness. If you go up and down this troubled world without a knowledge of your own salvation without an assurance of your acceptance with Godyou are losing power to honor the name of the Lord by a joyful conversation. You are in an inconsistent position and in an inconvenient one. If you really have not believed in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, you are resting short of eternal life!

Meanwhile, you come up to the Lords house and unite avowedly in worshipping Him while you deny Him the first essential of true worship namely, your faith in Him! Ah, dear Friend, if you have not believed that Jesus is the Son of God, the hope that you will ever do so grows fainter every day. The longer a man lingers in any state, the more likely it is that he will continue there. When men have long been accustomed to do evil the Prophet cries over them, Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard his spots? It is an awful thing to have heard the Gospel so long in vain. If even the appeals of Calvary are lost on you, what remains? Gospel-hardened sinners are hardened, indeed. Some of you have been unbelievers in the Lord Jesus Christ for 50 years and, I fear, will die in unbeliefand what then?

The portion of unbelievers is terrible. If you believe not that I am He, you shall die in your sins. Horrendous words! Die in your sins. That is what will, in all probability, happen to many of youno, it will surely happen unless you believe on the Son of God! Come, therefore, to this question at once. Do not delay for an hour. If the answer is unsatisfactory, the case can be altered if attended to at once. He that has not as yet believed on the Son of God may yet do so. Still is time afforded youdo not despise the respite of mercy. Upon you shines the light of another Sundaylong-suffering is not yet exhausted. The Gospel is still preached in your earsthe day of hope is not over!

The Bible is still open before you and the gate of Mercy is open, also, for all who will enter by faith. Therefore I pray you to now believe on the Son of God! You may not live to see another Lords-Daytherefore snatch the present opportunity. Soon will the tidings come to us about you, as they have so often come about others, He is dead, or, She has gone. Since eternity can be molded by today, I pray you, awaken yourselves! Look to your faith in Jesus, for if that is right, all is wellbut if that is found wanting, all is wanting.

IV. So I close with my fourth point which is thisTHE QUESTION MAY BE OF THE UTMOST IMPORTANCE TO US IF WE ANSWER IT. Do you believe on the Son of God? Suppose that the question has to be answered in the negative. If you are compelled to sigh and say, No, no! then be it so and look the truth in the face. It will tend to awaken you from your carelessness if you know where you are.

One came to join the Christian Church the other day who said, While I was at my work in the parlor, this thought suddenly came to me, You are an unsaved woman. I could not shake it off. I went down to my cooking in the kitchen but it followed me. From the fire and from the water I seemed to hear the accusation, You are an unsaved woman. When I went in to my meals I could scarcely eat my bread because of this choking thought. It haunted me, You are an unsaved woman! It was not long before that unsaved woman sought the Lord and became a saved woman by faith in Christ Jesus!

Oh, that I might put this idea into some minds this morning! You are an unsaved man! You do not believe on the Son of God and therefore you are in the gall of bitterness and in the bonds of iniquity! I would like to make the seat you sit upon grow hard and the very house to grow uncomfortable, so that you should vow, Please, God, I can but stagger home. I will seek my bedside and cry for mercy. I wish you were under even greater urgency and would entreat the Lord for mercy at once, on the spot! You would do so, I think, if you fairly answered this question and felt that the reply must be, No.

But, supposing you are able to say, Yesthis question will have done great servicefor it will have brought you great peace. As long as you leave this matter in doubt you will be tossed about. But when it is decided, you will enter into rest. Peace, like a river, shall flow into your soul when you can say

*I do believe, I will believe,   
That Jesus died for me;   
That on the Cross He shed His blood,   
From sin to set me free.*

Know that He is yours and you will rejoice in Him! You cannot obtain settled peace till you settle this question. This done, you will try to do something for Jesus to show your gratitude for His salvation. Until I know that I am saved I shall have no heart for holy work. A wise man stops at home and looks after his own concerns when he feels that they are in perilbut when they are all safe he can look to the interests of his neighbors.

When I know I am saved and that there is nothing more for me to do in that matter, for Christ has finished it all, then I enquire what I can do for Him who has done so much for me! Where is the child or the man I can talk to about my Savior? I will go and hunt up lost ones and tell them of a present salvation. Perhaps I have never dared to speak to my wife or to my children about eternal lifebut now that I possess it and know that I do because I believe on the Son of God I will begin to instruct others in this good doctrine. Yes, diligence grows out of assurance.

And what a help assurance will be in the time of trouble! You have a great affliction coming on, but if you can say, I know that I believe in Jesus Christ the Son of God, you will face it with quietness. Is it a surgical operation? You will lie still and yield yourself up to the surgeons knife, come life or deathand you will do it easily. Is it a cruel persecution which you have to face tomorrow? You will not be afraidbut, believing

in Jesusyou will take up His Cross. Are you growing old and thinking of the time when you must die? It will not matterfor you know that you will only be going Home since you believe on the Son of God!

He never lets a soul believe on Him in vain. He never casts away a poor heart that trusts Him. What strength your faith will give you! You will be a hero whereas you might have been a coward. Now that you know and are sure that you believe on the Son of God, you will fear no evil. This, I think, will fire you with holy zeal and praise. You have been saying, I do not know how it is that I am so dull and stupid! I go to the house of God and I do not feel the power of the WordI am afraid I am not a Christian. Just so. As long as you have that chilling fear upon you, you will not be sensitive to the cheering truthbut when you know that you believe on the Son of God and are sure of your salvationyour heart will beat to another tune and the music of the upper spheres will take possession of your bosom. I should not wonder if you should sing, as Toplady does

*Yes, I to the end shall endure   
As sure as the earnest is given;   
More happy, but not more secure,   
The glorified spirits in Heaven.*

You will begin to taste heavenly happiness when you have a sense of heavenly certainty. Being thus moved with gratitude and filled with joy, the result will be a great concern for others who have not believed on the Son of God. You will look upon unbelievers with sorrow and alarm. They are very wealthy, perhapsbut you will despise their gold because it blinds their eyes. They are very clever, perhapsbut you will not worship their abilities because the eternal light is hid from their eyes. You will say to yourself, They may have all their wealth and all their cleverness, but I have the Son of God! In having Christ, you have more than Alexander possessed when he had won the world! He could conquer the earth, but he could not win Heaven, for he knew nothing of believing on the Son of God!

In this respect you have done more than an angel could dofor an angel has no lost soul to trust with the Son of Godno sin to wash away in the Saviors blood. But you have trusted Him and you have been washed in His bloodand you are clean. Go home and sing, my Brothers and Sisters! Go home and tell it out among your fellows that Jesus is the Son of God and abundantly able to save! Go home and weep some poor sinner to Jesus! Go home and never rest until you can say to GodHere am I, and the souls that You have given me. We are believing on the Son of God. Peace be with you! Amen.

**PORTIONS OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMONJohn 9.** HYMNS FROM OUR OWN HYMN BOOK906, 550, 549. Adapted from The C.H. Spurgeon Collection, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307.  
Sermon #3008 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

AN ALL-IMPORTANT QUESTION   
NO. 3008

A SERMON   
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, OCTOBER 4, 1906.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, JANUARY 13, 1867.

**Do you believe in the Son of God?   
John 9:35.**

THE man to whom our Savior addressed this question had been born blind, but he had been the subject of one of the Masters mightiest miracles and was rejoicing in the possession of his newly-found sight! Our Lord is not accustomed to doing things by halves, so, having given to this poor man natural sight, He intended to also give him spiritual sight. Having delivered him from the misery of living in this world in darkness, He would also deliver him from the dense darkness that brooded within his soul. Blessed be the name of the Lord, we are never straitened in Him, but only in ourselves; and when we receive not, it is either because we ask not, or because we ask amiss. Our Lord had given to this man His left hand full of minor mercies and now He finds him out with His right hand full of yet richer treasuresgiving to him exceeding abundantly above what he had asked or even thought!

In order to effect this mans salvation, our Lord asked him a question upon a most vital pointDo you believe in the Son of God? That question I will try to press home upon all my Hearers, asking you, dear Friends, high and low, rich and poor, old and young, learned and ignorant to listen to the question, to give it an honest and earnest consideration and to endeavor, as in the sight of God, to answer it from your inmost heart.

I. In the first place, the question of the text, Do you believe in the Son of God? IS A MOST NECESSARY QUESTION.   
I believe it is a question which ought to be asked from the pulpit far more often than it is. I have been frequently pained, in reading sermons and on the rare occasions when I have had the opportunity of hearing sermons, to note that they have been addressed to the whole congregation just as though all were Christians. It is too much the custom for ministers to address the whole assembly as Brothers and Sisters and to speak to a mixed multitude of men and women as if they all had a part and lot in spiritual things. It seems that if anywhere, certainly in the pulpit, there should be a wise and constant use of discrimination. The preacher should make his hearers clearly understand that there are some who fear God and some who fear Him notsome who are still dead in trespasses and sinsand others who are alive unto God through the quickening power of the Holy Spirit. It would be a very wicked thing for me to delude you with the notion that you are all saved, for I cannot help fearing that some of you are not yet saved. The outward lives of some here are quite sufficient evidence that they have never been sanctified by the Holy Spirit. Indeed, I feel sure that I am addressing some who would not venture to even claim that they are Christians! They are too honest to do that, for they know that they are strangers to the saving power of the Grace of God! And how dare these lips of mine call those the children of God who are, at present, the children of wrath, even as others? How can my tongue pronounce that to the gold which I know is but dross? How can I speak to those of you who are living and, I fear will die without a Savior, as though you had an equal interest in the precious blood of Jesus with those who believe in Him?   
Further, the Sunday school teacher must never take this matter for granted with his scholars any more than the preacher must take it for granted with his hearers. Even when the dear children appear to be favorable to the reception of the Truth of God, to be impressed by the story of the Cross and to have a sort of childish love to Jesus, I think it is still well for us to ask this question over and over again, with tearful earnestness, dear child, do you believe in the Son of God? for, if not, all that pretty talk of yours and all those hopeful feelings of yours will bring you no solid, lasting good! Unless you believe in Jesus, you are outside the bounds of the Kingdom of Grace.   
The people who need to have this question most plainly put to them are, probably,

those who have had godly parents and who have been brought up under religious influences. It is an untold blessing to have had godly parents. It is an unspeakable mercy to have been in the habit of attending a place of worship from our childhood, but there are dangers connected with even these blessings. It is not bigotry, it is not a lack of Christian charity, it is not censoriousness when we say that there are tens of thousands of people who have attended the services of the Church of England from their childhood and who believe that in their baptism they were made members of Christ, the children of God and inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven! And that since the bishops hands were laid upon them in their confirmation, there is no need to ask them whether they believe in the Son of God. Do they not say, in their Creed, I believe in God the Father...and in Jesus Christ, His Son? To ask such people whether they believe in the Son of God must surely be a piece of impertinence! Yet I venture to say that there are no people in the whole world who need more to be asked that question than they do. And while it is especially so in the Church of England because the Prayer Book helps Episcopalians to imagine that they are Christians when they are not, it is very much the same among Dissenters!   
Many of you were taken to a place of worship in your mothers arms and, therefore, unless you have been privileged to sit under a very honest and faithful ministry, you may be led to conceive that you are the children of God through your godly ancestryand to imagine that the Grace of God runs in your blood and that you are a Christian because your father was a Christian. And that you ought to join a Christian church because your ancestors, for many generations, have belonged to that church. Beware of a mere ancestral religion which may be of no more value than the ancestral religion of the Chinese! Do not suppose that you are personally right in the sight of God because you have had a godly mother and father, or godly grandparents? Christs message to all who have not been regenerated by the Holy Spirit is, You must be bornagain. True religion is personalit is a thing which concerns each man himself! In the Prayer Book there is same nonsense about a sponsor promising, in a childs name, that he shall renounce the devil and all his works, the vain pomp and glory of the world, with all covetous desires of the same and the carnal desires of the flesh. Why, the sponsor cannot promise to do all that for himself, much less can he promise it for the child! No, you must yourselves come to God through Christ, personally make confession to Him of your own sins, seek pardon for your own selves, look with your own eyes to Christ upon the Cross and find salvation in Him for yourselves. All teaching that is contrary to this is nothing but deceptionthe invention of priestcraft or of the devil! And may God graciously enable you to escape from its snares!   
It also strikes me that this question ought to be frequently asked of all religious professors and especially of all ministers of the Gospel. It is a terribly easy matter to be a minister of the Gospel and a vile hypocrite at the same time. My Brothers in the ministry, I feel this to be only too true, and I often regret that I am not able to sit in one of those pews yonder, to listen to some faithful Brother minister who would help me to see myself as I really am in the sight of Godand cause me to tremble before Him, lest I should be either self-deceived or a deceiver of others! It is our misfortune that if we begin to preach without being truly converted, there is little likelihood that we shall ever be converted! This thought makes the pulpit to become a place where our shoes may well be, metaphorically, taken off our feeta place of trembling, alarm and anxietyfor who is to preach to the preacher if he is, himself, unregenerate? Who shall press upon him the question, Do you believe in the Son of God? Oh, then what solemn heart-searching, what strict selfexaminations the preacher should have! How he should lay bare his breast before the all-searching eyes of God, implore the inspection of the Infallible, ask to be weighed in the balances of the sanctuary which cannot err, and seek to be judged by Almighty Wisdom lest, as Paul said, after having preached to others, he himself should be a castaway!   
And it is very much the same, I am persuaded, with the deacons and elders of the church. Ah, my Brothers, it is a high privilege to be officers of a Christian Church! And for many of you I have long thanked God every time I have bowed my knees before Him. Yet I must remind you that even you may be deceived, for some like you have been deceived. As I look back, with trembling, over the years of my pastorate in London, I cannot help recalling some who did run well, yet something or someone hindered them so that they obeyed not the Truth of God. As they turned back, may not any one of you, my Brothers, do the same? May not I also go and do likewise? Nothing but the Grace of God will prevent such a calamity!   
I do not know how to talk with you as I want to do concerning this sad condition of soul. My heart would, if it could, get rid of my tongue and then it would speak to you something like thisDid not some of you, at one time, the moment you awoke in the morning, begin communing with God? Were there not red-letter days, when, from morning light to evening shade, you were in fellowship with the Most High? You had your burdens, but you always carried them to Jesus! And you had your joys, but you always shared them with Him. You lived for Him! Your heart was warm towards Him. You walked with Him in constant communion, but now, can you really live without even thinking of Him? Can you be happy without thinking of your God? Have you a better house than you used to have, and more money, more friends, more of this worlds good things and do you now forget your God and go the whole day without any communication between your soul and Him? Ah, then, you have, indeed, gone down in the world, not up! You are getting poorer and poorer. God help you! If you had come to me and told me that you had lost everything, but that you loved Jesus more, I would have sympathized with you because of your trouble, but I would have congratulated you upon your Grace. But now that you have got on so well in the world that you do not love your Lord as you once did, I can only pity you because of your dreadful prosperity and mourn over the fearful loss which you have experienced.   
And as for you who have been members of this church year after year, you who have been baptized into the name of the ever-blessed Trinity, you who have often gathered around your Masters Communion Table, permit me to shake you out of the slumbers of your fancied security! If you have taken it for granted that all must be well with you because you are a member of a Christian Church, I do beseech you to make diligent search, lest you should be mistaken. I am no advocate of doubts and fears, as you all well knowon the contrary, I delight to extol the blessings of a full assurance of faithyet, at the same time, I am well aware that it is hardly possible to have too much holy anxiety and sacred suspicion lest we should not be right with God! I do solemnly beseech you, by the living Godeveryone of you old professors, you venerable fathers in our Israel to again put this question of questions to your own heart and conscience, Do you believe in the Son of God? Have you a real, vital faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, or is it only a mere notion or name, a mere sham to which you are trusting? God grant that we may all answer the question, and answer it honestly, as in His sight, for it is a most necessary question for every one of us to answer!   
II. Secondly, and but briefly, I want to remind you that the question of the text is A REMARKABLY PLAIN QUESTION. Do you believe in the Son of God?  
Some people delight to see difficulties even where there are none. They revel in reading the Bible through spectacles of various colors. When you and I read our Bibles, there are certain passages which seem perfectly plain to uswe can understand them without any difficulty. But, when these sectarians read the Bible, they find out such novelties, such astounding marvels, such wonderful things that are to happen in the future, that I can only say that if their interpretation of the Bible is the correct one, it is a strange sort of Bible for God to have given to ordinary Christians like ourselves, for we might have read the Bible through 50 times, yet never have found out such mysterious doctrines and practices as the people profess to have discovered there! May God graciously preserve all of you from falling into the snares that are set by these inventors of novelties and absurdities! They are always hunting after some new thing, like the Athenians of old, and they lead many away from the simple Truths of the Gospel.   
But the question in our text is not a difficult or obscure one. It is, as our proverb says, as plain as a pike-staffDo you believe in the Son of God? Perhaps you would like me to explain to you the Doctrine of Election! Well, I may do that another day. Possibly you would like to hear about the Second Advent and that, also, I may tell you, as far as I can, in due time, but just now the question is concerning your souls most vital interests. How do you stand in relation to Godand especially in relation to Jesus Christ whom He has sent to be the Propitiation for the sins of all who believe in Him? This question is short, simple, plain, pointedDo you believe in the Son of God? That is to say, is Jesus Christ, who was born of the Virgin Mary, acknowledged by you to be the Son of God? You know that He died in the place of sinners and that His sacrifice atoned for the sins of all who trust in Him, so that God can be just, and yet the justifier of all who believe in His Son. So again I ask, Do you believe in the Son of God? When we were singing, a little while ago

*Jesus our Lord is crucified*

did you feel that the crucified Christ was your Lord and Savior? Did you rest your soul, for time and eternity, upon that blessed Substitute for sinners, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, expiring upon the accursed tree? If so, it is well with your soul! But if notif your answer to the question of the text is in the negative, it amounts to thisI will not accept the Propitiation which God has set forththe only Savior whom God has provided, shall not save me. I will not come unto Him that I may have life. I will force my way to Heaven by my own works or merits, or else I will go down to Hell neglecting His great salvation. That is the real meaning of your negative answer! And I ask you, as an honest man, to do one thing if that is your answersay it to yourself in so many words or, better still, write it down and sign it with your name. If you mean to serve Baal, say so! If you mean not to have Christ as your Savior, say so! Sit down and write out the reasons why you reject Christput them in black and white, that you may see them and weigh themas every rightminded man should do when he takes such an extraordinary course. If you think that Christ is not worth having for a Savior, say in your own handwriting, I will not have Him. I will not trust Him. I will not be saved by Him. If you do that, there will be something done, sad as it will be. But, at any rate, answer the question of the text, for it is so plain and simple that it deserves a perfectly plain and straightforward answer.

III. Now, in the third place, and again with great brevity, I want to show you that THIS IS A VERY PERSONAL QUESTION Do you believe in the Son of God?

You, young man, have been giving away tracts this afternoon. That is a very proper occupation, but do you believe in the Son of God? You, young woman, have been teaching a class in the Sunday school. That is well done on your part, I hope, but, Do you believe in the Son of God? You, my Brother, have been preaching the Gospel, this morning, according to your ability. So far, so good, but, Do you believe in the Son of God? Some of us sat, this morning, at the close of the public service, around our Masters Communion Table, where we broke bread in His name, as is our custom on the first day of the week, but, my fellow communicant, Do you believe in the Son of God? Wife, you have nothing to do with your husband in this matter and, husband, you and your wife must be set apart in this instance. For the moment, forget that dear child of yours! Hold him on your knee if you will, but apply not the question to him just now, but answer for yourself, Do you believe in the Son of God? That is to say, has your heart really felt the weight of your own sin and have you come to Jesus Christ and given that life-look at the Crucified One which brings instantaneous pardon to all who believingly look? Do you believe in the Son of God?

Even our own prayers may come to be idols and hindrances to us. We may think that the way of salvation is to pray, which it certainly is not, for the way of salvation is to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and to believe on Him at once! Unbelieving prayers will leave us as they find usthey cannot yield us any comfort. As it is with the prayers of others, so is it with our ownunless faith in Jesus Christ is mingled with them, they can never be a sweet savor unto God, and they can never bring a blessing to our own souls. What you have to do, dear Friend, brokenhearted and cast down, is to look away from yourself and all your fellow men, to Him whom God has set forth to be a Propitiation for sin. Looking to Him brings life to the soul and the testimony concerning all the saints is this, They looked unto Him and were lightened: and their faces were not ashamed. However feeble may be your eyesight, and however dark may be your surroundings

*There is life for a look at the Crucified One* and whoever looks unto Him shall live! Those who were bitten by the serpents in the wilderness were in various stages of poisoning. Some of

them, no doubt, had their eyes well-near closed shut by the swellings that arose through the bites of the serpents. But, however feeble was the look they gaveif it was only through the corner of the eyeif they did but catch a glimpse of the serpent of brass that Moses set upon the pole, as God commanded him, they lived at once! And if, in your case, sin seems to prevent the full exercise of faith and your consciousness of guilt hinders your belief in Jesus Christ, yet say to Him, Lord, I believe; help You my unbelief. Touch at least the hem of His garment and you shall find that it is not the measure of your faith, but the measurelessness of His Grace that will bring you the blessing you need! Though your faith is weak, His Grace is strong! Though you can scarcely believe in Him, all things are possible unto Him and He can cause even your weak faith to be the means of bringing salvation to you!

Ah, my dear Hearers, plainly as I am speaking to youand the gaudiness of oratory would be out of place herehow hard it is to get you to do what I urge you to do! I would gladly go down these stairs and talk to you one by one, but I might fail even with such an expedient as thatand there are far too many of you for me to come to each one! Yet I remember how holy Richard Baxter pleaded with his people, I would gladly come and kneel down before you, one by one, and say to you, Why will you reject the Savior? Why will you die? Why will you cast away your souls? If I cannot do that literally, my spirit shall do it. My Hearer, I ask you, each one, Do you believe in the Son of God? This is the question which must be put personally to you for you must die alone and you must rise in your own body, and you must be judged aloneand if you will not believe in the Son of God, you must be condemned aloneyou must personally be cast into Hell! There can be no sponsor for you in the flames of Hell, no substitute for you to bear your everlasting woe in your place. You yourself will be cast into Hell if you remain an unbeliever and, therefore, again I ask you, Do you believe in the Son of God?

Thus I have shown you that the question of the text is a necessary, plain, personal question.   
IV. Now, fourthly, I have to tell you that THIS QUESTION IS FUNDAMENTAL. Do you believe in the Son of God?   
This question goes right down to the very foundations of our faiththe fundamentals, as we most properly call them. I do not think that we are right in asking for answers to very abstruse questions from young people. An aged Christian may be asked many questions concerning his experiencethe depth of his sense of inward sin, the height of his enjoyment of fellowship with Christ. These are proper points to be brought before those who are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil. It would be very improper to put questions upon these points to a babe in Grace, but it would not be improper to put to a babe in Grace the question now before us. I venture to come to any man who professes to be a Christianand whether he is illiterate or notto put to him this question, Do you believe in the Son of God?   
I wish that some of you would put this fundamental question to yourselves, instead of trusting to the nonsense and absurdity in which you sometimes put your trust. Why, to this very day, there are some people who believe that they are Christians because, as they looked out of the window, they thought to themselves, If the Lord is gracious to us, we hope the sun will shine upon us. The sun did shine upon them and, therefore, they think that God must be gracious to them! What fools they must be to talk like that! Others have said that as they were at their work, or in their bed, they thought they heard a voice. Suppose you did, what then? If all the voices in the world were heard by you, I would not give a penny for your religion if you do not believe on the Lord Jesus Christ! Another says, I had such-and-such a text impressed upon my mind. If it had been impressed upon your heart by the Holy Spirit, it would have been a different matter. There is a superstitious way of misusing the Bible, of which even Mr. Wesley was guilty when he put a pin into the Scriptures to find out what he ought to do in a certain emergency! I believe that was as wicked as if he had shuffled a pack of cards for the same purpose. God does not guide us in any such way as that. Neither is there any importance to be attached to what you dream, or what you heard, or what you sawthe one fundamental question is, Do you believe in the Son of God? If you do, and yet you never dreamed a dream in all your life, thank God that you have slept so well and that you have not been troubled with indigestion, which is a great cause of dreams and visions of the night. If you have never heard mysterious voices, thank God that you have a well-regulated imagination and a wellbalanced mind. If you have never had a text that seemed to speak to you like a mysterious incantation, thank God that when you reverently read the Scripture, it speaks to you as the voice of God, and not as the voice of some witch of Endor, or as the voice of some old Delphic oracle speaking to a superstitious ear! My Brother, if you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, all is well with you, so far as your salvation is concerned. You may ask yourself, Am, I growing in Grace? Am I making such advances as I ought, in the Divine life? These questions are right and proper and deserve to be duly pondered by you, but if you believe on the Son of God, you have the root of the matter in you! You have the Tree of Life planted in your soul and you shall assuredly find a place in the Paradise of God. So, ask no further question upon this point, for this is the fundamental questionDo you believe in the Son of God?   
V. Now just for a few moments, let me remind you of what you know so well, namely, that, THIS QUESTION IS ALL-IMPORTANT.

Have you made your will? somebody asks, and that is a very important question to one who has anything to leave. I think that people ought to see to that matter and there are 50 other questions that might be asked, all of which would have their relative importance, but this is the weightiest question of allDo you believe in the Son of God? How can I put that question, with due solemnity, to each person in this congregation? Do you not know, Man, that life and death, Heaven and Hell and bliss or unutterable woe depend upon your answer to that short, simple question? If you believe on Jesus, there are robes of whiteness and tearless eyes for you! But if you believe not, there are for you   
*Flames that no abatement know   
Though briny tears forever flow!*   
If you can truly say, as you look, by faith, to the precious blood of Jesus, I am washed in that crimson flood and I am clean every whitif it is, indeed, so, then all things are yours, whether things present or things to come, life or death, time or eternityall are yours, for you are Christs and Christ is Gods. All is well with you now, and all shall be well with you forever and ever! But, oh, if you have to shake your head and sorrowfully say, No, I never was cleansed by Christs blood. I never accepted Him as my Savior. Do you know what your portion must be? Come, Man, do not close your eyes, like the silly ostrich, and then think to escape the hunter because you do not look upon him! Come Man, come look at the portion that awaits you! Do you start at sight of it? Can you see your dying bed surrounded with gloom and darkness? Are you afraid of that? That is a fair sight compared with what I have yet to show you!   
There, move away that bed, and let the next scene appear. Do you see that? What? Dare you not look at it? It is your naked spirit shivering before the face of God while He pronounces its doom! Does that frighten you? I have to show you a more terrible picture by far than that! It is the earth on a blazethe mountains are reeling to and fro, like drunken men! The stars, like withered fig leaves, are falling from the sky! The sun is becoming black as a sackcloth of hair and all the while you are crying to the hills to cover you and to the rocks to give you shelter, for the great Day of Gods Wrath has come and you are unable to endure it! Can you not gaze upon that picture? It is what you will come to if you remain unsaved. But if you are afraid of the picture, why are you not afraid of the dreadful reality, for I have not yet shown you the worst of your doom? I scarcely dare to lift the curtain which hides that dreadful prison of the lost, where their worm dies not, and the fire is not quenched, where the wrath to come, like a mighty ocean, never ceasing in its fiery flow, beats over the guilty forever and ever! Where the fierce tornado of the Divine Wrath blows upon the lost forever and ever, leaving them never a resting place, nor a moments cessation from their awful agony!   
My poor words, which may seem to some, terrible in their intensity, are feeble compared with the weighty words of the Lord Jesus as recorded in the Gospels and, therefore, as a man who cares for you, and who would gladly have you care for your own immortal souls, I do implore you, each one, to ask yourself this question, Do you believe in the Son of God? If you must honestly answer, No, then I ask you, Will you not believe in Jesus now? Oh, that the Holy Spirit would graciously enable you, this very hour, to trust wholly to that glorious finished work which, on the Cross, my Master has concluded once and for all, and the merit of which, even in Heaven, He delights to bestow upon all the sons and daughters of men who will believe on Him!   
VI. I feel persuaded, further, that, this is A QUESTION WHICH CAN BE ANSWERED AND WHICH OUGHT TO BE ANSWERED. Do you believe in the Son of God?   
I did not put into Our Own Hymn Book the hymn which begins *Tis a point I long to know   
Oft it causes anxious thought   
Do I love the Lord or no?   
Am I His, or am I not?*

I deliberated a good deal about it and I left it out, not because I doubt whether a Christian may sing it, not because I have not sung it myself, but because I am not quite clear that I ought to ask any congregation to sing it, for I hope that most of those in any ordinary congregation will not be in such a state of mind as that. It is a suitable hymn for one to sing sometimes in private, when one cannot sing anything betterbut it would scarcely suit a company of true Believers in the Lord Jesus Christ! A man may be and I think sometimes will be in doubt as to whether he really believes in Jesus, but chronic doubt is a sin that is not to be tolerated! Constant questioning as to whether you are saved, or not, is an unhealthy state for any of you to be in. You can tell and you ought to tell whether you believe in Christ, or whether you do not believe in Him. Faith is, in one sense, the gift of God, but, in another sense, it is a mental act for which we are responsible. God gives us faith, but He does not believe for us. He does not give us faith as we give our children bread, but He, by the gracious operation of His Holy Spirit, makes us willing in the day of His powerand then we will to believe in Jesus and we do believe in Him. Well, then, this being the case, I should think that you can, each one, tell whether you have ever believed in Gods Son as readily as you can tell whether you have ever trembled at Gods Word. One mental act must surely be as much under the cognizance of your inner consciousness as another mental act is.

Besides, you can judge whether you have faith by seeing whether you have its fruits. If you have believed on the Son of God, you have a care about spiritual things which you never had while you were an unbeliever. You are living in a world that is new to youin the spiritual realm where God rules by His Spiritand you are no longer confined to that which you can see with your eyes and touch with your fingers. You now see, and hear, and feel, and know a thousand things of which you were formerly utterly unaware. If you have truly trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ, you are a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. You love what once you hated and you hate what once you loved. You have altogether new tastesyou would not now find pleasure where once you reveled in it! And the weariness which you formerly felt in the services of Gods House is now all gone and you find the Sabbath to be a delight, and the company of Gods people to be a foretaste of Heaven! Are you, dear Friends at this moment desirous to be obedient to all the Lords Commandments? Obedience to God is a flower that never grew on natures dunghill! It grows only where the Spirit of God has tilled the soil and planted the root from which it springs. Surely you know whether you believe in Christ or not! At any rate, go not to your bed this night till you know the truth about your case. Fall not asleep with even the possibility that you may awake in Hell! Rest not, Man, till you are forever safe! Sleep not till you know that God is your Friend and that Christ is your Savior, lest, in the watches of the night, the hair of your head should stand on end with horror as you are awakened to find that your last hour has come and you are not prepared to stand before your Judge!

*How will your heart endure   
The terrors of that day   
When earth and Heaven, before your face Astonished shrink away?*

VII. Now I must come to the conclusion of my discourse and I do so by saying that THIS QUESTION DEMANDS AN IMMEDIATE REPLYDo you believe in the Son of God?

Possibly, one of you says, Well, Sir, I will give you my answer when I have a more convenient season. No, you will not, for you will probably forget all about it unless you give the answer now. Oh, what a lot of hammering and beating the iron of the human heart will stand! I am sure that if the iron that comes out of the heart of the earth were half as difficult to soften and to cast into molds as the nature of man is, the ironworker would give up his task as hopeless. Oh, how many times I have tried to preach the Gospel to some of younot without tears and not without headaches and heartaches, toonot without earnest pleadings in secret with Godnot without thinking and planning how I could set the old Truth of God in a new light and by what means I might enlighten your understandings, or interest your imagination and capture your heart! But, alas, thus far, with some of you, the hunter has lost his prey and the fisherman has waited in vain for his fishand he is bitterly disappointed at his failure! When will the day come when we shall capture you for Christ? What weapon of the Truth of God will pierce you who are like leviathan in his pride? When shall we draw you ashore to life, peace, holiness and happiness?

The great mischief with many of you is that you always talk about what you will do tomorrow! Yet there are newly-dug graves every day and the gravediggers hide the bodies of your fellows beneath the sod of the cemetery. It is true that, thus far, you have been spared, but are you, therefore, foolish enough to dream that you are immortal? Do you think that there is no tree growing out of which your coffin is to be made? Ah, Sirs, some of you will never see another year! This is not a matter of guesswork with me! I know that it is the truth that a certain proportion out of every thousand persons now living must die this year. Everybody knows that and here we have some six or seven thousand persons gathered together! [Remember, this was preached on a Sunday evening!] Well, then, there must be so many of us who must go to the grave within the next 12 months. You know that you are not immortal! You know that you must die sooner or later and some of you know that if you were to die now, you would die without hope, for you have not believed in Jesus and you would be eternally lost! I do beseech you, if you have any wits left, to use them now and to be startled as I put to you that ancient question, Why will you die? Where is the sense of it! Where is the reason for being damned? Do anything that is reasonable, Man, and who can blame you? If you have a good excuse for doing a certain thing, if it pays you well to do it, if it is the right thing to do for your country even though it does not pay yougo and do it! Cassius did a noble deed when he rode into the chasm in the Forum and so filled it up, for he did good to Rome. But what good will your damnation do to you or anybody else? What good will it do even to the lost in Hell? Even they might wish to keep you out of that dread place of torment as the rich man wished to warn his brothers, for they would get no good through your ruin.

What possible good can ever come to you if you are lost? It will be all hurt, and no good! All loss, and no gain! All wretchedness, and no joy! All darkness, and no light! All Hell, and no Heavenforever and ever! In the name of the living God, I beseech you! In the name of Jesus of Nazareth, I implore you to trust Christ and live! He who stopped the storm on the Galilean Lake and saved the all-but-shipwrecked crew of the little ship can stop the waters of wrath that threaten to beat upon your boat and save you even now! He who said to the dying thief, Today shall you be with Me in Paradise, can do as much for you! His precious blood still pleads for mercy! His Almighty Power is still engaged on mercys side. O my Master, enable these poor souls to trust in You! Father, call the prodigal home! Welcome him now! Give him the kiss of forgiveness now! Clothe him with the best robe now! Spirit of the living God, descend and do what we cannot doturn hearts of stone to fleshand to Father, Son, and Holy Spirit shall be the praise forever and ever! Amen.

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PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #3132 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

A QUESTION FOR YOU   
NO. 3132

A SERMON   
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 1909.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, AUGUST 9, 1874.

*Do you believe on the Son of God?   
John 9:35.*

[Other Sermons by Mr. Spurgeon upon this question are as followsSermons #1088, Volume 18 THE ESSENCE OF SIMPLICITY; #2141, Volume 36THE QUESTION OF QUESTIONS; #2667, Volume 46A PRESSED MAN YIELDING TO CHRIST and #3008, Volume 52 AN ALL-IMPORTANT QUESTIONRead/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.]

THIS blind man, whose eyes Christ had opened, was a very shrewd fellow and wonderfully straightforward and determined. What he did know could not be beaten out of him, neither could he be led to draw unfair inferences from what he knew. He would hold to what he clearly saw to be the fact. He believed Jesus to be a Prophet sent of God and he stuck to his belief whatever the Pharisees might say. Now I believe that is the kind of man to learn more of. The man who knows something and yet trifles with it, is not likely to be further instructed of God. Nothing is more displeasing to Him than trifling with what you have already learned, tampering with your conscience, not following the guidance of the Light of God which you have already received. But to him that has, and that uses aright what he has, more shall be givenand he shall have abundance. The honest and good ground was the sort of soil in which Jesus loved to sow the Good Seed of the Kingdom, so He thought it was worth His while to search for this man whom the Pharisees had excommunicated, that He might still further instruct him in Divine Truth. O dear Hearers, as far as ever you have received the Light, act up to it and praise God for the Light that He has given you! If you value the moonlight, He will give you sunlight before long. But be upright, straight, honest and sincere before the Lord, for He looks with hopefulness to the true and the upright, for these are the people whom He is most likely to bless.

I. Our Savior, having found this man, put to him the question in my text, Do you believe on the Son of God? This question I am going to consider with you as the Holy Spirit shall help us. And first, I see here AN EXAMPLE OF WISE PERSONAL ENQUIRY.

Our Lord Jesus Christ spoke to this man personally because He meant to do him good. He did not invite him to listen to a sermon, though that also might have done him good, but He got him alone and put to him this pointed, personal question, Do you believe on the Son of God? Christian people, this method which Christ, Himself, used, you ought to employ more than you do! Talk to people personally and pointedly. Push them up in a corner from which they cannot easily escape. Whenever a sermon is preached, it is the preachers duty to apply it to his hearers, but it is quite as much the duty of his Christian hearers to apply it to each unconverted person present by asking, Do you believe on the Son of God? Get hold of a man and do not let him go until you have put to him this personal question! Sunday school teachers should do this to each child in their classesperhaps their work just needs that finishing stroke to make it effective. Parents, especially, should do this with every boy and girl in their family. It should be close personal work with each one. Teaching may be general but it should always be followed by a personal catechizing of those who have been taught.

Our Savior put this question to the man when they were alone . He did not ask him this while there were dozens of people around them. It might have been very awkward for the man if He had done so. But, getting him by himself, Christ said to him, Do you believe on the Son of God? You, also, dear Friends, will find this to be a very useful way of working for Christ because it will often bring men to a crisis. They are, possibly, halting between two opinions. Perhaps in their own minds they have a sort of notion that they do believe in Jesus, and yet they really do not. So, when they are pointedly requested to say whether they do or do not believe in Him, it helps them to understand their true position and very frequently it drives them out of a wrong position into a right one! In the case of the man whose eyes Christ had opened, the question, Do you believe on the Son of God? led to the discovery of a very serious flaw in his condition. He was spiritually ignoranthe did not know the Savior even though He was standing close beside him and talking to him! He said, Who is He, Lord, that I might believe on Him? That lamentable ignorance on his part might not have been discovered by him if the question had not been so pointedly and plainly put to himDo you believe on the Son of God? That question led to the removal of his ignorance, brought him into clearer Light and ended in his saying, Lord, I believe, and in his falling down to worship the Savior of whose Deity he had just before been ignorant!

May I, then, without enlarging upon this point, earnestly urge upon my Christian Brothers and Sisters the wisdom of often using this method of pushing the individual sinner up into a corner and saying to him, Do you believe? When we are publicly instructing people, we are very often like persons who are building a great bonfire. We bring barrels, wood, coals and I know not what else, and keep on heaping up the pile, yet there is no bonfire! What we need is a match to set light to the pile and, very often, that pointed, personal question, Do you believe? pressed right home upon the individual hearer is just like the lighted match thrust in among the combustible materialsand so the instruction already given becomes profitable and effective! Have you ever used this method, dear Friends? I believe that in many cases parents go on with family prayer and instructing their children in Divine things, yet their boy is not a decided Christian because his father does not take him into the study, or into the little quiet parlor and put his arms round his neck, and pray for him, and say to him, My dear boy, have you really given yourself to Jesus Christ? And when a mother does that, oh, how many boys and girls have been brought to Jesus by those earnest personal enquiries from a mother whose tearful eyes give still greater force to her loving entreaties! I think that most Sunday school teachers will tell you that when they have persistently charged home the Truthof course, all other points being attended to as wellwhen they have persistently charged home the Truth upon the individual conscience, they have seen greater immediate results than they have had from their more general teaching.

I pray God to make us ministers more personal in our preaching. I have sometimes felt, when I have heard a sermon, as if the people whom that sermon concerned must have lived on the moon or on the planet Saturn, but that they certainly did not live down here on this earth! The congregation was addressed as though we were all very good respectable peoplebut if the preacher had told us what we really were, somebody would have been sure to exclaim, I cant hear such a preacher as that! He is so shockingly personal! But to be personal, in the sense of being faithful to each one of our hearers, is a mark of excellence in a Christian minister. And instead of being condemned for being thus personal, we should be commended for being what we were intended to be! We were sent by God to be personal and to deliver personal messages, as Nathan did to David when he said to him, You are the man. I wish it were possible for us, in a wise and prudent manner, to be more closely personal than we ever have beenand so to imitate our Saviors example of wise personal enquiry when He said to this man, Do you believe on the Son of God?

II. Now, secondly, anyone who is thoughtful can perceive, in our Saviors question, AN INDICATION OF THE VITAL POINT OF CHARACTER.   
Jesus Christ said to this man, Do you believe on the Son of God? He had been aggrieved by the conduct of the Pharisees. They would not believe him. They had been prejudiced against him and they had put him out of the synagogueso Jesus Christ seemed to say to him, Yes, I see how wrongly they have acted towards you and I see how truthful and courageous you have been, but the Pharisees do not believe on Me and that is the reason of their prejudice against Mebut do you believe on Me? It is quite possible for you not to take part with skeptics and opposers of the Gospel and yet, after all, you may not be, yourself, a Believer in Christ. So I put the question again to each one of you, Do you believe on the Son of God? I want this question to come home to you good, amiable, excellent people who never did oppose Jesus Christ in your whole lives and who do not intend to do soand who are very vexed that there should be any Pharisees who do such things! Still, do you really believe in Jesus Christ yourselves? That is the vital point. It is not enough to be a non-opposeryou must personally be an adherent of the Lord Jesus Christ, for He saidHe that is not with Me is against Me; and he that gathers not with Me, scatters abroad.

This man had also been suffering for Jesus Christs sake. He had been browbeaten and abused by the Pharisees, and now he had been put out of the synagogue! But Jesus seems to say to him, Yes, it is well that you should suffer for the Truths sake, and for believing that I am a Prophet but that is not enough. Do you believe on the Son of God? Some of you, perhaps, will persist in attending a place of worship, though you have to suffer a great deal at home because of it. And you continue to read the Bible and other religious books though you get laughed at for doing it. And you come regularly to the Prayer Meetings and the week-night services though there are many who consider you foolish for doing so. All that is well, but it is not enough! You might even give your body to be burnt for Christs sake, but if you have not faith in Him, you would not thereby be saved. This is the point, Do you believe on the Son of God?   
This man could have replied to Christs question, I believe that You are a Prophet. But Jesus would still have said to him, Do you believe on the Son of God? To believe that Jesus is a good Man and a great Prophet, and that He was sent of God is not enough! Saving faith lays hold upon both Christs Humanity and His Deity. We must believe in Him as the Son of Mary and the Son of God, truly Son of Man, yet just as truly Son of God. There must be genuine faith in the Deity of the Savior, or I do not see anything in the Word of God which gives even a glimmer of hope to the soul! So I press home the question upon each one here, Do you believe on the Son of God? Well, says someone, I believe the Bible. I am not an opponent of Christ and I have even suffered for Christs sake. So far, so good! But, Do you believe on the Son of God? Have you given up all other ground of hope and committed your souls eternal interests to that atoning Sacrifice which alone can reconcile you to God and enable God to look upon you with favor? If you have, it is well. But if you have not, it is far from well with your soul!   
This man might have said, I have had my eyes opened. I was blind, but now I see. Yet Christ, who had opened his eyes, said to him, Do you believe on the Son of God? Perhaps someone here says, I have given up drinking. I am glad to hear it, as glad as I am to hear that this blind mans eyes were opened! Well, says another, I am very different from what I was 12 months ago. Through attending the means of Grace, I have become, I trust, respectable. Whereas before I was disreputable and given over to every evil thing. I am glad of it! I say again, as glad as when I read that this blind mans eyes were opened. But, my dear Friend, that is not the main point. Do you believe on the Son of God? Morality is excellent as far as it goes, but without holiness no man shall see the Lord and holiness far exceeds mere morality. Holiness can only be produced by a real change of heart and that real change of heart can only come through the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit which manifests itself through faith in Jesus Christ. Moral changes are commendable and we would be the last to say a word against them! But just as silver is not gold, so morality is not holiness, and the message we still have to deliver is this, You must be born-again. So we press the question of the text home upon the conscience of everyone here because it concerns the vital point of faith in Christ. I am convinced that this question, Do you believe on the Son of God? is the most important question that a man can ever have to answer! This is vitally and overwhelmingly important. I am a Churchman, says one. I am a Nonconformist, says another. I am a Calvinist, says one. I am an Arminian, says another. Well now, I am not going to ask you anything about your belief on any of these points, though I know what I think is the right view concerning all of them. But I can tell you that you may go to Heaven or you may go to Hell either as a Churchman or as a Nonconformist, as a Calvinist or as an Arminian but if you believe on Jesus Christ, you shall never perish, neither shall any pluck you out of His hands! It is believing on Him that is the allimportant point, so I still urge each one of you to answer the question, Do you believe on the Son of God?   
III. Thirdly, the text seems to me to give A HINT AS TO THE REASONABLENESS OF BELIEVING IN JESUS CHRIST.   
Our Savior seems to say to this man, not in words, but in reality, You have had your eyes opened. A great deal has been done for you. Now, do you believe on the Son of God? It is a natural inference, from the opening of the eyes of a man who has been born blind, that the One who has opened them is Divinehave you perceived that great Truth of God? Do you see it now? Why, I think I hear you all say, He ought to see it! There ought certainly to be, in such a miracle as that, enough to convince him. He has been in darkness all his life, and now he has had his eyes opened, so that He who opened his eyes must be the Son of God. Very well, but what about yourselves? You say that you believe the Biblethen how is it that you do not believe on the Son of God? You say that the testimony of God in Scripture is true. Then why do you not believe it? Why do you not trust your soul to Him who you know is able to save you? You know what faith isthen why do you not exercise it? You know that the things which you are bid to believe are true. Then how is it that you do not believe these things? Some of you have heard the Gospel preached many hundreds of times. A hundred and more times every year I have tried to batter away at the doors of your hearts! And sometimes you have been a great deal impressed by the Truth that you have heard. You have gone home and prayed over the sermon, or you have sat here and wept under it. You have said truly that God has come very near to youthen how is it that you have not believed in Him? You have, perhaps, seen your daughter saved. Your wife, also, you know to be a Believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. You have seen your sister brought to Jesus. You remember what wonders of Grace God worked for your old father and how triumphantly your dear mother went home to Heaven! You believe that all this is truethen you are no atheist, no skeptic. You believe that Jesus Christ can save you and you also believe that He will save you if you trust Him. What reason can there be, then, why you do not trust Him?   
I sometimes hear a person say, I cannot believe. Cannot believe the Truth of God? Do not tell me such a lie as that! A thing is truethen who dares to say that he cannot believe it? When you say that you cannot believe, it is a shamefully mean way of saying that you will not believe. God is true and all that God says is trueand it seems to me that being true, God ought to be believed and all that God says ought to be believed! If a man says to me, when I state a thing positively to him, That is not true, I am not angry with him because it is clear to me that he does not know me and he may think that I can lie and I have no right to expect him to believe me until he knows me! But when he knows me and has become my friend and has found out my true character, if he then says to me, I do not believe you, I feel hurt. But when a man says concerning what God, Himself, declares, I do not believe it, that is to charge God with lying and is such a great sin that God justly says, He that believes not is condemned alreadyas he rightly deserves to bebecause he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.   
It is very sad to think that men will not believe the very God who made them! A friend who is here from Edinburgh told me, this afternoon, a pretty story which I wish I could tell you in Scotch, but it was somewhat to this effect. A Christian, walking down Princes Street, Edinburgh, one night saw a sight that attracted his attention. An old man and an old woman were evidently looking for somebody, so he asked them for whom they were looking. They said they were looking for their poor girl who was out upon the streets, leading a life of shame. He waited to see what would happen. By-and-by, they found her. And her father took hold of her with both his hands and said to her, Lassie, will you no come home to your own father and mother? She would not go home with them, but went away to her sin. Well now, it seems to me that God appears thus to lay hold of sinners and say to them, Will you not come Home to Me in Heaven? Will you not come to My Son, Jesus Christ, who died to save just such sinners as you? Will you not yield to that gracious Spirit who loves to bring sinners to Jesus? Christ seems to me to put it so to this man, Your eyes have been openeddo you not believe on the Son of God? And He bids me remind you that you have had warnings, entreaties, invitations, privilegesyou have seen the hand of God stretched out on your behalfthen will you not believe on His Son? Surely you are unreasonable if you do not!  
IV. But I must pass on. The text seems to me to give, in the fourth place, A SUGGESTION AS TO THE BEST GROUND FOR COMFORT TO A MAN WHO IS IN TROUBLE.   
Look at the man whose eyes Christ had opened. The Pharisees had cast him out of the synagogue and the consequence of his excommunication would be that nobody would employ him. Oh, you are the man who was put out of the synagogue, are you not? Yes. Well then, I can give you no work. He goes to an old friend and asks for lodging, but the friend says, I am sorry, but I cannot allow you to tarry in my house. You have been put out of the synagogue and if I harbor you in my house, I also shall be excommunicated. You are now cut off from Israel, so I cannot have anything to do with you. So this poor outcast man, as he stands there, is full of trouble. Jesus Christ comes to him and, in order to comfort him, He says, Do you believe on the Son of Godas much as to say, If you do, never mind the rest.

Jesus did not ask him to comfort himself with the thought that he had done the right thing and had been straightforward about itand if they had put him out, he could bear itfor he

had done the right thing. There is some comfort in that thought, but if we had no comfort except what we could get out of what we ourselves had done, it would be a miserable comfort indeed! Jesus did not say to this man, Well, you are not like those prejudiced Pharisees who have put you out of the synagogue. There are some people who can always get comfort out of the badness of other people. They say, Well, we are glad we are not like old So-and-So. Jesus did not wish him to get comfort in that way and He did not say to him, Well, poor Man, they have put you out of the synagogue, but they cannot hang you, and they cannot stone youthey have done as much as they can do to injure you. There are some people who say, Well, they have done all they can, nowthey cannot do anything more to me. And they seem to be turned into Timonsmen-haterswho hate their species and seem to get comfort for themselves by defying all mankind beside. That is not the way to get comfort!

If you have been treated badly. If you are the odd one in the family. If everybody tries to take advantage of you. If you have been slandered. If your mistress is harsh and unkind. If your master is tyrannical. If your fellow clerks make you the butt of their jestsdo not try to get comfort from any of the sources I have indicatedthough a great many do so! But answer this question, Do you believe on the Son of God? If you do, then you are saved and you may well rejoice in that fact! Believer, you are one with Christrejoice in that! Your affliction is borne by Christ as well as by yourselfrejoice in that! And rejoice also that as Christ is with you in your suffering, you will be with Him in His glory! Even now He has fellowship with you in your low estateso rejoice in that! You have to go home tonight to those who mock at your religion, those who have no sympathy with you, whose every word is a taunt and whose every look is a sneer. Then when you get home, sit down quietly by yourself and say, My name is written in Heaven, for I believe on the Son of God. And though the world knows me not, I remember that it knew Him not. It is enough for me to share the lot that was my Lords, for the disciple is not above his Master, nor the servant above his Lord. Believing in Jesus, I can bear and forbear and wait until the Glory is revealed, for Jesus will never fail me, nor forsake me.

If there are any of you in great trouble, I would like to remind you of this fact, that faith in Jesus is the best cure for every care, the best balm for every wound. Get away to Jesusat the foot of His Cross is the best place for mourners. All our other sorrows die when Jesus sorrows are revealed. Faith in Christ is what you need beyond everything else!

V. The last point is this. When our Savior asked the man whose eyes He had opened, Do you believe on the Son of God? it was AN INCITEMENT TO THE MAN TO CONFESS HIS LORD.

Jesus seemed to say to him, Do not hide that great Truthdo not keep that precious treasure to yourself. Immediately the man said, Lord, I believe, and then, next, he practically proved that he meant what he said by falling down and worshipping the Lord. My dear fellow Christians, there may be some of you who have lately been converted to Christ, but you have kept the good news to yourself. Now, believe me, if it is genuine faith in Christ, you cannot conceal it! A man may put fire into the middle of a stack of hay and tell it not to shine, lest somebody should try to put it out. But it is not in the nature of fire to hide itself, so you will soon see that blaze. It is said that fire and a cough and love cannot be hidden. And certainly that is true of the holiest sort of lovelove to Jesus. It is sure to reveal itself somehow or other!

I knew a man who thought he would go to Heaven alone and never tell anybody that he was a Christian. But he lived in a village where there was a Prayer Meeting and he stole in once, and he liked it so much that he went again and sat in a quiet corner where he thought nobody would see him. But the Brother who was conducting the meeting said, Will that friend in the corner be kind enough to engage in prayer? He shook his headhe was like a snail in his shell and he did not mean to come out in that public fashion. But when he got outside, he thought to himself, I am afraid I have almost denied the Lord Jesus by refusing to pray when I might have done so. However, he thought, if I am asked again, (I hope I shall not be), I think I will just pray, but I shall not say much. He was asked another time, but again he was very timid and he did not pray. So, after the service, the leader said to him, I am glad to see you here, dear Friend, though you do not pray with us. Do you like to be here? He answered, Oh, yes, I enjoy it very much. Then, said the other, I trust you know something about the Lord. And almost before he realized what he was doing, he had told all his secret out. He could not help it! And what is there, after all, that we should need to hide? If I really love my Savior and anybody says to me, You also are one of His disciples, I ought gladly to answer, Yes, yes, yes! And if He is not ashamed to acknowledge me as His disciple, I cannot be ashamed to acknowledge Him as my Master! Oh, that I may never put Him to shame! And, certainly, to confess Him as my Savior shall never make me ashamed.

Why is it that some of you who believe in Jesus, are so backward in confessing your faith in Him? Do not profess to believe if you do not, but if you do believe in Jesus, I ask again, why are you so backward in confessing your faith? Jesus Christ said to His disciples, Go you into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. And then He told them what Gospel to preach, He that believes and is baptized shall be saved. You see the two parts of it. Ah, you say, you Baptists make a great deal of Baptism. We Baptists do not make any more of Baptism than the Lord Jesus Christ has done! But I was not talking about Baptists, I was talking about the words of the Lord Jesus Christ as they are recorded in the New Testament. He says, He that believes and is baptized shall be saved. Is not that plain? Someone asks, Can we not be saved without being baptized? I am not going to answer such a question as that! My business is to bid you listen to what Jesus Christ says, He that believes and is baptized shall be saved. Give good heed to what Christ says, and raise no questions concerning it. For my part, I am going to run no risks and, therefore, I take the whole passage just as it stands! My Master alone knows the relative importance of the two parts of the message, but I am bound to deliver His message just as I have received it. Suppose I send a servant to my front door with a message and the person to whom it is sent says to her, Your master did not mean all that, she would naturally say, I have nothing to do with what my master meansI have only to tell you what he said. So say I concerning what my Master said and what He said wasHe that believes and is baptized shall be saved. And He has also said, Whoever, therefore, shall confess Me before men, him will I confess also before My Father which is in Heaven. But whoever shall deny Me before men, (which is here the same thing as not confessing Him), Him will I also deny, (or, not confess), before my Father which is in Heaven. Come along then, you who have been hiding yourselves! Come forth and confess that Jesus Christ is yours!

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **JOHN 9.**

Verse 1. And as Jesus passed by, He saw a man who was blind from his birth. Therefore the man could not see Jesus, but the more important matter was that Christ could see the blind man! And you, dear Heart, may not yet have learned to look on Christ, but He can look on you in your blindnessand a look from Him will speedily work a wondrous change in you!

2. And His disciples asked Him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind? Many of Christs disciples are still occupied in asking questions that serve no practical purpose, like this one, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?

3. Jesus answered, Neither has this man sinned, nor his parents. That is to say, sin on their part was not the cause of his blindness.   
3. But that the works of God should be made manifest in him. [See Sermon

#2309, Volume 39GODS WORKS MADE MANIFESTRead/download the entire sermon, free of

charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.] Human nature is a platform for the manifestation of Divine work. The more in need you are, dear Friend, the more room there is for Gods mercy to operate upon you.

4-7. I must work the works of Him that sent Me while it is day: the night comes, when no man can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the Light of the world. When He had thus spoken, He spat on the ground and made clay of the spittle, and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay, and said to him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, (which is by interpretation, Sent). He went his way, therefore, and washed, and came

seeing. [See Sermon #1977, Volume 33THE BLIND BEGGAR OF THE TEMPLE AND HIS WONDERFUL CURERead/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.]

Christ used very simple means to cure this mans blindness, very unlikely means, apparently, to produce the desired effect. It might have seemed, indeed, that the man would have been more in the dark than ever when his eyes were plastered over with clay, yet the Lord chose to work in that way. And so, when the poor preacher feels as if he was nothing and nobody, and that his method may rather hinder his Masters work than help Him, yet still his Lord can work through his weakness and get to Himself glory notwithstanding His servants infirmities!

8, 9. The neighbors, therefore, and they who before had seen him that he was blind, said, Is not this he that sat and begged? Some said, This is he: others said, he is like he: but he said, I am he. There is no question about my identity, I am the same man whom you have seen sitting and begging, and I now come before you with my sight fully restored.

10, 11. Therefore said they unto him, How were your eyes opened? He answered and said, a man that is called Jesus made clay, and anointed my eyes, and said unto me, Go to the pool of Siloam, and wash: and I went and washed, and I received sight. It was only a short story, but it was very sweet to him, and he told it with no excess of detail, but with all its salient points. He was a sharp, shrewd man of few words, but those few words were weighty. Friend, when you tell the story of Christ and His love to you, do not embellish it with flowers of speech. There is enough in what Christ has done to make it shine without any fine words of yours. The beauty of Christs work is such that it is most adorned when unadorned.

12. Then said they unto Him, Where is He? He said, I know not. There are a good many things concerning Christ which you may not know, but if you know that He has opened your eyes, you may be well content with the knowledge of that until He shall be pleased to reveal more about Himself to you.

13. They brought to the Pharisees him that aforetime was blind. I am sure that this was a very distressing sight to them, for there was nothing that ever grieved their hearts more than for Christs power to be displayed! They did not want to see the blind man whose eyes Christ had opened. If the miracle brought Christ any glory, it brought them just as much misery!

14, 15. And it was the Sabbath day when Jesus made the clay, and opened his eyes. Then again the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight. That seemed to be the principal question with them they always wanted to know the manner in which Christs cures were worked.

15. He said unto them, He put clay upon my eyes, and I washed, and do see. That is shorter than his previous account of the miracle. When Pharisees ask a carping question, the shorter the answer, the betterit is a pity to cast pearls before swine.

16, 17. Therefore said some of the Pharisees, This Man is not of God because He keeps not the Sabbath day. Others said, How can a Man that is a sinner do such miracles? And there was a division among them. They said unto the blind man again, What say you of Him, that He has opened your eyes! He said, He is a Prophet. He was a brave man, who dared to say what he believed whether he offended or pleased! He did not know much, but what he did know he did know, and he was quite certain about it. There are some men whose breadth of knowledge is as remarkable as its shallowness! It is like water upon the meadows when a river overflows its banks, and covers a wide area, but there is scarcely an inch of depth. Give us the narrower river that is deep and that can bear onwards to the ocean a noble fleet, rather than the wide expanse of useless, shallow water!

18-21. But the Jews did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind, and received his sight, until they called the parents of him that had received his sight. And they asked them, saying, Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see? His parents answered them and said, We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind: but by what means he now sees, we know not; or who has opened his eyes, we know not: he is of age; ask him: he shall speak for himself. [See

Sermon #1393, Volume 24SPEAK FOR YOURSELFA CHALLENGE!Read/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.] They were timid, but they were   
also shrewd enough to let their son speak for himself, as he was quite able to do.

22-24. These words spoke his parents, because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had already agreed that if any man did confess that He was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue. Therefore said his parents, he is of age, ask him. Then again called they the man that was blind, and said unto him, Give God the praise: we know that this Man is a sinner. They thought they could get over him by giving him a little of what they called good advicePraise God, but be quiet concerning this Man; depend upon it, He is a sinner.

25-28. He answered and said, Whether He is a sinner or not, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see. Then said they to him again, What did He to you? How opened He your eyes? He answered them, I have told you already, and you did not hear: therefore would you hear it again? Will you also be His disciple? Then they reviled him. Of course, that is the usual way with those who are in the wrong. Abuse the plaintiff when you cannot answer his case! Then they reviled him.

28-30. And said, You are His disciple but we are Moses disciples. We know that God spoke unto Moses: as for this Fellow, we know not from where He came. The man answered and said unto them, Why herein is a marvelous thing, that you know not from where He came, and yet He has opened my eyes. Where could He have come from but from God? Who could have worked such a miracle unless He had been sent from God?

31-33. Now we know that God hears not sinners: but if any man is a worshipper of God, and does His will, him He hears. Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind. If this Man were not of God, He could do nothing. That was very forcibly spoken. Oh, that all of us whose eyes Christ has opened, would speak for Him as bravely as this man did! Our cure has been quite as clear and quite as notable as His was, so let us not be ashamed to testify for Him before gainsayers and opposers!

34. They answered and said unto him, You were altogether born in sins, and do you teach us? Such learned men as we are, with such culture and such penetration as we have, do you teach us?

34. And they cast him out. It was a great mercy for him that they did excommunicate him! One of the greatest blessings that could come to him was that of being cast out of the synagogue, and being cast out of the society of such men as those Pharisees were!

35. Jesus heard that they had cast him out. Jesus knew all that had happened to this man, but someone probably related the story to Him. And our Lord knows all about each one of us and He knows whether anyone here is suffering for His sake or for the Truths sake. Jesus knew that they had cast him out.

35. And when He had found him. For He always finds those whom the world or false professors have cast out.   
35, 36. He said unto him, Do you believe on the Son of God? He answered and said, Who is He, Lord, that I might believe on Him? He was a sensible man and he had the sense to perceive that knowledge rightly used leads to faith. He desired to know in order that he might believe. And if you ever say that you cannot believe, but are anxious to do so, then make enquiry as to what is to be believedexamine the evidence concerning it and so faith will come to you by the operation of Gods good Spirit.   
37-40. And Jesus said unto him, You have both seen Him, and it is He that talks with you. And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped Him. And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind. And some of the Pharisees which were with Him heard these words, and said unto Him, Are we blind also? Are we blind? It seemed impossible to them that it could be so! Jesus answered them with scathing words.   
41. Jesus said unto them, If you were blind, you would have no sin: but now you say, We see. Therefore your sin remains. If what you have done had been done in utter ignorance, you would have been comparatively guiltless. But you have sinned against light and knowledge, with a most determined antipathy to the Grace of God and, therefore, your sin remains in all its scarlet hue to condemn you.

Adapted from The C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Version 1.0, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307  
PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #1088 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

THE ESSENCE OF SIMPLICITY   
NO. 1088

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, DECEMBER 29, 1872, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when He had found him, He said unto him, Do you believe on the Son of God? He answered and said, Who is He, Lord, that I might believe on Him? John 9:35, 36.**

THIS text is from the story of the blind man to whom Jesus had given sight. His narrative of the cure provoked the anger of the Jews and their rulers. And, as the man could not be convinced by them that one who had opened his eyes could also be a bad man, they cast him out of their assemblyand by that act signified to him that he would be, or already was, cast out of the Jewish Churchset aside from the Synagogue and made the victim of the greater excommunication. This was one of the most fearful calamities that could befall a Jew and I do not doubt but what the man considered it to be so.

Now, it is not at all likely that any person here is feeling the same trouble, but many may be suffering from something similar. It may be that you have excommunicated yourselves. Within the court of your own bosom, conscience has held a solemn court and pronounced upon you a sentence which continually rings in your ears. You scarcely dare mingle with those who assemble in the house of God for you feel yourselves unworthy to be among them. Up till lately you were upon the best of terms with yourselves and reckoned that all was right with God. You hoped that you stood on as good a footing, at any rate, as other men and perhaps were somewhat better than many around you.

But now a process of enlightenment has come over your mind practices have been seen to be seriously evil which before were regarded as trifles and sin itself has worn another aspect than any which it bore in former times. Does such a person stand here this morning? Then let me assure him that his state of mind is well known to me, for I knew its horrors by the space of many months together. I, too, felt that I was cut off from the congregation of the hopeful and must not hope for mercy from God. I dared not lift so much as my eyes towards Heaven, but complained to the Lord as Jonah didI am shut out of Your sight.

Therefore with brotherly sympathy I speak to any man who reckons himself a castaway, shut out from the house of the Lord. The man in the narrative, most happily for him, at the time when the sentence began to cast its gloom over him, was met by the Lord Jesus Christ who at once proceeded to afford him the necessary cordial. Christ has come as the consolation of Israel and where He finds that men are burdened in spirit He commences His gracious work. But, observe, He brings but one cordial and prescribes but one way by which its efficacy can be realized. He spoke to the oppressed man concerning the Son of God and personal faith in Himfor this is the master consolation for broken heartsthis is the surest and best means of bringing joy to souls which sit in the dungeons of despondency.

Our Lord began by saying to the cast-out one, Do you believe on the Son of God? Now, if any here present are in the state which I have thus hurriedly sketched, feeling themselves guilty before God with spirits ill at ease, with hearts alarmed at coming and deserved judgmentI come in Christs name to them this morning with words of comfort! But they will be no other than those which Jesus uttered of old. I have nothing to speak to you by way of comfort but concerning the Son of God and concerning Him only, by demanding that you believe on Him, for only as you receive Him by faith will He be to you a relief from sorrow. He that believes on the Lord Jesus shall not be ashamedbut without faith you are without salvation!

We shall this morning labor to bring you all to the point in hand. There shall be between the doctrine of the Gospel and your soul this morning, O you who are not yet a Believer, a direct encounter. You shall come up this morning and face the Gospel whether you spurn it or accept it. You shall know, if the plainest words can tell it to you, that if you believe in Christ Jesus you shall be saved. And it shall be put to you whether you will do this or not and you shall either believe on the Son of God or incur anew the sin of putting from you the only name given under Heaven among men whereby you can be saved!

I say you shall be brought to this if words can bring you to itand then I must leave the work of your deciding in the hands of God the Holy Spirit. I entreat you who love the Lord and have prevalence in prayer to aid me with your supplications. Pray that the result of bringing the sinner face to face with the Gospel may be that he may decide to believe in Jesus! Pray that faith may be given him! Pray that the Son of God may become the object of his souls confidence and that in no case the hearer may be left to continue in unbelief and to reject the Son of God!

You have seen at the mouth of the coal pits how the full wagons, as they run down the incline draw the empty ones up to the pits mouth that they also may be filledI would to God that you who have Grace may exert the power God has given you with Himselfand so by prevalent intercession you may draw others to the Savior. While we are preaching you be praying and God will work by us both!

Look upon the unsaved around you with an eye of pitythen look to Christ, your exalted Savior, with the eyes of faith and say to HimJesus, You who have redeemed myriads by Your blood, now work by Your eternal Spirit and redeem also by power. Let the Spirit that rested on Your own ministry, the Spirit that was with Your servants at Pentecost, the Spirit that has converted us also to your Truth, work mightily among the congregation this morning, that all these may be led to obey You. When your Cross is lifted high, let it bring life to the dead throughout the camp and be to the awakened a lighthouse of safety and to the despairing a pillar of hope.

I. The run of our discourse this morning being solemnly practical, we shall, in the most distinct manner, lay down and define THE MATTER IN HAND. With you, my anxious Friend, the greatest and weightiest business that can concern you is that you find salvation. You have it not at present, your conscience tells you thatand though you are well aware that you must obtain it or be forever lostyou have as yet but small prospect of ever finding it. You have sinned and punishment awaits you and neither can you escape!

The point above all points with you is that you be saved. And if you are really awakened you desire to be saved from sin as well as from its punishment. You would not only escape from the consequences of doing wrong, but from the propensity to do wrongfrom the constant power and defilement of past sinand from the tendency to sin again. You desire, also, to be forgiven and by forgiveness to be set clear from the anger of a justly offended God. And you desire to be rendered acceptable to the Most Highand if you are in your right mind you desire that all this should be done really and trulynot in pretence or fiction, but in deed and in truth.

God forbid that you should ever be content with the name of being savedwith an external and professional salvation of outward rites and ceremonieswhile your heart remains unpurified and your nature uncleansed! In some other departments we may be deceived and not be very great losers, but in soul matters we must make all things sure. For if we are deceived there, it is all over with us, indeed. Let me be cheated with base metal instead of gold if you will, but not with falsehoods in the place of the saving Truth of God, or deceptive notions in lieu of gracious operations. Let me be deceived as to the food I eat and find every morsel of it adulterated, if so it must bebut not in the eternal life-bread, which my soul craves after. Be true to my soul, if all else is a lie!

Do you, my Hearer, desire salvation from the power and guilt of sin? And do you desire it to be thorough and real? Do you not also long for it now? If God has at all quickened you, you long to be saved at once! You tremble at the idea of delay. Sin is bitter to you now; it is a present plague. The matter before us now is present salvation, personal salvation to be realized for yourself. If there is such a thing as looking up to the smiling face of a reconciled Father in Heaven, you desire to enjoy it now! If it is possible for the load of sin to be rolled from off a mortals shoulders forever, you desire to be rid of that burden at this instant! If there is, indeed, a fountain in which, if a man is washed, every stain shall disappear, you long to plunge beneath its cleansing flood at once and be made whiter than the driven snow.

If your soul is so far awakened I bless God, indeed, for there is nothing beneath the sunand, indeed, there is nothing above itthat can rival in importance your souls salvation. Now the matter which I must press upon you is this. If you are ever to be saved, God has declared that salvation must come to you as a gift of His Grace, as an act of His free favor and can only be received by you through your believing in His Son. As Christ consoled the man in the temple by saying to him, Do you believe on the Son of God? so today there is no consolation, much less salvation for you except through believing in Gods own Son.

A hundred times have you heard the story of Gods only begotten Son who is the lover of mens souls. But we must tell it to you yet again. God will not save men on the ground of their merits. Indeed, if they have any merits they do not require saving. If God owes you anything, produce the account and you shall have it! If there are obligations on Gods part towards you, say what they are and if they can be proved to exist God will never give you less than you can justly claim. Alas, my Friend, if you are lodged where you deserve to be, where will it be but in the pit of Hell? It were well for you, then, to have done with all claims and demands! God will only save you as a guilty person who deserves to be destroyed, but whom He saves because He chooses to save youbecause He resolves to manifest in you the abundance of His mercy.

By Grace are you saved, is the immutable purpose of Heaven! And it is further decreed that this Grace shall be received by men through the channel of faith, and by that channel only! God will save only those who trust in His Son. Jesus Christ the Lord came into this world and took upon Himself our Nature, as we taught you last Sunday, [THE HEXAPLA OF MYSTERY, Sermon #1087] and being found in fashion as a Man, He took the transgressors place. The sins of His people were numbered upon Him, imputed to Him, charged to His account and He suffered for them as if they had been His own sins. He was scourged, tormented, crucified and slainthe stripes He bore were the chastisements due to human sinand the death He endured was the death threatened to transgressors.

And now, whoever will trust in Jesus shall participate in the result of all the Redeemers substitutionary agonies and the case shall stand thusthe sufferings of Christ shall be instead of the Believers suffering and the merits of Christ shall be instead of the obedience which man ought to have rendered. Faith in Jesus makes us righteous through the righteousness of anotherit causes us to be accepted in the Beloved, perfect in Christ Jesus! As by the first Adam we fell, so by the second Adam we rise again.

Now the way to partake in the benefits of the death of the Lord Jesus is simply by believing in Him. Here let it be understood that believing in Jesus is not a mysterious and complex action. It does not require a week to explain what faith is. Faith believes what God has revealed concerning Christ and it therefore trusts in Christ as the Divinely-appointed Savior. I believe that Jesus was Gods Son. I believe that God sent Him into the world to save sinners. I believe that to do so He became a Substitute to justice for all those who trust Him and, as I trust Him, I know that He was my Substitute and that I am clear before God.

Since Jesus died for me, Gods justice cannot put me to eternal death for whom Jesus, my Substitute has died. Gods Truth cannot demand a second time the debt which has already been fully paid on my behalf. The rationale of the whole thing is as plain as possible and whoever in this world, old or young, Jew or Gentile, literate or illiterate, rich or poor, debauched or moral will trust in Jesus shall be savedhe is saved the moment he does so! But whoever of women born

refuses to trust in Jesus he is condemned already because he has not believed on the Son of God. Let a mans character be what it may, if in that character there is no faith, he is a lost soul! But on the other hand, let that character have been what it may, if now he comes to the Cross and believes in Jesus, he begins from that moment a new lifeGod will give to him all the Graces and excellencies of character which will adorn his faith and his faith shall save him!

Trusting in Jesus, believing in Jesusthat is the matter. I need to bring my hammer down upon this anvil at every stroke. And if the Lord will be pleased to place before me some heart that He has melted in the furnace of conviction, the strokes will count if the Eternal God will lay to His almighty arm and strike with Divine energy. If any soul is but brought to faith in Jesus, the work is done! To believe in the Son of God is the point, and nothing else.

II. This being the matter in hand, we will make an advance, in the second place, to notice that there is A QUESTION IN OUR TEXT WHICH INVOLVES THE WHOLE BASIS OF FAITH. The man said to Jesus, Who is He, Lord, that I might believe on Him? This man all through the narrative proves himself to be a very shrewd fellow. I do not know that holy Scripture gives us an instance of a more commonsense man than this man whose eyes were opened. And so, when he is told that he must believe in the Son of God, he comes to the point at once and says, Who is He, Lord, that I might believe on Him? as if that was all he wanted to knowWho is He?and then the faith would surely come.

When a soul is seeking faith, this question is the main point. The hinge of the whole matter lies there. This man did not say, Lord, who am I that I should believe?not at all. That would have been wide of the point. If I read a story in the newspapers about the truthfulness of which there is a question, I do not begin asking what my own character is, as though that had anything to do with it! But I ask who the authority for the story may be. I do not look within, but I look to the person claiming belief. The story is true or not, whatever I may be. My character does not concern the truth or falsehood of the statement. I must enquire into the statement itself. So this man did not make any remarks about what he might have been or might still be, but he hung the issue on this nailWho is He, Lord, that I might believe on Him?

So now, dear Hearer, all the arguments for your faith lie within the compass of that question, Who is He, Lord, that I should believe on Him? You need not say, Who am I that I should believe? I have lived a life that has been defiled with sin. I have gone from one transgression to another. I have resisted conscience. I have stood out against the Gospel. I have defiled myself by sins against light and knowledge. It matters not. There you stand with all your defilement taken for granted and God says to you, Whoever believes on the Lord Jesus Christ has everlasting life. That is the saving matterthat, and nothing more nor less!

Will you believe in the Lord Jesus or not? What you are is nothing to the point. If Gods witness is true, it is true whether you are black or white, whether you are a big sinner or a little sinner! And if it is false it will not be any the truer whether you are good or bad, worthy or unworthy! If Jesus is able to save He ought to be trusted. And if He is not able, none ought to rely upon Himthe whole question turns on that. Neither raise any quibbles as to your present condition. You say, But I at this moment feel myself so hard of heart! I cannot weep as some can. Repentance is hid from my eyes. Prayer is heavy, groaning work with me. Even while I am listening to the Gospel this morning my attention is not riveted as it ought to be upon the Truth of God which I know to be vital! I am destitute of every good point. I am empty of everything that can recommend me to mercy.

I answer, so what? Suppose I tell a man that the sum of 10,000 pounds has been left him in a willis it anything to the point if he shows me his raps, his empty cupboard and his wretched bed? Does his poverty make me a liar? Why does the man introduce such extraneous matter into the good news? Either it is true or it is not! His condition has nothing to do with the truth or falsehood of my declaration. If the man were wrapped in scarlet and fine linen, that would not make my statement any truer. And if the dogs lick him as they did Lazarus, that does not give him a right to deny my truthfulness when I tell him a fact.

So, O Sinner, your condition has nothing to do with the question whether Jesus is to be trusted or not. God so loved the world that He grave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. Will you believe in Him? Will you trust the Lord Jesus? If you desire to trust Him the subject for enquiry is, Is He worth trusting? But it is a question far away from the point to say, I am this, or, I am that. Is not this so? I appeal to your own common sense! But still, as to the future, says one. I might go back to my old sins. I cannot trust myselfI have made some reformations before and they have been but poor venturesmy ship has gone out to sea and foundered in the first gale. I cannot expect with such temptations as will await me, that I shall bear up and enter Heaven.

Now, what has the question of believing in Jesus to do with your good resolutions or your miserable failures? Whoever trusts Christ shall be saved. If you are lost trusting Him in the future, Gods Word will not be true. The question is, Can you trust Christ? And that turns on that other, Is He worthy to be trusted? No other question can be admitted for a single moment. The case is something like that of a man in yonder sea. His ship is wreckedshe is breaking to piecesher decks have been swept. He barely retains his hold on a floating spar. Look! The lifeboat comes up close to his side and is ready to take him on board.

Now, if there is a question in that mans mind about getting into that lifeboat in order to be saved, the only rational one that I can conceive is, Will the boat carry me to shore? Is she seaworthy? Will she outlive the breakers? Can she reach the land safely? You cannot conceive the poor fellows saying, I quiver too much with chills to be rescued by that boat, or, The sea has washed the last rag from off my back, the boat will not suit me, or, Another time I may be wrecked on the coast of Africa and there may be a lifeboat. No, no! Man alive, there is the boat! Is she seaworthy? That is the question! If so, get into her! If Christ is not worth trusting, do not trust Him but if He is worthy of all confidence, then have done with idle questions and cast yourself upon Him.

If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which He has testified of His Son. He that believes on the Son of God has the witness in himself: he that believes not God has made Him a liar because he believes not the record that God gave of His Son. And this is the record, that God has given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that has the Son has life and he that has not the Son of God has not life (1 John 5:9-12).

Still, we will keep to this pointJesus is worth trusting, worthy of the sinners unwavering faith. He is worth trusting, O Sinner, because first of all He on whom you are bid to rely this day by the command of the Gospel is God Himself! You have offended God and it is God who came into the world to save sinners. Against Christ your sins were launched as arrows from a bow, but He against whom those bolts were shot has come in the fullness of His power and the infinity of His mercy to save them that believe. Can you not trust yourself in almighty handsalmighty to save? Is anything impossible with God?

An angel could not save you, but surely God Himself can! How can you limit the Holy one of Israel? How can you set bounds to boundless love, or limits to limitless Grace? If Jesus were man and not God, unbelief would have good excuse! But if the Savior is Divine, where can distrust find a cloak for itself? I feel this morning as if I could not help believing in Christ now that I know Him to be Divine. Faith has grown to be a necessary act of my mind. Save me? Who shall persuade me that He cannot? Come forth, you devils with your arguments, and plead with me, and you cannot inject a doubt into my soul while I know Him to be God! He can shake the heavens when He pleases and make the earth to tremble! He bears up the universe upon His shoulderscannot He save my poor soul? Yes, that He can. Who is He that I might believe on Him? He is Divine and therefore I believe.

But next, the Lord Jesus Christ, in whom the sinner is bid to trust, is commissioned by God to save. He came into the world as a Savior, not alone on His own account, but as Messiah sent of God. He has the full concurrence of the sacred Trinity. It is the will of the Father; it is the will of the Holy Spirit as well as the will of the Son that whoever believes in Jesus will be saved. He was anointed of the Lord for His peculiar work. Now, I feel as if this were a special ground for trust in Him. If Christ were an amateur Savior who had taken up the trade of saving on His own account, there might be a question. But if God has divinely commissioned Him to save, O Soul, why can you doubt any more? Warranted of God, authorized of the EternalO Heart, rest in Him!

Then, mark, the Lord Jesus Christ has actually done all that is necessary for Him to do for the salvation of all who trust Him. Years ago, before Jesus Christ came into the world, if I had been sent to preach the Gospel, I must have cried Jesus will take upon Him the sins of Believers and lay down His life for His Church! But now I have a more encouraging messageJesus has carried His peoples sins away forever! He has suffered on their behalf all that was required to make an end of their transgressions. Whatever was

demanded by the justice of God as a recompense for the injured honor of the Law He has rendered! The equivalent for all the sufferings of all the elect in Hell forever, Christ has suffered to the utmosteverything that was necessary that God might be just and yet the Justifier of him that believes, Christ has endured! The cup of vengeance is not full and to be drainedit is empty and turned bottom upwardsJesus has drank it dry!

The labors necessary for our redemption, superlatively greater than the labors of Hercules, have all been accomplished! Christ has gone into the grave, has gone out of the grave and gone up to His Glory. He has entered Heaven because His work is doneand now He sits down at the right hand of the Father in the posture of rest and honor because He has perfected forever all those who put their trust in Him! Now, Soul, how can you refuse to believe in Jesus? To me the argument seems impossible to be resisted. If it is so, that Christ has died, the Just for the unjust and that all who trust Him shall be saved, I will also trust Him and I shall find peace through His blood.

Moreover, Soul, the point, we trust Gods Grace is bringing you to is thisJesus deserves to be trusted and trust Him we will. He is full of power to save for He is now upon the Throne of God and all power is given Him in Heaven and in earth. He is full of power to save, we know, because He is saving souls every day. Some of us are the living witnesses that He can forgive sin, for we are pardoned, accepted and renewed in heart! And the only way in which we obtained those gifts was thiswe trusted Him we did nothing else but trust Him!

If any soul here that believes in Jesus should perish, I must perish with him. I sail in that boat and if it sinks I have no other to flee to. I avow before you all that I have no other confidence. I have not so much as the shred of a reliance in any sacrament I have undergone or enjoyed, in any sermon I have ever preached, in any prayer I have ever prayed, in any communion with God I have ever known. My hope dies in the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ! And I shake off into the fire as though it were a viper, as a deadly thing only fit to be burned, all pretence of relying on anything I may be, or can be, or ever shall be, or do. None but Jesusthis is the settled pillar upon which we must build! It will bear us up, but nothing else can.

Now, since by the authority of Infallible Scripture we know that Jesus has this power, why is it that souls seeking rest do not obey the command and rest themselves freely upon Him? This is the climax of human depravitythat it rejects the witness of God, Himself, and chooses to perish in unbelief! Moreover, remember, also, that Jesus Christ this morning is by no means unwilling to save sinners, but on the contrary He delights to do it! You have never to drag mercy out of Christ as money from a miserit flows freely from Him like the stream from the fountain, or the sunlight from the sun. If He can be happier, He is made happier by giving His mercy to the undeserving. When a poor wretch who only deserves Hell comes to Him and He says, I have blotted out your sins, it is joy to Christs heart to do it.

When a poor blasphemer bows his knee and says, Lord, be merciful to me a sinner, it makes Christs heart glad to say, Your blasphemies are forgiven. I suffered for them on the Cross. When a poor little child, by her bedside, cries, Gentle Jesus, teach a little child to pray and forgive the sins which I have done, the Savior loves to say, Suffer these little children to come to Me, for this, also, is a part of My recompense for the wounds I endured in My hands, My feet and My side. When any of you come to Him and confess your transgressions and trust yourselves in His hands, it will be a new Heaven to Himit will put new stars into His ever bright and lustrous crown! It will make Him see of the travail of His soul and give Him satisfaction!

Have we not here, also, arguments to prove that Jesus is worthy to be trusted?  
III. This leads us in the third place to say by all these answers to the questionWho is He? EVERY SINNER IN THIS TABERNACLE IS SHUT UP THIS MORNING TO THE ALTERNATIVE OF FAITH OR UNBELIEF. You are shut up either to trust in Christ, in whom God commands you to trust, or to refuse to trust Him. I am not sent to preach to some of you this morning, but to everyone who has ears to hear. I have never learned to preach a restricted Gospel to a part of a congregationthe commission received by every true minister of Christ is, Go you into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature: he that believes and is baptized shall be saved; he that believes not shall be damned.   
As you are all creatures, the Gospel is hereby preached to all of you sensible or insensible, spiritually dead or spiritually alive, so long as you are able to hear the Gospel, one message comes to you all out of the excellent gloryWhoever will, let him come and take of the water of life freely. Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved. But I know what will be your course of action unless the Spirit of God prevents it. Many of you will try to decline the alternative between believing and not believing which I have put so nakedly before you. You will not like to say, I will not trust Christ, and yet you will not trust in Him!   
What, then, will you do? Why, you will ring the changes on the old bells, But I am such a sinner. I am so unworthy! I have already shown that the plea is not relevant and ought not to be thrust into the business. The question is one and indivisibleWill you believe on the Son of God? Why, then, do you raise another question about yourself which has nothing to do with it? Yet I will take you on your own grounds and answer you. Granted that you are a special and abominable sinnerthen of all men in the world you are the man who should trust Christ, because it is written, This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.   
You have been a drunk, a fornicator, an adulterer, a thiefin facta devil of a man. Well, then, you have been a sinnerthat is all it comes to and Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. Therefore, instead of being shut out by your character, you are shut in by it. You are the sort of man that Christ came to save! You cannot run away and say, He did not come to save me because I am not a sinner. You dare not do that! Very likely you will turn round upon me and say, My reason for unbelief is that I do not feel as I should.   
I again say the plea ought never to be urged. Because I feel a pain in my foot this morning, is that a reason why I should not trust in an honest man or believe a statement which comes to me upon good authority? I will, however, urge objections on behalf of the slaves. No black man came forward to say that the Blacks were unworthy and undeservingneither did the slaves propose that a part of the money should be paid by themselves. O no, it is not in human nature to request others to encumber their free gifts in that fashion!   
Yet here we are so false to all that is reasonable that we need to encumber Sovereign Grace! When God says, I will blot out your transgressions now and save you once and for allonly trust My dear Sonit is strange, tis passing strange, tis madness at its consummation that men should invent objections and plead for a Gospel with conditions and hard terms! Now, what will men do if driven out of this? I have often seen the sinner in the next place turn to downright falsehood and say, It is too late, though he knows right well it never can be too late, for the Gospel says, He that believes and is baptized shall be saved.   
It does not say, if he believes when he is 25 years of age, or 35, or 55, or 105, but it stands the same for all ages! It is never too late to believe a Truth of God and that is the pointWill you believe on the Son of God? Then the sinner will say that he feels within himself that there is no hope and so, because he happens to believe a lie, he will make out that Gods Truth also is a lie and refuse to believe that which God solemnly declares, namely, that there is salvation in Jesus Christ! But I cannot stay to mention all these falsehoods, nor, indeed, to run into all the subterfuges of men who seek to escape from their own mercies.   
I saw in Pompeii, on a shop door, the motto, Eme et Habe bisBuy and you shall haveand I could not but think that if I were walking the streets of the New Jerusalem, I should have seen a very different device, Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Now if there could be a shop opened in London in which all the goods were to be had without money and without price, would you quarrel with the shopkeeper and petition for an Act of Parliament to shut his shop up and say it was wicked because you would rather go on the old terms and pay for all you have? Of course not!   
Yet why is it you stand out against free Graces golden motto, Trust in Christ and you shall have. Here is instantaneous pardon, perfect pardon, everlasting pardon, sonship through Christ, safety on earth, glory in Heaven and all for nothing, all for nothingthe free gift of a gracious God to undeserving sinners who trust in Jesus! Never angel had a more gracious, more God-like message of mercy than I have! How I wish I could glow with a seraphs zeal and cry with a cherubs voice while proclaiming it! Would God that men would leave their foolish reasonings and believe in Jesus Christ!   
IV. Lastly, on this alternative, this day may hang EVERLASTING THINGS TO MANY OF YOU. I remember well, for the anniversary of the season has almost come round, when I was placed in a similar condition to many now present, when I knew myself to be ruined and undone and heard, for the first time truly to understand it, that word, Look unto Me, and be you saved, all you ends of the earth.   
I know how it stood that morning. I was like Naaman by the Jordans brink. There flowed the flood. The old nature said, Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? May I not wash in them and be clean? Human nature said, I need to

feel something: I need to have John Bunyans experience. I need to have my mothers experience. I need to feel a broken heart. I need to groan more bitterly. I need to be kept awake so many more nights and all that sort of thing.   
Suppose I had resisted still? If Gods Grace had not come in and made all that wicked pride of mine give way, I might have been at this hour I know not where, if still living among men. I might have been in Hell, gnawing my tongue to think I should ever have heard a plain Gospel sermon and should have put far from me the Gospel when it was proclaimedand all because I would not believe what is indisputably true and would not trust in Him whom no one ever trusted in vain.   
This morning I know there are some here in my past condition, in whom the good Spirit will say, Wash and be clean, and the soul will sigh, It seems too good to be true. But the good Spirit will reply, Are not My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts? Unbelief will say, Your sins are many. But the good Spirit will answer, Though your sins are as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow. Though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool. Then the heart will suggest, But I have rebelled against You, O God, so long. And the sweet Spirit of God will whisper, I have blotted out your sins like a cloud, and like a thick cloud your iniquities: Return unto Me, for I am married unto you, says the Lord.   
And I do trust that now, at this very moment, many a heart will say, I will, then, simply rest my souls salvation upon Christ the Son of God who is the only Savior of the lostI will never from this day on hope to be a self-saved man, nor look to anything but to Him who on the bloody tree endured the wrath of God on the behalf of as many as believe on Him. Soul, if you do so trust Jesus, as surely as you live you are saved! Go in peace. Not only do I speak these words this morning from these poor lips of clay, but He who was nailed on the tree, whom all Heaven adores, speaks this morning through meand He says to one, Daughter, be of good cheer, your sins are forgiven you. And to another, my Master says, Son, your sins are forgiven you: take up your bed and walk.   
O forgiven ones, I charge you do it! And as you got out of this house this morning, saved, and full of joy, tell others about it! Never leave off telling about it and live to love Him who has saved you! I saw the other day a picture by Rubens, in which he has painted Mary Magdalene kissing the feet of Christ while still they are gushing with founts of blood on the Cross. It was a strange picture, but I felt if I had been there I would have kissed them, too, though they had been crimson with His gore.   
O blessed feet! O blessed Savior! O blessed Father who gave His Son to be so blessed a Savior! O blessed Spirit of the blessed God that led our wicked, proud hearts into obedience and trust in Jesus! Yes, blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who has begotten us unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. The Lord bless you. Amen.

Adapted from The C.H. Spurgeon Collection, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307.  
END OF VOLUME 18   
O Spirit of God, use these sermons to bring many to a saving knowledge of my Master, Jesus Christ!   
Sermon #2667 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

A PRESSED MAN YIELDING TO CHRIST   
NO. 2667

A SERMON   
INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS-DAY, MARCH 25, 1900.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE NEWINGTON, ON THURSDAY EVENING, OCTOBER 12, 1882.

**Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when He had found him, He said unto him, Do you believe on the Son of God? He answered and said, Who is He, Lord, that I might believe on Him? And Jesus said unto him, You have both seen Him, and it is He that talks with you. And he said,   
Lord, I believe. And he worshipped Him.   
John 9:35-38.**

LAST Sabbath morning [Sermon #1683, Volume 28The Great Cross-Bearer and His Followersread/download the entire sermon free of charge at http://www.spurgeongems.org], I spoke

to you concerning one who was forced into the Kings service. That was Simon, the Cyrenian, who was compelled to bear Christs Cross. He was not a volunteer, but a pressed man, yet, I think that after he had been forced to bear the Cross, he willingly carried it and I hope that he, afterwards, became a faithful follower of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, strange to say, here is another pressed man, for I do not think that this man, whose eyes had been opened by Christ, had thought of becoming a Believer in the Son of God until the Lord Jesus found him. Before he had reached that pointindeed, before he knew that the Prophet who had opened his eyes was the Son of Godthe Pharisees had cast him out of the synagogue so that he was compelled to bear the cross for Christ although he did not, then, fully know Christ and certainly had not believed upon the Son of God. Yet, in his case, also, it appears that he cheerfully took up the cross which had been, at the first, forcibly laid upon him.

It may happen that there are some persons here who are in a similar positionsome who have been ridiculed for being Christians even before they are Christians! Some who have been mocked merely because they go to a place of worship, though as yet they have not yielded themselves to Christ. Well, if that is the case with any, seeing that the cross is laid upon their shoulders, I trust that they will not throw it off, but that they will bravely bear it for Christ and freely suffer what, up till now, has seemed to them to be a piece of injustice, for they have been treated as if they were believers in Christ, when really they are not yet on the Lords side.

This man, then, bearing Christs Cross in a certain way, was cast out of the synagogue. And then Christ found him and blessed him. Observe, dear Friend, where Christ began with him, for it will show us where and how the blessing usually enters. The door by which the richest of Heavens favors must come to us is indicated by our Lord going to that door and opening it. He said to the man, Do you believe on the Son of God. So that faith in the Son of God is the gate of benediction. Faith is that window of agate and gate of carbuncle by which the Divine Light of Jesus love comes streaming into the soul. This is the way by which Gods mercy enters the heart of man and, therefore, the Lord Jesus Christ, Himself, begins there. And in all our dealings with the unconverted, it will be wise for us, also, to begin there. That is the place where the decisive battle will have to be fought, for, upon the believing or the not believing on the Son of God, the eternal destiny of each individual will turn! He that believes on the Son has everlasting life: and he that believes not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abides on him.

That wrath abides even now upon him if the life of God is not in him. Let us hammer away at that all-important point of faith in Christ. This is the Thermopylae [narrow pass] of Christian experience. If this pass can be stormed and carried, we can capture the citadel of mens hearts. But if unbelief continues to guard that narrow passage to eternal life and to hold it against the Gospel and its invitations, exhortations, promises and threats, then nothing whatever can be done! So, in this enquiry of our Lord, we have most instructive teaching. His objective, no doubt, was to bless this man by working in him saving faith and, therefore, He said to him, Do you believe on the Son of God?

I think our text will help us, first, to speak of true faithhow it is known. Secondly, true faithhow it progresses. And thirdly, true faith how we can promote it.

I. First, I want to speak concerning TRUE FAITHthe faith that savesHOW IT IS KNOWN.   
First, it is absolutely essential that it should be faith in the Son of God. Our blessed Lord knew that this man believed in Him as a Prophetso might He not have been content with that? No, because to believe in Christ merely as a Prophet is not saving faith. It may be a step towards salvation and it may lead up to it, but the faith that is absolutely necessary is that belief in Him as the Son of God. And he who does not believe in the Deity of Christ has not a Savior who can save him! The work of saving a soul is a Divine operation and no one but a Divine Being can accomplish it. It is He who sits upon the Throne of God who says, Behold, I make all things new! There cannot be anyone except the Creator who can createand the Creator must, in every case, be God. To save a soul, there must be a work performed which is analogous to the Resurrection. But, in order to raise the dead, there must be the Presence and Power of God. It is one of those operations which it is not conceivable can be performed by an angel or by any created being. The Highest alone can accomplish ithas He not said of Himself, I kill and I make alive? The power of life and death must rest with God alone. Hence, then, the work of salvation needs a Power nothing less than Divine. He who believes in Christ as a mere man has not believed in a Person who can give him salvationand Christ cannot accomplish the stupendous task if He is only man, for the Savior must be God!   
There is no true and logical standpoint, in reference to the Deity of Christ, except one of two things. Either our Lord was the Son of God, equal with the Father, or else He was an impostor, for He most distinctly claimed that He was the Son of God. In the chapter preceding our text, at the 54th verse, we read that Jesus said to the Jews, If I honor Myself, My honor is nothing: it is My Father who honors Me; of whom you say, that He is your God. Then they took up stones to cast at Him because He said that He was the Son of God! And, in this case of the blind man whom He had healed, He took pains to find him that He might communicate to him in private the fact that He was, Himself, the Son of God. He never withdrew His claim to the Deity! If He had only said to the Jews, No, I am not the Son of God. You are mistaken in supposing that I said I was. The expressions I used are not intended to convey that idea, then they would not have crucified Him. This was the chief point of their quarrel with Him and I must again say that either He was God, or He willfully misled the people by using words which made them think that He was God.

His words have led millions of Christians, from those days until now, to worship Him as God. And they were perfectly justified, by His utterances, in doing so. And if He meant anything less than that, then He was a deceiver. But He did mean that He was God and it is our joy and glory to rest in Him as being, alike, the Son of Mary and the Son of Jehovah, HimselfLight of Light, very God of very Godco-equal and co-eternal with the Father. And here we feel that we can rest for our souls salvation! We can lean with our whole weight on One who is, indeed, mighty to save. Seeing that all power is His and that He is equal with God, He can and He will save all those who put their trust in Him! Do not any of you, I beseech you, be content with any faith less than that! If you have any sort of faith which does not recognize Christ as God, do with it as the man did with the bank note, when he found that it was badhe laid it down and ran away from it, for fear anybody should suspect him of being its owner. Put away every kind of confidence that is short of faith in the Son of God and abhor it, for it is a damnable delusion! And may the Lord bring you fully into this blessed state of salvation through believing on the Son of God!   
A second point about saving faith is that it rests upon a knowledge of Him. This man said to Jesus, Who is He, Lord, that I might believe on Him? He was not one whose notion of faith was that he need not know what he believed. The Church of Rome seems to inculcate some kind of implicit faith (or credulity) which can exist apart from knowledgebut how can I believe that which I do not know? Paul puts it thus, Faith comes by hearing. You must first hear and know what it is you are to believe before you can believe it. Otherwise your faith is vain, like that of the man of whom I have sometimes spoken, who said, I believe what the church believes. But what does the church believe? It believes what I believe. Then what do you and the church believe? Why, we both believe the same thing.   
That is not the kind of believing that can save the soul! It is through the knowledge of Christ that we are saved. To know Christ is sometimes said to be analogous to believing in Christ. You must know what it is that you have to believe! A faith that does not know is no faith at all. Read through the Epistles of John and mark with your pencil every time the word, know, is used. The Apostle makes that word, know, come in again and again, for a man must know that which he is to believe and hence this man says to Christ, Who is He, Lord, that I might believe on Him?   
For my part, I could never be content without unquestioning certainty as to my souls salvation. Do you think that is more than a man ought to wish for? Are any of you at ease while you are afraid that you have a mortal disease working within you? Oh, no! You want to know, from a qualified physician, the truth about your case. And if it were whispered in your ear, at this moment, that your house was being broken into or was on fire, would you sit still and not trouble yourself as to whether the report were true or not? Would you not want to go at once and see for yourself? If you knew that you bought an estate, some time ago, but you have since heard that the title to it is a very uncertain one, in fact, in all probability, you will lose all you have paid for it, would you not say, I ought to have taken care to be certain about the title. And I would not have bought the estate if I had not felt that the deeds relating to it were all right. Well, then, if you desire certainty about your bodily health, about the safety of your house and about the validity of your title-deeds, can you afford to go without certainty as to your souls affairs? No, you cannot. Therefore, rest not till you have it. If you have various questions about your spiritual condition, boldly face those questions and answer them. Never let any questions about your eternal welfare be such that you dare not face them and do not wish to search out the answers to them. Pry to the very bottom of them and, better still, ask the Lord to search you, and know your heart, to try you, and know your thoughts, and to lead you in the way everlasting. And be not content till you can truthfully say, I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him.   
This man, of whom I am speaking, knew that Christ had opened his eyes and, therefore, He must be at least a Prophet. He also knew, further, that whatever that Prophet told him must be true, for the Man who had opened his eyes must have been sent by Godand God does not work miracles by liars. He said to himself, This Man is undoubtedly a faithful person, or God would not employ Him in such a wonderful work as that of opening the eyes of a man who was born blind. And then he stood perfectly prepared to receive whatever might be spoken by this Prophet of whom he knew something, though he did not know enough to understand what was meant by the Savior when He asked, Do you believe on the Son of God? He, therefore, sat as an enquirer at the Saviors feet, waiting for something to be told him which should enable him to believe!   
You, dear Friend, may not be in exactly the same condition that this man was, but, still, your case may be, in many respects, a parallel one. You say, perhaps, I wish, above all things in the world, that I could believe in Christ. Do you intend to sit down and try to make yourself believe in Him? That would be a very unwise thing because faith is not worked in the soul in that fashion! Suppose it was rumored, at the present moment, that there had been another massacre in Alexandria, and that our troops had been driven out of the city? How would you decide whether the report was to be believed or not? Would you sit down in your pew and say, I will try to make myself believe it? Well, you might come, by a process of reasoning, to some sort of conclusion as to whether it was or was not a likely thing, but the mere sensible plan would be to enquire what foundation there was for the report. And if, on going to the War Office, you were informed by someone in authority, Yes, there has been a very great disaster, well, then, knowing the facts of the case, you could believe. The enquiry at headquarters would be the way to ascertain the truth of the report, and just so is it in connection with believing in Christ. If I am to believe in Him, I ask, with this man, Who is He? and until I know who He is, it is idle for me to talk about forcing myself to believe in Him!   
Now listen, He in whom you are asked to believe for salvation is, first, of all, Himself God! Then, in Infinite mercy, He came and took upon Himself our nature and dwelt among men. He voluntarily camebeing God but He was also sent of God, appointed and authorized to be Gods Ambassador to man. He was, in addition to being sent of God, anointed of God, for the Spirit of God rested upon Him without measure, qualifying Him for His work. The life He led here on earth was uniquethere was never another like itand the imagination of man cannot write the history of another man that shall be at all comparable to the life of Christ! It stands apart in a lone, simple majesty, utterly inimitable, absolutely perfect. Then He died and by that death He forever put away the sin of His people. He took upon Himself the sin which He had never committed. He was numbered with the transgressors and He suffered as if mens transgressions had been His own. He died, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God.   
And God has accepted those sufferings as a propitiation for all who believe in Him. And now, this is the witness of God concerning Him, that He has raised Him from the dead, and taken Him up to His Throne and made Him to sit there, at His Fathers right hand, where, at this moment, He is making intercession for all who come to God by Him. And now, our prayers are accepted through Himand the infinite blessings which are His, He distributes among us! And He is shortly coming again with sound of trumpet, and attended by myriads of saints and angels. As He ascended from Olivet, in like manner He will also descend to earth again. King of Kings and Lord of Lords shall He be in that dayAnd before Him shall be gathered all nations: and He shall separate them, one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. He is God! He still lives! It is the living, reigning Christ whom we preach to you! He lives in Glory and He also lives here by the Presence of His Holy Spirit who is with us and who is to abide with us evermore. And it is upon Him as God Incarnate, as Saviorcrucified, risen, and gone into Glorythat you are asked to place your souls confidence!  
If you would learn this Truth of God more fully, read the four Gospels and the Epistles, and ask the Spirit, who inspired the writers of them, to explain and apply them to you. That is the way to obtain faith! Many a man has been reading in the Bible the story of the Cross, and so he has believed in Jesus. Many another has heard about the Savior, and so has been led to believe in Him. It is the simplest thing in the world to believe upon trustworthy evidence and when we get the evidence of Christs life and death manifesting the glory of His Person, the graciousness of His Character and the efficacy of His atoning blood, then are we led to believe in Him! True faith is based upon knowledge of Christ, as it was in this mans case. Take care, dear Friends, that you always remember that simple but important Truth of God.   
And, further, true faith always expresses itself to the Lord. This man, when he had believed in Jesus, said, Lord, I believe. True faith ought also to express itself to men, as Paul puts it, in writing to the Romans, For with the heart man believes unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. Or, as the Master Himself puts it, He that believes and is baptized shall be saved. Therefore, the confession before men ought not to be neglected in any case, yet I fear, and hope, that there are some pilgrims who steal into Heaven, scarcely known by men to be Christiansat least, not acknowledged as such by open profession. I do not recommend dodging behind the hedges and getting to Heaven along back roadsthat is a bad planbut still, I trust some have managed it, though with much trouble and loss to themselves. But, in every case, everyone who has believed has made the confession of that faith to the Master Himself. He has said to Jesus, as this man did, Lord, I believe, even though he has added, with another man, Help You my unbelief. He has said to Jesus, with Thomas, My Lord and my God. There has been a personal acknowledgment, as we sometimes sing it

*My faith looks up to You,   
You Lamb of Calvary,   
Savior Divine.*   
It is a very vital point about true faith, that it thus recognizes its obligation to speak to Him and to acknowledge itself to Him. How sweetly does faith, sometimes, come up from the wilderness, leaning upon her Beloved and acknowledging to Him that she is His and He is hers! She cannot help making this confessionshe would be untrue to herself and to her Lord if she did not do so.  
In one respect, we are better off than this man was, for we have many Divine promises to help us to believe in Christ. Have you ever noticed, dear Friends, how much we live upon the promises of our fellow men? In buying a small article at a shop, you pay your twopence for it across the counter, but, the larger the business transaction gets to be, the less there is of metallic currency in connection with itthen you often pay each other in promises. The most common form of a promise is a bank noteand it is worth while to observe how much a bank note is made after the model of Gods promises. How does the wording of this bank note run? It is headed, Bank of England. And it begins, I promise. You take this note readily enough instead of five golden sovereigns, because you read on it, I promise to pay the bearer, and Gods promise is payable to the bearer. Whoever has the promise in his possession, whoever has faith enough to lay hold of Gods promise, may read it in this wayI promise to pay the bearer.  
I remember when I first snatched at one of Gods precious promises. I could hardly hope that I had any right to it, for I felt myself so utterly unworthy, but I snatched it up and ran with it to the Bank of Faith! And as soon as I presented it, I received its full value. God always honors His own promises. Here is one: Him that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out. Go to Him with that gracious message and it shall be fulfilled to you, whoever you are! The note says, I promise to pay the bearer. If a janitor takes that note to the Bank of England, he will get the money for itI mean a janitor in character as well as by trade, for the declaration on it is, I promise to pay the bearer.   
What does it now say on the bank note I promise to pay the bearer on demand. That is how all Gods promises runon demand. It is worthy of note that in the olden times, when the Lord had made many promises to His people, He added, I will yet for this be enquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them, as though the fulfillment of the promise was delayed until it was asked for! No doubt many of Gods great and precious promises are not realized by you and me because they are not presented to the Lord as we should take a note to the bank to get it cashed. We do not enquire of God as much as we ought. You hear of enquirers going to see the ministerthat may be a good thing, but the best sort of enquirers are those I heard before I came up here to preach tonightwhen some good earnest souls met downs in the lecture hall to enquire of God for a blessing, and to ask Him to help His servant to speak the Word with power.   
Now, coming back to this bank note, I daresay you would not mind having a pile of paper of this kind reaching from the floor to the ceiling then you would say to yourself, Now I am a rich man. But you have not a single farthing there, you have only a promise to pay the bearer on demand the sum of five pounds. Ah, you say, but that promise is good all the world over. Whose promise is it? Well, it is signed by the chief cashier, but he only signs it, for the Governor and Company of the Bank of England. That is where the value of the promise lies! And it is our comfort to know that we have a noble name written below all Gods promises, for the Lord Jesus Christ has signed them all in Gods behalf for the great Governor of Heaven and earth, who has no need of any company to be joined with Him, for His sole resources are fully equal to the fulfillment of every promise that He has ever issued!   
Now, if we treat mens promises with respect, and pass them from hand to hand as if they were genuine gold, and we constantly do so, shall we not treat Gods promises with something more than respect and trust them with implicit confidence? Will any man have the impudence to say, I have faith in a note signed by the chief cashier of the Bank of England, but cannot trust a promise that is certified by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself? Shall I consider that bank note to be as good as the money it represents and yet, when I hold in my hand, Gods Word, signed, sealed and ratified by the sprinkling of the very blood of His dear Son, shall I dare to say, I find it hard to believe in that Word? If I talk so, I shall grieve the people of God and, what is far worse, shall grieve the Lord Himself!   
II. Now I turn to the second part of our subject, which is, TRUE FAITH, HOW IT PROGRESSES.   
Very often it has a very small beginning. Saving faith does not always come all of a sudden. Some men are saved, as Saul of Tarsus wasthey are struck down in the midst of their sins and converted in remarkable and unusual manner. But with many others there is, first, a faint twilight. Then, by-and-by, a little more and, at last, the sun has fully risen upon them. Perhaps you cannot tell when it did actually rise, but you know that it has risen, for there is the light and the brightness of its shining!   
In the case of the man of whom I am speaking, faith began with a preparedness to believe. His eyes had been opened and he was, thereby, made ready to believe anything that Jesus might tell him. And there is many a man who, looking back upon Gods goodness to himself and Gods goodness to his father and mother, and Gods goodness to gracious people in generaland thinking of the holy and lovely Character of Christhas, in that way, been prepared to believe when the Truth of God was clearly set before him!   
This man went a step further on the right road, for he desired to believe. He said, Who is He, Lord, not, that I might know about Him, and talk about Himbut, that I might believe on Him? He had a desire to possess true faith! And there are many like he, who desire to believe, but who have not exercised faith in Christ. This is very amazing, but it is true. Of all things in the world, to believe in Christ is one of the most simple, yet that is the reason why many find it so difficult. If it were difficult, it would seem easy to them, but, being easy, it appears difficult. Some of you, dear Friends, when I try to describe how we come to trust in Christ, will twist and turn what I say, even if I make it as plain as a pikestaff. You think, Oh, he must mean something very different from what he says! You really cannot get this idea into your headsthat you have only to depend on Christ, to trust Him and then you are saved, for he that believes on the Son has everlasting life.   
Whenever we use a metaphor, or figure, or illustration to try to explain the simplicity of faith, straightway somebody finds a difficulty even in that. When I have been trying to catch a sinner, I find that he has as many hiding places as there are days in the year. I have stopped up one after another, and I have said to him, No, salvation only comes through believing. Yes, Sir, I know, butand down he runs into another hole! When I have dug him out of that, and fancied I will surely catch him, he says, Oh, yes, we are to trust the Savior, butand again he is off. Somehow, men seem very ingenious in trying to find out reasons why they should not be saved! And all their foolish ingenuity seems to be employed in attempting to escape from this blessed Divine simplicity Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved. May God the Holy Spirit lead them to believe in Him! He must lead them, for no man can see Christ until his eyes are Divinely opened. We may put the Truth as plainly as we can, and preach it so that we think we cannot be misunderstood, but men will misunderstand us, even those who desire to believe in Christ, until the Holy Spirit works effectually in them!   
This man went still further on the right road, for he not only desired to believe, but he made enquiry in order that he might believe. I put it to you very simply, just now, with regard to making enquiries concerning a certain piece of news. Well, this man did the same. He said to the Master, Who is He, Lord, that I might believe on Him? If sinners would only make enquiries about the Savior, they would soon trust in Him. You will find, as a rule, that the people who rail at the New Testament, have never read it. If they would but read it, their foolishness might soon come to an end and be followed by a blessed faith in Christ. But, instead of doing so, they read what some objection-manufacturer has said about the Bible, instead of going to the Book, itself, and seeing what it really teaches. If I were very thirsty, I do not think that I would abstain from going to a well because somebody told me that it contained bad waterbut I would go and see, and taste for myself. And when a soul gets very thirsty, if it is wise, it goes to the Word for itself. I advise you to do that, dear Friends. O taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man who trusts in Him.   
When this man had made his enquiry and received Christs answer, he soon became decided. He said, Lord, I believe. I like that simple, clear acknowledgement of faith. So often, when we are conversing with an enquirer, he says, Yes, Sir. I hope I believe. Oh, dear, is that all you can say? Well, I trust I believeand so faith is surrounded by fogI hope I believe. I trust I believe. Man, dont you know whether you believe or not? You may know it! One thing I know, you have no business to go to sleep till you know, once and for all, for, if you are not a Believer, you are an unbeliever! There is no middle state between the two. And if you are an unbeliever, you are condemned already, because you have not believed in the name of the only-begotten Son of God! This matter of believing ought never to be left in doubt at all, but it should be definitely settled, so that you can say with this man, Lord, I believe.

Then, further, he acted as a Believer, for, he worshipped Him. This proves how his faith had grown. I should like to ask you, who are the people of God, when you are happiest. I think you will agree with what I am going to say, but if you do not, it will still be just as true to me. My happiest moments are when I am worshipping God, really adoring the Lord Jesus Christ, and having fellowship with the ever-blessed Spirit. In that worship, I forget the cares of the Church and everything else. And, to me, it is the nearest approach to what it will be in Heaven, where, day without night, they offer perpetual adoration unto Him that sits upon the Throne, and unto the Lamb. Therefore, what a memorable moment it was for this man when he worshipped Christ!   
Now, if Christ was not God, that man was an idolater, a manworshipper. And you and I, instead of being regarded as very excellent people, by those who call themselves, Unitarian Brethren, should be condemned as idolaters! If Christ was not God, we are not Christians! We are deceived dupes, we are idolaters as bad as the heathen whom we now pity. It is making a man into a god if Christ is not God. But, blessed be His holy name, He is God, and we feel that it is the supreme delight of our being to worship Him! We cannot veil our face with our wings, for we have none, but we do veil them with His own robe of righteousness whenever we approach Him. We cannot cover our feet with our wings, as the angels do, but we do take His blood and His righteousness both as a covering for our feet, and as wings with which we fly up to Him. And though as yet we have no crowns to cast at His dear feet, yet, if we have any honor, any good repute, any Grace, anything that is comely, anything that is honest, we lay it all at His feet and cry, Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Your name give glory, for Your mercy and for Your truths sake.   
III. Now I come to the third point, which is this, TRUE FAITHHOW TO PROMOTE IT.   
Beloved Brothers and Sisters, there are many of you who are constantly looking out for souls and trying to bring them to Christ. You have, here, an example of what you may do in endeavoring to lead them to exercise faith in Jesus.  
First, if you have any choice as to those to whom you go, seek out the oppressed. You are to go, as far as you can, into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. But if you may specially look for some more than others, seek out the sick, the sad, the weary, the poor, the broken-down ones and especially such as have been put out of the synagogue. When our missionaries have gone among the Brahmins in India, they have had a few converts, but the most blessing has been given among the poor people who have no high caste of which they are proud. When the Gospel was taken to them, they gladly received it! The Gospel worker will be wise if, instead of shunning those whom even nominally religious people put away, he looks after them, first. They are likely soil for the good Seed of the Kingdom to grow in and bring forth fruit. Our Lord Jesus Christ, at Sychar, did not go to some goodly matron who was an ornament to her sex. You know where He found the woman who became His disciple and missionary, and you know what kind of woman she was and, to this day, He delights to go about, as Whitefield used to say, sweeping up the devils castaways. Those whom nobody else wants and nobody else will haveour blessed Lord and Master delights to receive. Therefore, look after those out-of-the-way sinners! I like that expression, those out-of-the-way Sinners, because our Lord Jesus Christ is the High Priest who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way. Out-of-the-way sinners are the sort He came to save, therefore, look out for them, you who would follow the example of the great Soul-Winner.   
Then, next, when you come to close quarters with them, ask them questions, as Christ did. He said to this man, Do you believe on the Son of God. Put the enquiry pointedly and personally. Here am I, up in the pulpit, firing the Gospel gun, and the shot flies where God directs it. But you, downstairs, who love the Lord, can, as it were, hold a pistol close to the sinners head! Take them separately, one by one, and make them stand and deliver. Put the question as our Lord did, Do you believe? See, Friend, you can say, the minister has been preaching about faith. Do you believe? This is what nine people out of ten needsomebody to come and make a personal application of the Truth of God to them. They are like soldiers out upon the battlefield. They lie there, wounded, bleeding, dying. Close by, there is all that is needed to bind up their wounds and plenty of it! Then, why do they lie there in agony? They need personal attention and it is your business, as an army surgeon, to go and put on the splint and bind up the wounds. Oh, that we had multitudes who would do this, and that all Gods people were constantly looking out for opportunities of making a personal application of the Truth to those who hear it! Do you believe? said the Lord Jesus to this man, and by that question He held him fast. That is the way to win soulsbegin with a personal question!   
Then, be ready to answer enquiries. This is what our Lord Himself did when He revealed Himself to this man. Tell them all you know and if you cannot tell them all they need to know, try to bring them to somebody more advanced in spiritual things than you, yourself, are, so that, with prayer, patience and wise instruction, he may lead them to Christ.   
Next, pray to the Lord Jesus Christ to reveal Himself to them, for that is the way faith comes. We cannot speak of Christ as He should be spoken of, but when He reveals Himself, then the sinners see Him. All the portraits of a beauty never touch the heart like one glance from her eyes and all the portraits of Christ that were ever painted by His most admiring disciples, never make such an impression on the heart of man as when once He says, as He said to this man, You have both seen Him, and it is He that talks with you. None but Christ Himself can preach Christ to the fullest. He must reveal Himself, or the Spirit must reveal Him, or else men do not see Him.   
Finally, glorify Christ by your own personal testimony. Remember that wondrous intercessory prayer of our Lord, in which He said, Neither pray I for these, alone, but for them, also, which shall believe on Me through their word. It was so kind, yet just like He, not to say, through My Word, though it is His Word that we are to proclaim. But we get it into our hearts and so appropriate it that when we utter it, we speak out of our own heart, and soul, and then it becomes our word, too, and so sinners believe on Christ through our word. Go on speaking your word, that is, Christs Word spoken by you, for this is how to win souls for Him!   
Now, in closing, I want to begin again, and give you another little sermon altogether, only I shall not be able to preach it to you, but just to give you the heads of it and leave it with you.   
The first head is, when you are believing, mind that you believe in Jesus Himself. Do you believe in the Son of God? or is it somebody else in whom you are believing? Is it merely what others say about Christ that you believe? Is it your own opinion of Christ? Or is it really the Son of God upon whom you are believing? When you are believing, believe in Jesus Himself.   
Next, when you are enquiring, enquire of Jesus Himself. This is a beautiful thing, to my mind. Here is a man asking Christ about Christ asking Jesus, Who is He? and, all the while, speaking to the very Person about whom he was enquiring! He did not know it was Jesus, yet he had gone to the very Fountainhead! Now, perhaps some of you have made enquiries of Christian people and you have read the Bible, and prayed, and yet you cannot find Jesus. Then go direct to Him, by faith, and say, Lord, show me Yourself. That is the way to learn of Him. Have I a book of which I cannot make heads or tail as I read it? If I knew where the author lived, I would call on him and say, Dear Sir, will you kindly tell me what you mean by this expression? I cannot understand it. That is the way to find anything outgo to the fountainhead. So, always go to Christ and, when you are enquiring, enquire of Christ Himself.   
Next, when you are seeking Christ, ask Christ to reveal Himself to you, for there is nobody who can reveal Christ as Christ can reveal Himself by His blessed Spirit.   
And, next, when you are confessing your faith, confess it to Christ Himself. Say, as this man did, Lord, I believe. Say to your minister, or to your mother, or to your friends, I believe, but take care, above all the rest, that you say, Lord, I believe.   
And, lastly, when you are worshipping, worship Christ Himself. He worshipped HIM and no one else. Take care that your reverence and adoration are not given, in any degree, to the church, or to any person in it, or to any priest, or minister, or anything created or made. Worship God, and God in Christ Jesus. And the Lord bless you, Beloved, for His names sake! Amen.

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PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #1798 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

SIGHT FOR THOSE WHO SEE NOT   
NO. 1798

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON THURSDAY EVENING, AUGUST 14, 1884, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**And Jesus said, For judgment I have come into this world, that they which see not might see and that   
they which see might be made blind.   
John 9:39.**

THE great Day of Judgment is not as yet. God, in infinite longsuffering, waits to be gracious, giving men space wherein to repent and to be reconciled to Him. Jesus has come into the world for judgment, but not for that last and eternally unchangeable judgment which awaits us all. That hour and that advent will arrivewe have the declaration of Gods Word for it. Read in Matthew 25When the Son of Man shall come in His glory and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His Glory: and before Him shall be gathered all nations: and He shall separate them, one from another, as a shepherd divides His sheep from the goats. There is no question as to this sure facteven if many more centuries should pass away, the dread assize will be held in due season.

The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness. He is full of tenderness and long-suffering and, therefore, He tarries, but the vision will come, it will not tarry. Settle this in your minds and live as in the presence of that august tribunal. Though the Day of Judgment is not at this hour, yet our Lord Jesus is now carrying on a form of judgment in the world. His fan is in His hand and He will thoroughly purge His floor. He sits as a refiner separating ever and anon his silver from the dross. His Cross has revealed the thoughts of many hearts and His Gospel is everywhereacting as a discoverer, as a separator and as a test by which men may judge themselves, if they will. It is a very happy circumstance when a man is willing to accept the Lords judgment, day by day, permitting the Law of God, itself, to judge him, before the Lawgiver ascends to the tribunal.

Happy are those people toward whom a present judgment is being exercised, of whom Paul says, But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world. Saints are now judged by a fatherly discipline, that they may not be judged, hereafter, by a judicial condemnation. Our Lords great design in coming into the world is the salvation of men. God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world, through Him, might be saved. But, in order to that salvation, it is necessary that men should know the truth about themselves and should take up a truthful position before Godfor God will not endure a lieand neither will He save men upon false grounds. He will deal with all His creatures according to His Truth. If He condemns them, it will be because equity requires it. And if He saves them, it will be because He has found a way by which mercy and truth are met together.

So, then, everywhere throughout the world, wherever Christ comes comes by His Gospel and the consequences of ita judgment is going on. Men are set before the Judgment Seat of their Saviorthey are tested, tried, made manifest and declared. Light no sooner comes into the world than it begins to judge the darkness. Scarcely had it been known to be darkness if the light had not revealed the contrast. Where the Gospel comes, some hearts receive it at once and are judged to be honest and good groundmen who are willing to accept the Gospel come to the Light of God that their deeds may be made manifest that they are worked in God. Other hearts at once hate the Truth, for they are the children of darkness and, therefore, they love darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil. You see, then, how without its being the main intention of Christs coming into the world, it yet becomes a secondary effect and, so far, an incidental purpose of His coming that His very appearance among the sons of men should judge them!

In this glass they see their own countenances and discover their spots. By this plummet line they test their own uprightness and see how far they lean towards evil. Under the sign of the Gospel, the Lord has set up a public weigh-house. Do you not see the great scales?they are correct to a hair! Come here and test yourselves. Even in this banqueting house of love, Truth marks her own and sets her brand on counterfeits! God has a fire of trial in Zion and a furnace of test in Jerusalem. At this hour I pray that the Gospel may have a dividing effect in this house. Observe with care that wherever Jesus Christ comes, the most decided effects follow. I have come that they which see not might see and that they which see might be made blind. Neither to the right nor to the wrong is Christ indifferent. Whoever you may be, if you hear the Gospel at any time, it must have some effect upon you. It will either be to your soul, a savor of life unto life, or else, a savor of death unto death. It will be antidote or poisoncuring or killingsoftening the conscience or searing it. It will either make you see, or else, because you fancy that you see, its very brightness will make you blind, like Saul of Tarsus, who cried, I could not see for the glory of that light.

You cannot be indifferent to the Gospel if you become a hearer of it. I have come, said Christthat fact none of you can escapefor judgment I have come and that judgment must take place in your mind and conscience whether you will it or not! This coming and judgment have a wonderfully marked and decided effect. It is not that of a little improvement or of slight alterationit is the turning of things upside down so that, they which see not might see, and that they which see might be made blind. It is a very violent changefrom light to darkness or darkness to light! In either case it is an absolute reversal of your condition.

Now, the Gospel will do just that for you! If you live without it, it will make you die. If you feel that you are dead without it, it will make you live. He has put down the mighty from their seats and exalted them of low degree. He has filled the hungry with good things and the rich He has sent away empty. Learn, therefore, that there will always be some effect upon the human mind wherever Christ comesand that this effect will be a very decided onechanging all their conditions as much as if the laws of Nature were reversed! The Lords approach to a soul will lift it into the Light of God more and more gloriouslyor else it will plunge it into deeper darkness, deeper responsibility, deeper guilt and, consequently, deeper woe!

Well may we justify that faithful preacher of the Word who, in the middle of his sermon, suddenly stopped and cried, Woe is me! What am I doing? I am preaching Christ to you and, while I hope some of you are receiving Him, and so I am leading you toward Heaven, many others of you are rejecting Himand thus I am increasing your responsibility and your guilt! Thus I am doing evil instead of good to you! Woe is me! God help His poor servantI have often felt the sweet preaching of the Gospel to be bitter work. I do not wonder that dark thoughts come over the earnest preacher! I wish his hearers would partake with him in his anxieties. May we unite in deep concern, tonightI will pray for Gods blessing upon every one of youand you pray earnestly that no word of mine may be unprofitable to you. When preacher and hearer draw the same way, the chariot wheels move to musicand that music is salvation! Come, Spirit of the living God, and make it so!

Now, I want to take you immediately to the text and I shall dwell upon two points of it if there should be time. If not, I shall keep to only one. The first is enough to begin withCHRIST HAS COME THAT THOSE WHO SEE NOT MAY SEE.

It is a very wonderful thing about the Gospel that it is meant for people who think themselves most unsuited for it and most undeserving of itit is a sight for those who see not! An anxious friend gave me, the other day, a description of himself which was enough to make a man stand aghast to hear it. With many sighs and tears, he described to me the condition of a man lost by nature and by practiceand unable to help himself in the least degree. When he had completed his storyI let him finish it and touch it up with a few extra strokes of blackI took him by the hand and said, I am sure that you are one of those whom Christ came into the world to save. You have given me the most accurate description, possible, of one of Gods elect when awakened to see his state by nature before the Most Holy God. You are one of those for whom the Gospel was intended.

I spoke boldly, for I felt that I was only stating the Truth of God. Since Jesus Christ came into the world to open mens eyes, I know that He did not come to open the eyes of some of those around me, for they have bright eyes which smile on me, while I am now speaking, and seem to sayNo oculist is needed here! I cast my eyes all round the place and I see nothing for the great Opener-of-Eyes to do till I pause at yonder pew, for there sits a blind man. There are one or two here, tonight, whose natural eyes have, for many years, been sealed in darknessand I say of them, if Jesus Christ has come to open anybodys eyes, He has come to open the eyes of the blind! It must be so! Infirmity and disability are necessary preparations for the receipt of the blessing of sight.

Suppose I heard that Jesus had come to make lame men leap like a rabbit? Well, I should look round and say that He did not come for that young girlshe can skip like a gazelle and run like a fawn! He did not come for that young manI saw him on his bicycle just now, flying over the ground as swiftly as a swallow skims the stream! Neither did the Healer of the Lame come for that strong Brother over there, to whom a quick, long walk is quite a pleasure. But just now there limped down yonder aisle a lame man on his crutches. Did you not hear his heavy movement? Well, if Jesus Christ came to heal lameness, that is the kind of person that He had His eyes upon! When I hear of charity breakfasts being distributed, I never imagine, for a moment, that the select assembly that will be gathered to discuss a meal of porridge and bread will consist of members of the Houses of Lords and Commons, or of the royal family!

I do not suppose that one of those honorable confraternities will be present at a festival with beggars unless they should take a fancy to be lookers-on. If I went to a charity breakfast and saw some of the peerage there with basins and spoons, instead of stars and garters, I would say, Go away! You are not the people that ought to be here! You have no right at this entertainment. The richer and the more respectable you are, the less right you have to be sitting at a meal that was meant for the poorest of the poor. Now turn the parable around. If you are blinded in your spiritual sight, Christ came to open your eyes! If you are lame so that you cannot run to Him, Christ came that He might restore you! If you are as poor as spiritual poverty can make you. No, poorer than thatas poor as

sin can make youand if you are as unable to help yourselves as the dead in the grave, then I remember that great Truth of God, When we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.

It sounds curious, does it not? But it is so. Christ died for our sins, not for our virtues! It is not your efficiencies, but your deficiencies which entitle you to the Lord Jesus! It is not your wealth, but your need! It is not what you have, but what you have not! It is not what you can boast of, but what you mourn over, that qualifies you to receive the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ! He came on purpose that those that see not might see. O blind eyes, I have good news for you! O souls that sit in darkness and in the valley of the shadow of death, my feet are beautiful, tonight, for I bring you glad tidings of exceeding joylight for the blind, gladness for the despairing, Divine Grace for the guilty!

Now I want you to consider the blind man of whom we were reading in the narrative just now as a sort of model blind manthe kind of blind man that Jesus Christ delights to look uponand to whom He rejoices to give sight. This blind man knew that he was blind. He never had a doubt about that. He had never seen a ray of light and yet he believed that he was blindnot quite so easy a matter as some of you may think, for I have met with thousands of blind men who laugh at the idea of sight because they have had no experience of it! And they refuse to believe more than they can understand or feel. This sightless beggar had to be told that there was such a thing as sight, but being so told, he believed it and all his later experience went to confirm the unhappy fact. Under a full persuasion that it was so, he had taken up the proper position for a poor, blind manhe sat by the wayside and begged for alms.

Now, the man whom Christ delights to bless is the man who knows his right place and is willing to occupy it. He does not conceal his blindness and talk as if he carried a telescope about with him and communed all night with the stars. Many of you unconverted people are a deal too highyou will have to come down a good many notches before you will be in your true places! You are so excellent, are you not? And so intelligent, and so humble, and so well-meaning and so everything that you ought to be! To you, salvation will never come! The spirit of peace will never dwell in a nest which reeks of pride! In your own false judgment you are within an inch of being perfect, whereas the Lord knows that you are not half that distance from Hell if His justice were to be let loose upon you! You dream fine dreams in your fond conceit of yourselves, fancying that you have kept the Law of God from your youth up and that you are abundantly religious, excellent, admirableand all that you ought to be! As long as you think thus highly of yourselves, the blessing is hindered and kept away. You are not of the kind that Jesus came to bless.

He said, Himself, I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. Perhaps someone here is saying, I do not understand it. I cannot get at this GospelI scarcely know my own condition. I am unhappy, I know. I am not right, I know, but I cannot describe myself, or see myself aright. As to this faith of which I hear so much and this atoning blood which seems so mighty to cleanse, I seem as if I cannot perceive it or comprehend it. Alas, I am so blind! You speak the truth, my dear Friend, and therein you are like the blind man in the Gospel! I pray that as Jesus healed him, so He will heal youand I pray with strong confidence, too, for my Lord has certain fixed waysand when He meets with certain cases, He acts after the same method with them. Jesus is not arbitrary, but He has a way of procedure from which He does not deviate, so that, when He meets such a case as yours, He does the same with each instance of it, to the praise and glory of His name! Take up a blind beggars position, tonight, and sit down and cry for light and healing and you shall certainly have them.

This blind man not only believed that he was blind and knew it, but he had a sincere desire to be enlightened. It was no grief to him that Jesus had come that he might see. It was an intense joy to hear that Jesus had opened the eyes of other blind men and though he may have feared that his case was one quite out of the catalogfor since the world began, it was not heard that any man had opened the eyes of one that was born blindyet he was pleased to find that Jesus Christ had stopped and looked upon him and was placing clay upon his eyes! He felt a gladness and an alacrity about his heart when he was bid to go to Siloam and washhis whole manhood went with the Saviors act and deedhe gave himself up to the surgery of the Christ with the full consent of his being.

Now, are you hungering after Christ? Oh, Soul, if you know your need of Him and have a strong desire after Him, the heavenly work is begun! If there is within your spirit a burning longing to be reconciled to God by the death of His Son, your cure is already half-worked! Some of you have written me letters, lately, which show the actions of your heartthese are blind movements, enough, but they all grope after light! Poor souls that you are, what hope I have for you! Specially for him who, with broken heart, has begged our prayers these many months and yet has not come out to light and liberty! I am so glad to see the strength, vehemence and agony of your desires. Your unbelief grieves me, but your eagerness charms me. Would God you would trust my Lord Jesus Christ and rest in Him! Still, I am glad to think that you cannot rest without Him. I am glad that you cannot be quiet till He quiets you. No pillow will ever ease your head but my Lords bosom. No hand but His can ever staunch your bleeding wounds. I am glad that it is so, for such a sinner as you are is well described by Hart

*A sinner is a sacred thing;*

*The Holy Spirit has made Him so.*   
The Spirit of God has set apart the blind soul to be a monument of the Illuminators skill! He has made the lost soul to be the choice standing place whereon Christ may set His feet and display all the splendor of His love!

This man is, again, a model to every other blind man because he was very obedient. As soon as the Lord said to him, Go, wash, he went. There was no question with him about Siloamhe had no Abana or Pharpar which he preferred to that pool. He was fully submissive. He stood still, you know, and let the Master put the clay on his eyes. It did not look like an operation that could do him any good, but he believed that Jesus was a Prophet, and so he waited and let Him do whatever He pleased with him. How glad I am when I can see a poor soul offering a full surrender to Jesus! Some of you heard, last Monday night, about the sweetness of yielding yourselves up to Jesushow I wish you might now feel it! You will be a great deal more passive than active, in the matter of your conversion. He will give you quickness of foot after He has once given you lifebut, in the inception of life, the first thing is just to acknowledge your death and to be willing to receive life altogether from Him in His own way!

That is a good word in the Prophet, Oh Lord, you are the Potter and we are the clay. Now, what can the clay do to help the potter? Nothing! It must only be pliableit must yield to his hands. The clay must not be stiff, hard and unwilling to be molded, or it will be set aside. O be submissive to the saving hands! When you are brought into such a state of heart that you are willing to be anything or nothing so that you may be saved, dear Soul, you are near unto the kingdom! If you can say, I would give my life to be saved, or if the Lord refuses anything at my hands, I will gladly consent to be nothing if He will but save me, then you are on the doorstep of Grace! I would so completely yield myself up to Christ as to feel what He would have me feel and nothing moreto be what He would have me beand to do what He would have me do and nothing beyond.

If you are thus submissive, I tell you to take heart of hope! The Spirit of God is at work with you! You are very near to Christ. Believe on Him! Trust in Him and live, for He has come on purpose that they that see not might see! Catch at that sacred purpose of amazing Grace and let your despair fly away. This is our first remarkthis blind man becomes our model.

And now, notice next that when he sees, this kind of man acknowledges that he does see. He has been so thoroughly convinced of his blindness that, when he gets his sight, he acknowledges it with glad surprise. To him, the newly-given light is such a gift that he is overjoyed with it, and gladly cries, Now I see! Some people do not know whether they are converted or not. I hope that they are saved, but such people are not generally of very much use. We have to spend our time and strength in taking care of them, comforting them and enabling them to rise above sheer despair. But the man that has been totally blind and has known itwhen he gets sight, he is equally sure that he sees! You cannot make such a man doubt the greatness and truthfulness of the change! He comes out and says, One thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see! I delight in clear, sharp-cut conversions! I do not condemn those dear friends who come into light by slow degrees. Far, far, far from it! I delight in them, too! But still, for usefulness in testimony and for decision of character, there is nothing like a conversion which is like life from the deadand like turning from darkness to lightand from the power of Satan unto God!

The old-fashioned convert is the man for me! He knows something and holds fast by what he knows! His is experimental knowledge and you cannot beat it out of him! I like to think of some of you utterly blind people who cannot help yourselves at all, for, when you receive the Light of God, you will know it and you will not hesitate to come out and say so! In your case the poor preacher will not be robbed of his wages, as he often is when he saves a soul by Gods Grace but never hears of it. Neither will the Gospel be deprived of its witnesses, nor the Church be despoiled of her helpers, nor the Lord be robbed of the revenue of Glory which is His due! We expect from you blind folks grand testimonies for Jesus when once the Lord causes you to see!

Again, when the blind mans eyes were opened, he began to defend the Man that opened his eyes. He did it well, too. He said, Herein is a marvelous thing, that you know not from where He is, and yet He has opened my eyes. On he went with arguments which confounded scribe and Pharisee! When the Lord takes a big blind sinner, washes him and opens his eyes, then the man will not have Christ spoken against! He will speak up for His Lord and Masterhe cannot help it. You will not find him dumb, as some professors are. Why, some of your genteel Christians do not speak for Christ above once every six monthsand then it would be better for you to have held your tongues, for you speak so half-heartedly! Here is a man with an open mouth and he speaks right from his heart under the guidance of the Spirit of God. He is not ashamed to acknowledge what the Lord has done for him. We need many recruits of this sort.

The Church at the present day needs men and women who are so thoroughly and certainly converted that when they speak about Christ, they speak positively and with a power which none can deny or resist! I think I hear a poor, darkened, desolate one crying out, Oh, Sir, if the Lord were to save me, I would not be ashamed to acknowledge it! If He should ever bring me in among His people, I will tell them all about it! I will tell the very devils in Hell what Sovereign Grace has done for me! Oh, my poor Brother, you are Christs man! You are the kind of man He delights to bless! You poor, devil-dragged sinners, who are almost at your wits ends and would even take away your own lives if it were not a most horrible sinyou are the very ones upon whom the Lord, in mercy, looks tonight, for He said, Himself, The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me because He has anointed Me to preach the Gospel to the poor. He has sent Me to heal the broken-hearted; to preach deliverance to the captives and recover sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.

Only trust yourselves in His dear hands and believe that He can, and that He will save you, and you shall be saved! And then I know that you will acknowledge His name, defend His Truth, glory in His Cross and live to His praise. Those who see not shall be made to seeand then the Lord Jesus shall be the Lord of their hearts, the Master of their lives and the Beloved of their souls!

The best thing about this man was that when his eyes were opened, he wished to know moreand when Jesus Christ spoke to him, saying, Do you believe on the Son of God? He asked, Who is He, Lord, that I might believe on Him? When He found that the Son of God was the same Divine One who had opened his eyes, then we read that at once he worshipped Him. Notice that at the end of the 38th verseAnd he worshipped Him. He was no Unitarian! In the man who spoke with him, he saw the Son of God, and he reverently adored Him. If our Lord Jesus had not been God, He would have told the man to rise and He would have torn His garments in horror at the bare idea of receiving Divine worshipinstead of which, our Lord instanced this as a proof that the mans eyes were opened and immediately said that He had come for that very purposethat those that did not see might see.

Friends, if you have not seen Jesus of Nazareth to be very God of very God, you have seen nothing! You cannot be right in the rest unless you think rightly of Him. Until you get to know that Jesus is both Lord and Christ, exalted on high to give repentance and forgiveness of sin, you still need that there should fall from your eyes, as it were, scalesfor the eternal Light of God has not come to you. He that once receives the true Light from God will know the Lord Jesus, not as a delegated God, or a glorified man, but as God over all, blessed forever! He will have a God to save him and nobody else, for who could save us but the Almighty? I would not trust the tenth part of my soul with 10,000 Gabriels! And I could not repose it anywhere but in Him that is able to save to the uttermosteven that same God without whom was not anything made that was made.

Thus I have shown you how this model blind man is the very man to whom the Lord Jesus will give sight because the results that follow are glorifying to Christ. Are you such a person? Then be comforted!

But how is it that such blind men come clearly to see? The reason is Sovereign Grace, but still there are other reasons. First, there is no conceit in them to hinder Christ. It is not our littleness that hinders Christit is our bigness. It is not our weakness that hinders Christit is our strength. It is not our darkness that hinders Christit is our supposed light that holds back His hands. It is easier to save us from our sins than from our righteousnesses! Our self-righteousness is that hideous boa constrictor which seems to coil itself round and round our spirit and to crush out of us all the life that would receive the Gospel of the Grace of God. He that thinks that he knows, will never learn. He that is blind and thinks that he sees, will remain contented in the darkness all his life. Now, dear Friends, if you are in the state that you know that you are in the darka darkness that may be felt. If it seems to cling to you, so that you cannot get rid of it. If you seem unable, even, to obtain a ray of light, then you are just in the right state to receive the eternal Light from the Lord Jesus Christ!

The next reason is that such people as this always refuse to speculate. They want certainties. When a man feels his own blindness and spiritual death, if you discuss before him the fine new nothings of modern theology, he says, I do not want them! They are of no consequence to methere is no comfort in them for a lost soul. A poor thief was converted some little time ago and he was taken to hear a certain preacher who is exceedingly broad in his views. When the reclaimed thief came out, he said to a friend that took him, If what that man said was true, it would be a fine thing for me, for I could have my full swing and yet get off easy. But I know that it is a lie and, therefore, I do not want to have anything more to do with him or his doctrine. A sinner like I deserves to be damned forever and it is no use for anybody to tell me the contrary! Therefore I need a Christ that can save me from eternal damnation. If this mans Christ only saves men from the little bit of damnation that he has preached, he is no good to me.

That was a very sensible observation. We, also, need a Savior from eternal damnation and we do not care for those little saviors from a little Hell which are nowadays so much cried up. We have a lot of sham sinners about and we have a number of ministers who preach a sham savior, a sham salvationand the sham sinners like to have it so. But if Christ once deals with youpulls you down to the last course and digs your foundations upthen you will want a Christ that will begin with you upon no terms but those of Free Grace! And you will want a power that will work the whole miracle of salvation for you from beginning to end! If you are, yourselves, utterly without strength, that makes you reachable by the strength of Grace! When a man gives up his pretty speculations and just sticks to the old teaching from the Divine Word, he wants a great Savior to save him from a great Hell, for he feels himself to be one who has been a great sinner and greatly deserves the infinite wrath of God! If your salvation should be too big for you, that will be a great deal better than getting one that will be too small for you. But, if you think that the salvation of Jesus is too great for you, it shows that you are not the man for whom it is meant. Our fear is that you are one of those that see but will be made blind. If you feel your blindness and cry out to God about it, you are the man for whom the sight-giving Savior died.

Again, people who are thoroughly blind are the kind of people who are glad to lean on God. A man that can see a little does not need to borrow guidance from outside. He says, No, no! I do not need it. Take a homely illustration from myselfI used to be very backward in using spectacles, for some time, because I could almost see without them, and I did not wish to be an old gentleman too soon. But now that I cannot read my notes at all without wearing spectacles, I put them on without a moments hesitationand I do not care whether you think me old or not! So when a man comes to feel thoroughly guilty, he does not mind depending upon God! If you sinners think that you can do a little without God, or can do with just a little help from God, why, then, you will keep away from the Lord Jesus. But when you come to thisI will perish if Christ is not everything to mewhy, then you will have Him, for He never refused a soul that came to Him in that style!

You may have heard the story of the Negro slave and his master who were both under conviction of sin at the same time. Almost the next evening the slave found joy and peace through believingbut his master was months under conviction. So he said to his slave, one day, Sam, you know we were both pricked to the heart at that meeting and here are you, rejoicing in Christ, and I am still doubting and despairing. What can be the reason of it? The slave said, Why, you see, Massa, Jesus Christ come along and bring a fine robe of glorious righteousness, and say to Sambo, Here is a robe for you! I look at myself and see Sam all rags from head to foot, and I take the robe, and puts it on directly, so glad to have it! Jesus say same thing to Massa, but Massa say, My coat is very respectable. I think I can make it last a little longer. Massa patch up the hole in the elbow and mend the skirt a little, and he go on with it. Massas coat too good. If his coat were all in rags, like Sams, he would not wait, but he would, this very day, take the glorious robe of righteousness.

That is the whole truth of the matter. Some of you are not poor enough to be made rich by Christ! A man said to me the other day, Sir, I despair of myself. Give me your hand, I said. You are on the right road, but I want you to go a little further. I want you to feel that you are too great a fool even to despair of yourself! When you cry, I cannot feel my own folly as I should, then I think your folly will be ended. I like to hear a man cry, I feel unhappy because I cannot feel. I am grieved to think that I cannot grieve. I am in an agony because I cannot get into an agony. You are getting right, my Brother! You are the sort of man that God will bless. Now look away from yourself, agony and all, and just trust in Jesus Christ, who is able to save to the uttermost them that come unto God by Him! Admit your blindness and you shall find the Light of God come streaming into your eyes! Because you are content and willing to lean wholly upon God, the Lord will guide you into peace and joy. What a mercy it is when we are brought to our last resort and are compelled to hide in Jesus because we have no other shelter!

*Tis perfect poverty alone   
That sets the soul at large.   
While we can call one mite our own,   
We get no full discharge.   
But let our debts be what they may,   
However great or small,   
As soon as we have nought to pay,   
Our Lord forgives us all.*

Once more, our Lord Jesus Christ delights to work in those who are thoroughly blind in order to give them sightit is high pleasureHis royal recreation! I know that a true man is never so glad as when he has helped those who need help. The plague and worry of this London life, to some of us, is that so many apply to us for help who ought never to be helped at all except by the policeman and the jailer. They cringe, fawn and make up lying stories. And when we say, We will call upon you to see if it is true, they ask in mighty indignation, Do you think I am a liar? Dont you believe what I say? I have had to answer, No, I do not believe a word of it, or you would gladly give your address that we might enquire into your statements. They do not want to be enquired intothat is their horror for it spoils their game. They want to get money without work and they thirst for an opportunity to get drunk at other peoples expense! A true man does not like to work among cants and cheats of this kindit makes him sick and angry. Yet many a man has been well pleased to go down to the worst place in horrible London and to do good to those who are really poor and helpless. One does not like giving to impostors, but where there is real need, the generous heart is pleased to afford aid.

Now, you poor Soul. You are no imposter. Yours is real need. You can say, A poor beggar? Ah, that I am! Does the Lord want to enquire about me? Search me, O Lord! Try me and know my heart. I know that You will see no righteousness in me. There is nothing in me upon which I can depend. I am, indeed, a helpless miserable wretch unless Your infinite mercy comes to me. Jesus Christ rejoices to work among such as you are! He likes blessing the truly needy! What a joy there is in that great heart of His when He can save souls on the borders of Hellwhen He can stretch out His hand and snatch them like brands from the fire! He knows that you will love Him as much as that woman did who had much forgiven and, therefore, stood and washed His feet with her tears and wiped them with the hairs of her head! He takes delight in you that cannot take any delight in yourselves. To you that are dried up and barren, He will bring living water! He will open rivers in high places for the thirsty ones and fountains in the midst of the desert for them that faint.

I have felt a wonderful satisfaction in feeding a poor half-starved dog that had no master and nothing to eat. How he has looked up with pleasure in my face when he has been fed to the full! Depend upon it, the Lord Jesus Christ will take delight in feeding a poor hungry sinner. You feel like a poor dog, do you not? Then Jesus cares for you! He does not care about kings and princes and those great people whose grandeur dazzles beholders, but He cares about poor sinners! If you are nothing, Christ loves you and He will be everything to you. If you will but come to Him, just as you are, with no plea of any kind except your urgent need and your dread of the wrath of God, you may come and be sure of a welcome!

One said to me this week, I am afraid to come to God, for I believe that I am only driven to Him by the mean motive of fear. Ah, I replied, it was the devil who told you that because in the 11th of Hebrews, among the first of the great heroes of faith we read that Noah, being moved with fear, built an ark for the saving of his house. Fear is not a mean motiveit is a very proper motive for a guilty man to feel! Where else can such poor sinners as we are begin, except with selfish fear? Do not judge yourself about that! The prodigal went home because he was hungry, yet his father did not refuse him admittance. As to its being mean to fear, it would be meaner, still, to defy your God! You ought not to say, It is too mean a motive. Why, what but a mean motive can be expected from such a mean wretch as you are?

A boy has been rebelling against his father and he has left his home in high passion, swearing that he will never go back. His father sends him a letter, and says, Return. Everything is forgivenonly confess your fault and I will restore you to the family and treat you as lovingly as ever. The boy reads this letter and he says, It is very kind of my father; I think I will go home. But a wicked companion says, Then you are going to eat humble pie. It will be very mean of you after all you have said about fighting this matter through. Are you going to knuckle under to your father? Why, it is the very devil tempting the boy, is it not? And so it was the devil who whispered to my friend that it would be mean to turn to the Lord through fear. Fear is a blessed thingThe fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdomeven slavish fear of God is a great deal better thing than presumption!

Oh, you poor blind one, look to Christ and live! I was about to say, You dead ones, come! And I do say it, for God says itAwake, you that sleep, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give you light. What is the use of talking thus to dead people? asks one. My dear Friends, I do not suppose that it would be of any use for you to do so, because, you see, you were never sent on such an errand! But I am as much sent to preach to the dry bones, tonight, as Ezekiel was when he stood in the valley and said, You dry bones, hear the Word of the Lord. In the name of the eternal God, I say, You guilty sinners, fly to Christ, and live! Come along with you, you who are the very worst in your own esteemyou who are all but in Hell! The Lord says, Look unto Me and be you saved, all the ends of the earth, for I am God, and there is none else. He will not cast you away, but He will receive you now! God grant that you may come, for Jesus sake. Amen.

**PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMONJohn 9.** HYMNS FROM OUR OWN HYMN BOOK257, 602, 603.  
Adapted from The C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307 Sermon #2359 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

PERSONAL AND EFFECTUAL CALLING   
NO. 2359

**A SERMON INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS DAY, MAY 6, 1894. DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, FEBRUARY 26, 1888.

**He calls His own sheep by name, and leads them out. John 10:3.**

IF YOU were near an Eastern village, you would probably see a large square, walled about with stones rolled roughly one upon another. You would also see a gate and, perhaps, more than one entrance into this enclosure. The square is empty through the day, for the flocks have gone into the neighboring pastures. But, towards evening, at certain seasons of the year, all the shepherds bring their flocks to these enclosures and there they are shut in for the night all together. One man has but a few sheep and another man has only a few sheep, while the more wealthy owner has larger flocks, but all are enclosed in what I will call the parish fold.

Now the morning comes. The sun is up early and so is the shepherd. The porter is at the door and he recognizes the various sheepherders as they come down to the sheepfold to fetch their flocks. One shepherd comes and he takes away his little company. Another shepherd arrives and he leads away a larger number. In each case, the shepherd has no trouble in separating his own sheep from the rest in the fold. You and I would think it well near impossibleand we certainly would never be able to divide those differing flocksbut the shepherd does it easily as soon as ever he comes to the door of the fold. There are certain of his sheep that love him much. They are accustomed to keep very near his hand and often get the sweetest bits of grass, and they leap up at the very sound of his footsteps! They recognize his person and they come straightway to the gate and are ready, at once, to go out to the pastures with him.

Some others, I am afraid the larger part of the flocks, are not quite so eager, but the shepherd speaks and they recognize his voiceand when he proceeds to name the sheep, one by one, for this the Eastern shepherd literally does, and when he begins to call them out by name, you can see the fleecy creatures recognizing the tones of his voice and responding to his call as readily as dogs with us know their masters voice and their own names! The sheep, thus called, push their way from among the different flocks and they come out and follow their shepherd, who leads them to the pastures that he has provided or discovered for them.

Now, that is exactly what the Good Shepherd does with His sheep. He comes to the door of the fold. Here we are, to-night, like so many sheep in the enclosure. I cannot tell who among you may be Christs sheep, or who may not be His. My voice has no power to separate you from your companions unless Christ shall use my voice and make it the echo of His own. I may speak as long as I will, apart from that Great Shepherd of the sheep, but I can make no distinction between His chosen ones and the rest of mankind. But if the Lord, Himself, shall come and call, His chosen shall detect the gracious voice. And when, one by one, He calls them to Himself by what theologians term effectual calling(and it is a good expression, for it is effectual calling), then the sheep hear His voice and they rise up at once and follow Him, for they know His voice, and He leads them out.

I am going to speak upon this text, viewing it from three points. I. The first point is that JESUS, THE GOOD SHEPHERD, OFTEN COMES INTO CONTACT WITH HIS SHEEP.

He has bought them, He has paid the full price of their redemption. He has laid down His life for His sheep, so that they are effectually ransomed. He has gone up to Heaven to plead for them and to present before His Father the memorials of His death. Yet He is still with them, according to His Word, Lo, I am with you always. He has not left His sheep here, below, simply to the care of undershepherds, much less are they in charge of hirelings. He has His under-shepherds, but He is with them and He still comes to His flock. He still calls His sheep by name. He still leads them out. Let us think of the various ways in which the Good Shepherd still comes into contact with His sheep.

He came into contact with us, first, in our conversion. He had come to us, before, by the many pleadings of His Spirit and the many entreaties of His love in the days of our youth, and in years gone by, but we did not, then, know His voice. Our ears were not open, then, and we did not hear His call. He went after us into the wilderness, He sought us on the mountain steeps, but it was, for a time, a weary seeking and little came of it. Then, on a day never to be forgotten, He came with His effectual Grace! I say He came. Mother had come, teacher had come, pastor had come, books had come, sermons had come, but, last of all, He, Himself, came! Do you remember His coming? I can never forget the spot where He first met with me! The tones of His voice when, at last, He won my heart, are ringing as clearly in my ears, tonight, as though they were the marriage bells of yesterday! I can never forget how that call sounded, Look! Look! Look unto Me, and be you saved, all the ends of the earth! Then I knew His voice and responded to it, through His own rich Grace, and I was His and He was mine! It needed that He should do the wooing for Himself and should unveil His own dear faceand then my heart was won and my spirit yielded itself entirely to Him! You remember how it happened to you, also, do you not? Think of it with joy and gratitude.

Since then, the Lord Jesus has often come to us in guidance. Many of us can say that He has guided us through all the pathway of life and, at certain times, and at difficult turns of the road, He has come to us with such consoling counsel, and with such abounding compassion that we have blessed Him, and said, He is truly near to me. How hallowed is this place! It is none other than the House of God and the very gate of Heaven. There are some few saints who could not tell you when Christ is not with them because He is always with themthey never lose His company. I wish that I could be one of their number, yet, I might almost claim that position, for it is a joy to me to be able to say that, habitually, I do realize the Presence of the Lord Jesus Christ. I have said more to Him than to any other man. I have spent more time with Him than with any other that I have ever heard ofand my heart more joyously goes out to Him than to anyone beneath the sun!

You have, perhaps, seen the rooks on the plowed landall day going from field to fieldfollowing the man with the plow. Where do they live? Where are their nests? Wait till near the going down of the sun and you shall see. Now they all mount with many a caw and with hoarse converse with each other, and after they have hurried to and fro a while, away they go where those old trees that stand around the ancient baronial hall supply them with their house and home! Now, such is Christ to some of us. We are necessarily abroad through the day, looking after this or that work which needs attention, but the moment we are at liberty, we know where our nest is! It is with the hearts of many of us as it is with the needle in the mariners compass. Do you see it? It is pointing to the pole. If you will, you may put your finger on that needle and turn it round. It points East nowyes, you turn it round till it points South. But take your finger off, it is back at once to its true pole! So is it with our hearts. Our hearts are with Him on His Throne, always magnetized and polarized for Christ, and we shall never rest until we get back to Him! He is in our first thoughts in the morning and our last meditations at night! We can truly say

*I think of You, my God, by night,   
And talk of You by day.   
Your love my treasure and delight   
Your Truth my strength sustain.   
The day is dark, the night is long,   
Humblest with thoughts of Thee,   
And dull to me the sweetest song,   
Unless its theme You be.*

And, Beloved, you know how near the Lord is in the way of sympathy. It is no exaggeration where we read, In all their affliction He was afflicted, and the angel of His Presence saved them. You have sometimes been in sharp sickness and have had cruel pains, as men call them. Or you have, perhaps, known the sharper pangs of poverty, or possibly, though I hope it is not so, some of you know what it is to be deserted by your friends in the hour of your greatest need, and have to stand alone amid the pitiless blasts when none seem willing to afford you shelter. Oh, but we never fully know Christ till such a time as that! We never realize the sweetness of His sympathetic companionship till He stands by us and we can say with Paul, At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me. Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me and strengthened me. Yes, He may be a long way from the healthy and the strong sheep, but the Good Shepherd is always near the sickly and the weak! And when the heart is breaking, Christ always comes. He knew what heart-break meant, and desertion, and agony, and bloody sweat, so He can sympathize with us in our sorrowsand there is no hand so soft as that which was nailed to the Cross! Jesus is quick as a mother to feel all the sufferings of His people.

I may also add that our Lord is always with us in intercession. This Divine foresight takes the practical shape of pleading for us about troubles that are yet to come. You see Peter. Satan had desired to have him, that he might sift him as wheat. And Satan had not, then, gone any farther than desire. His malice is very quick, but still, at that time, he had only desired to have Peter. Yet, when the devil had that desire, Christ had gone a long way beyond himBut I have prayed for you, that your faith fail not. So quickly does the careful love of Christ outstrip all our necessities, that even the dark wings of the arch-enemy cannot fly so fast as the interceding love of our Arch-Friend, our chief Helper, our BestBeloved! He is always with you, watching to see not only what you need, but what you will neednot only noting what are your dangers, but what are to be your dangers in the future! Before Satan has plucked the arrow from his quiver, and long before he has fitted it to the bow, Christ has already prepared that shield of interceding love that shall guard you from his attacks! O sheep of Christ, can there be happier news for you than that the Good Shepherd is always with you? He has said, I will never leave you nor forsake you. Vineyard of the Lord, hear this, and make a song of itI, the Lord, do keep it. I will water it every moment lest any hurt it. I will keep it night and day. Here is a song for the vineyard of red winelet all the saints sing it in their hearts tonight!

So much, then, upon that first point, that Jesus often comes into contact with His sheep.   
II. Secondly, this also is clear from the text, that Jesus CALLS HIS SHEEP BY NAMEHe calls His own sheep by name. You Thomas, you Mary, and Martha, and Lazarus, and you Matthew, the publican, yes, and you, Mary of MagdalaHe calls you all by name! What does this imply?   
The first thing that it means is, intimate knowledge. Beloved Friends, I used to have such a trustworthy memory that I not only knew the nearly 6,000 members of this Church by face, which I am still able to do, but I knew them all by nameand it was a rare thing for me to ever forget or make a mistake, save when certain ladies changed their names and I had not been made aware of it, but even then I soon rectified the error. But now, sometimes, I find myself unable to remember all your names perhaps it is because I do not see you often. Our Lord knows all the myriads of His redeemed by name. There is no failure of memory with Him and He always sees them! His eye and His heart are towards each one of His people both night and dayHe calls His own sheep by name. I do not wish so much to preach upon this passage as I want you to put it into your mouth, or rather, to taste it with your spiritual palate, so as to get the flavor and sweetness of it. I know My sheep, says the Good Shepherd! He knows not only who they are, but what they are, and where they are! He calls His own sheep by name. This implies His intimate knowledge of them.   
Does it not signify, next, that if He calls us by our name, He is in the habit of speaking to us with exceeding plainness? He can so speak to us that we shall know what He means. His Word is dark and mysterious to outsiders, but when He makes us to be His sheep, He speaks very plainly, calling us by name. It is only when persons are on very familiar terms with one another that they address each other by their Christian name. We are, all of us, Mr. Somebody, or the Reverend Mr. Somebody, or Dr. Somebody, or Squire Somebodybut when we are at home, we are, none of us, esquires! We are Richard, or Mary. Mother never thinks of calling us, Mr. and Father does not say, Miss, but they call us by our name! So the Lord Jesus Christ calls us by name to show how plainly He speaks with us and also to let us see what gracious familiarity there is between the Head and the members of His mystical body, between the Bridegroom and His spouse, between the Well-beloved and His Church which is so dear to His heart!   
He calls His own sheep by name. I think this also means intense personality. When anything is directed to you by name, it comes to you as your own with great definiteness. There is a story recorded of Mr. Rowland Hill which I have not seen printed in a book until just lately. It bears on its very face the tokens of truth, for it is just what he would be likely to do. He was accustomed, at family prayer, to pray for his servants by name, asking for such a blessing for Sarah, and such for Jane, and such for John, if his man-servant was present. There was a new cook engagedher name was one which, in those days, was more common than it is nowit was, Biddy. So, at prayer time, Mr. Hill prayed that God would bless Sarah, and the others, one by one, and would the Lord be pleased to save Biddy and give her a new heart and a right spirit!   
After prayer was over and the servants had gone away, there was a gentle knock at the study door and the good minister said, Come in, what is it? Please, Mr. Hill, I am very glad to be in your service and I hope I shall find it a comfortable place, but would you kindly not mention my name in prayer? I have not been accustomed to it and I do not think I could bear it. All right, Biddy, he said. I try never to do anything that is displeasing. I am sorry you should be annoyed and I must not mention your name in prayer again. She went to her work and the next time of family prayer Mr. Hill prayed in the following manner. After having pleaded for blessings in general, He said, Now, Lord, be pleased to bless Sarah, and convert her, and lead her in Your way. And so he mentioned the rest of them and then he added, Lord, I may not ask You to bless Biddy because she earnestly requests that she may not be mentioned to You in prayer. The prayer was over and there was, again, a knock at the door. Come in, said Mr. Hill. It was that cook, again. Please, Mr. Hill, she said, I didnt want you to pray like that. I didnt want to be left out in prayer, Sir. Please, you may mention my name if you like. Just so, Biddy, he said, I will do it and God will bless you, I do not doubt.

Well now, there is a good deal in that way of personally mentioning people in prayer, because they then feel that you are praying for them and when the Lord Jesus Christ calls His own sheep by name, they distinctly recognize that He speaks to them! Have not some of you known what it is to be spoken to, from this pulpit, by the Lord Jesus Christ, quite as distinctly as if I had mentioned your name and address? You know you have! This is the way in which some of you were first brought to Christ. It was not merely to sinners, but to you as a sinner! It was not merely to all men, but to you as distinctly singled out, that the Gospel of Jesus Christ came with power! To show the personality of His Gospel, He calls men by name.   
This call also teaches us the wonderful suitability of Christs Words to our needs. There will often be, in a text of Scripture, the very message that is needed by a poor wearied spirit. How often, too, will the Lord prepare the mind of a hearer till the preachers words shall be as suitable as if he had been told all about the unknown person! Friends sometimes write to me and say, We are going to bring a friend of such and such a sort to the Tabernacle. They let me know in the hope that I may make my message suitable. Do not let me know whom you bring! I do not want to know because I cannot suit my sermon to your friend. Bring your friend, with your own hearty and earnest prayer, but without my knowing anything about it! God will speak through His servant what He wishes to have saidand it will come with greater force and power than any thoughtful love can suggest. Oh, may God speak to some of you tonight! May you be called out by your name and feel in your heart, Jesus calls me, and I will go to Him at once, and put my trust in Him!   
III. Now I am going to close with this third remark, THAT THIS CALL BY NAME COMES AT SPECIAL TIMES. I will mention four special seasons when the Lords personal call is heard.   
First, it comes at conversion. I have, perhaps, already said enough about that. There is a call to sinners by namethe Gospel preached in general is all very well, but it is the Gospel preached in particular that saves men. If you have come in here, tonight, just to hear as one of a crowd, you will probably get nothing by coming. But when you sit here, saying, Lord, speak to me! Lord help me to apply every word to my own case! Help me to lay hold of every promise that is quoted!that is the way to gain the blessing! They say that the times are improving and that business is looking up, but when I meet with a friend who is in a certain trade, he says, Business is not looking up my way. I do not find that I have any more customers than I used to have, or that I can get the slightest increase of profit on my goods. Just so, Friends, you do not profit by the general blessing, do you? You need a particular blessing to come to your own soul, for, in this respect, as it is with temporal things, so it is with eternal thingswe need the blessing for ourselves.   
Now, in business we have to check this kind of selfishness, but in spiritual things we may excite it, for we need men to covet earnestly the best gifts. One good old man said, The Lords people are a covetous people. Oh! said one, they ought to get rid of all covetousness. Yes, he answered, except that spiritual covetousness to which we are exhorted by Paul, when he says, Covet earnestly the best gifts. That is quite true! We should covet earnestly the best things, even heavenly things. Seek these things for yourselves and rest not satisfied until you have them! May the Lord by conversion call you by name, that you may have the first of these best gifts!   
I have known Him, in the second place, call some by name to fresh service. Did He not say, Separate Me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them? Sometimes there is a Sunday School teacher needed. There sits a young man in this place, tonight, who ought to be in the Sunday school. I shall not call him by name. Perhaps he would be offended if I did so, but I hope that the Lord will call him. There sits a Christian woman, here, who should be engaged in the school, or who ought to take a tract district. Possibly there is a Christian woman here, of years and knowledge, who ought to be teaching a Bible class, or conducting a mothers meeting. Perhaps I speak to some large-hearted man, with considerable ability, who spends all his time on his business and does no work for Christ. He ought to have a Mission Hall and support it, himselfhe has money enough and he has talent enough. Some of you have never had an idea of what you yet can do for the Lordand the only way to find it out is to try to do something for the Savior! There are too many retiring people among us who are so retiring as to get to be lazy! Come out of your hiding place, my dear Friend! No, I will not mention your name, though I know some of this sortand I have their names almost on my tongue, but I will not mention them. But I do pray the Master to mention your names so that you may consecrate your substance, your time, your ability, to the work of the Lord somewhere in this great perishing London, or somewhere in this great nation where so many perish for lack of knowledge! He calls His own sheep by name, and leads them out into wider spheres, into larger enterprises, into fuller consecration to His service! May He now do that with many of you, my Brothers and Sisters!   
Sometimes the Lord calls His saints by name and leads them out into higher attainments in the Divine Life. Come, you who have been always halting, doubting, fearingit need not be so with you! The Lord invites your faith to full assurance, your love to enthusiasm, your prayer to wrestling, your desire to expectation and your present imperfect service for Him to the complete dedication of yourselfbody, soul and spiritto His cause! We have not yet attained all we may reach, dear Friends. There is a something yet beyond and to this the Master calls us. But I cannot rise to it, says one. With man, it is impossible, but with God all things are possible. You may be strong, useful, joyfulyou need not always be weak, careless and sorrowful! Oh, that there might come into your soul, by the breath of the Divine Spirit, an increase of spiritual life till you shall have it more abundantly and shall bless and praise the name of the Lord!   
But, lastly, there will soon come another call to some of usand we would be very, very slow to shrink from it. I mean the call Home to Heaven. I know not to whom it may come this week, or next, but stand you all ready for it. It will come by the messenger appointed by Him who loves you and who longs to have you where He is, that you may behold His Glory! Perhaps the summons may come to you as it came to Christiana, with this tokenan arrow sharpened with love, let easily into her heart. She knew what the token meant and she welcomed her Lords call! It will come in different ways. One aged Christian, who was dying of cancer, met another who was greatly suffering from another painful disease. Well, well, my Brother, she said, we must all have something to die of, you know, or we should live here forever. Do not let us quarrel with the messenger the Lord sends. He will send the proper messenger in His own good time and in the right way.   
Rowland Hill, whom I have already quoted, was sometimes very odd in his expressions. He went, when he was very old, to see a godly woman at Everton who was nearly ninety, and he told her that when she got Home, he hoped she would mention him up there, for he had almost begun to think that they had forgotten himhe had grown so old that he would be glad to be going Home to his dear Lord and to see those blessed Johns John, the beloved disciple and John Bunyan, and some other Johns that he mentioned. It was not long before he went home, too, and he almost overtook her before she could deliver his message! Well, whether we live to be as old as he, or die in middle life, or in the early days of our conversion, it does not matter. The Lord will send the messenger and the messenger will know usand we shall hear the voice that says, Arise and come away. I would have you standing with your wings outstretched, as the cherubim abode over the Mercy Seat, with their wings outspread, as if ready to die at the Divine bidding!   
Are you afraid? Afraid of going Home, dear child? Are you so fond of boarding school that you have no desire for the holidays? Are you afraid, dear Heart, afraid of the wedding day, and of the Bridegroom, and of the everlasting joy? Soldier, are you afraid of the victory and the crown? No, no! Instead of fearing, let us begin to anticipate the bliss of being forever with the Lord. God help us to joy and rejoice, wearing, today, by faith, the chaplet which we shall soon wear in reality, striking even now the harp strings with the joyous fingers which, before long, shall sweep the chords throughout eternity, as we sing, Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah, unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, to Him be Glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.   
We will close our service by singing this verse

**Forever with the Lord! Amen! So let it be!   
Life from the dead is in that word, Tis immortality!**

**EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON**: *John 10:1-31.*

Verse 1. Verily, verily, I say unto you. When our Divine Lord and Master was about to speak with deep solemnity, He usually commenced His discourse by repeating the word, verilyVerily verily, I say unto you. The authority of Christ is the basis of our religion. He does not quote from others, but He says, Verily, verily, I say unto you. Jesus is Incarnate Wisdom, He is God, Himself, and what He says is Infallibly true and is to be accepted without question.

1. He that enters not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbs up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. Those who professed to be the shepherds of the sheep, but did not come according to previous Revelation by the way of the Old Testament types and prophecies, were nothing better than thieves and robbers. They could have no design in palming themselves off upon the people except to steal from them and to do them harm.

2, 3. But he that enters in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter opens. John the Baptist was, so to speak, the porter who recognized the Christ and opened the door to Him. John said, concerning Jesus, when the Spirit abode upon Him, I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God.

3. And the sheep hear his voice. His chosen ones, those whom the Father had given Him, the peculiar peoplethe sheepat once recognized the Presence of the Shepherd when they heard His voice.

3, 4. And he calls his own sheep by name, and leads them out. And when he puts forth his own sheep, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him. He goes before them. There is never an act prescribed by Christ for His followers but He first performs it, HimselfHe goes before them. Other professed leaders drove the flock before them. The Jewish teachers laid heavy burdens upon men and grievous to be borne, which they, themselves, did not touch with one of their fingers. It is the distinguishing mark of the Good Shepherd that, when He puts forth His own sheep, He goes before them. You are not bidden to do, as a servant, what the Master would not do. Even if it is the menial occupation of washing the saints feet, He, Himself has done ityou are to lay down your life for the Brethren, for Jesus, Himself, has done thatHe goes before them, and the sheep follow him.

4. For they know His voice. There is an instinct, a God-given instinct, in the elect of God, by which they know Christs voice. When once the Spirit of God has changed their natures, they have an open ear for the Words of Jesusthe sheep follow Him: for they know His voice.

5. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers. Others will follow the stranger, but the sheep will not do so. We read of some, that they were full of such deceivableness that they would, if it were possible, deceive the very elect, but there is an, if it were possible. The Lords true sheep cannot, will not long be deceivedthey know not the voice of strangers...

6. This parable spoke Jesus unto them: but they understood not what things they were which He spoke unto them. We need not only to listen to Christs Words, but we need an interpreter to explain them to us. Jesus is needed to make His people understand His own teaching. He

*Is His own interpreter,   
And He will make it plain.*

7. Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you. Still, you see, Jesus speaks with the same authority! He is an intense dogmatist. He leans not upon the arguments of human reason, nor upon the precedents of former teachers. Again He said just this, Verily, verily, I say unto you

7. I am the Door of the sheep. Is He both Shepherd and Door? Yes, and many other figures meet in Himall creation cannot set Him forth completely. We may multiply all the types and symbols and analogies of Nature, and yet not fully picture our Lord Jesus Christ. Dr. Watts truly wrote

*Nature, to make His beauties known,   
Must mingle colors not her own.*   
We must know the Creator as well as the created if we would set forth

Christ to the fullest.   
8. All that ever came before Me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep   
did not hear them. Some people did hear themone pretended messiah  
and another led different companies of deluded followers after them, but   
the sheep did not hear them. The Prophetess Anna, the holy waiting  
Simeon, the guileless Nathanaelthese did not hear themtheir ears   
had not yet caught the mystic tone which belongs only to the true Shepherds voiceThe sheep did not hear them.   
9. I am the Door: by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and   
shall go in and out, and find pasture. Is Christ the Door of salvation to   
you? Some teach that Baptism is the door. Others talk of a thousand   
things as being doors of salvation, but it is Christ, alone, who is the   
Door, and you must enter into salvation by simple trustful faith in Him.   
What does a sheep do in order to enter the fold? Does it perform any   
tricks? No, it simply goes in by the doorway. Poor wandering sheep, do   
the same, for Jesus says, By Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved,  
and shall go in and out and find pasture.   
10. The thief comes not but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am  
come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. You who have eternal life may have more of it! You may be spiritually stronger, more vigorous, more clear of eye, more happy of heart,   
more active in service. Life is a blessing, but abundant life is a greater blessing! We need not merely to breathe, to live, as I saw one about an hour ago. He had life, but too little life even to speakwe need to have much life, that we may enjoy it, and may use it for the glory of God! Christ has come that we might have life more abundantlymay we all   
make use of His coming to that end!   
11-13. I am the Good Shepherd: the Good Shepherd gives His life for   
the sheep. But he that is an hireling, and not the Shepherd, whose own the  
sheep are not, sees the wolf coming, and leaves the sheep, and flees: and   
the wolf catches them, and scatters the sheep. The hireling flees because  
he is an hireling, and cares not for the sheep. How many there are of  
whom we have reason to fear that they must be hirelings because, when   
they see false doctrine and error abroad, they do not oppose it! They are   
willing to put up with anything for the sake of peace and quiet. They flee   
as soon as they see the wolf, but he most copies his Master who will not   
flee on any terms. Certainly he will not flee when wolves are about, for is   
he not set for the defense of the sheep, that he may chase the wolf away,  
even though he gets to himself many a scratch and many a wound? Our  
Master never fled from the wolves. He might have done soour Good   
Shepherd might have gone back to Heaven and escaped Gethsemane, the   
gruel scourges and the wounds upon the treebut that was not His   
course of action. The sheep were His own and, therefore, it was a joy to   
Him to interpose Himself between them and the destroyer, and He did so. 14-16. I am the Good Shepherd and know My sheep, and am known of  
Mine. As the Father knows Me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down  
My life for the sheep. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold.  
Not yet brought in, still wandering away on the barren hills. Them also I  
must bring. I must, says Jesus, and, as men say, must is for the king.   
There is a Divine necessity laid upon Christ our Savior! He must save the   
people, the sheep whom His Father gave Himthem also I must bring.   
Oh, wondrous love that holds even the Omnipotent Savior in bonds and   
puts Him under the sacred constraint of this mighty, mustthem also   
I must bring.   
16. And they shall hear My voice. How like a king, Jesus talks! It is the   
Royal Shepherd who says, They shall hear My voice. But suppose they   
will not hear it? They shall hear My voice. But suppose they stop their   
ears against the Gospel. They shall hear My voice, and Christs, shall,   
is always backed by Omnipotence!  
16-18. And there shall be one fold, and one Shepherd. Therefore does  
My Father love Me, because I lay down My life, that I might take it again.  
No man takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it  
down, and I have power to take it again. This Commandment have I received of My Father. Herein lay much of the effect of the death of Christ,   
that it was voluntary, that He had power to lay down His life, the right to   
lay it down and the right to take it again. When any ordinary man dies,  
he only pays the debt of nature. If he were even to die for his friend, he   
would simply pay a little earlier that debt which he must ultimately pay! But the Christ was Immortal and He needed not to die except that He  
had put Himself under Covenant bonds to suffer for His sheep. 19-26. There was a division, therefore, again among the Jews for these   
sayings. And many of them said, He has a devil, and is mad, why do you  
listen to Him? Others said, These are not the words of Him that has a  
devil. Can a devil open the eyes of the blind? And it was at Jerusalem, the   
feast of the dedication, and it was winter. And Jesus walked in the Temple  
in Solomons porch. Then came the Jews round about Him and said unto  
Him, How long will You make us to doubt? If You are the Christ, tell us  
plainly. Jesus answered them, I told you, and you believed not: the works   
that I do in My Fathers name, they bear witness of Me. But you believe   
not because you are not of My sheep, as I said unto you. This was a brave   
utterance of our Lord. Those who are Christs chosen and redeemed people, in due time come to believe in Him, but He does not say to the Jews,  
You are not My sheep because you do not believe. He tells them the   
same Truth of God in another way, Your not believing is a proof that you   
are not My sheep.   
27-31. My sheep hear My voice and I know them, and they follow Me.   
And I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall  
any man pluck them out of My hand. My Father, which gave them to Me, is  
greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of My Fathers  
hand. I and My Father are One. Then the Jews took up stones again to  
stone Him. These are the ultimate arguments of unbeliefstones! There  
is no sense in stones, no reason in violence, yet ungodly men, when they   
have nothing else to use, throw stones at the Teacher of the Truth of  
God! Is this generous? Is this wise? If you do not believe the testimony, at   
least leave the Testifier alone! Yet it is not in the nature of men to do so.   
Their stones are always ready when they are unable to answer the   
Christ. Then the Jews took up stones again to stone Him. They had   
done it previously when He said unto them, Before Abraham was, I Am.   
But as He escaped their malice, then, so did He at this time.

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**THE DOOR   
NO. 2752**

**A SERMON   
INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS-DAY, NOVEMBER 10, 1901.**

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, JUNE 15, 1879.

**I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out, and find pasture.   
John 10:9.**

How very condescendingly the Lord Jesus Christ sets Himself forth! The noblest figures of speech are not too lofty to describe His merits. If we could speak with the tongues of poets and of angels, we could not adequately represent His loveliness and though the writers of the Scriptures, Inspired by the Holy Spirit, have used language which exceeds all other in majesty and beauty, even they are not able to tell all the excellence of the Glory of Christ Jesus our Lord.

Yet, beloved Friends, when He speaks of Himself, He is pleased to use no lofty imagery, no far-fetched metaphorsHe talks of Himself one day as water, and another day as breadand here He deigns to call Himself a door. The illustration is exceedingly simple! Who is there that will not understand it? He means that as by passing through a door we enter into a house, so by passing through Christ Jesus, by faith, we enter into eternal life, enter into the true Church and ultimately shall enter into Heaven!

I am the door. This metaphor is not only simple, but it is wonderfully commonplace. The dealers in profundities will not like this expression. The gentlemen who must have something newsomething very strikingwill hardly admire this kind of talk but then, our Lord does not court their admiration. His objective is not to win the applause of the wise and the poetical, but to win the souls of the poor and the needy, to bring them to eternal lifeso He uses what many call a childs figure, a commonplace figure, I am the door.

He has selected this emblem, I should think, partly that it may often come before our notice. You will not go out of this place without seeing a door! You will not get into your own house without seeing a door and when you are inside, you will not get into your parlor without seeing a door. And when you go up to bed, you must pass through a door. When you rise, tomorrow morning, and start to go out to work, you will have to open a door probably two doorsand when you reach your work, there is pretty sure to be another door to be entered. Doors meet your gaze almost everywhere, so our Lord Jesus Christ seems to say to you, I will meet you wherever you are. Anywhere and everywhere, I will speak with you and plead with you. I will make the door of every room in your house and the door of every cupboard, too, preach a little sermon to you, as you shall be reminded by it that I am the door. I am sure our Lord Jesus Christ does not want His ministers to deliver magnificent orations, spread-eagle sermons, with long and elaborate sentences in them. He wants them to just come and talk as He talked, in all simplicity, so that the very poorest and most illiterate of their hearers may understand their meaning, embrace the Truths of God they proclaim and find everlasting life in Him of whom they speak. So I shall try to do at this time, keeping the style of my discourse congruous with the text.

We will begin by noticing first, the door. Secondly, the users of it. By Me if any man enters in. And, thirdly, the privileges of each of these users. He shall be saved, and will go in and out, and find pasture.

I. First, then, concerning THE DOOR.   
I am the door, says Jesus, and the first thought that strikes us is, the necessity of it. Here is the house of mercy and, inside, there is washing for the filthy, healing for the sick, food for the hungry, clothing for the naked. But suppose there had been no door to the housewhat use would it have been to us? Suppose there had been only windows, through which we could look in and see the provision prepared there? And suppose that we could hear the songs of those who were permitted to partake of it, but there was no door by which we could enter in? All the mercy of God would have only been a tantalizing of our hunger in such a case as that. The house of mercy, without a door, would have been a house of misery to us! Look at this picture, if your eyes can perceive itthe city that lies foursquare, that mighty city, whose pinnacles tower on high so loftily that the height is as great as the breadth, and the breadth is the same as the length. Her very foundations are of precious stones and her twelve 12 gates are priceless pearls! Can your eyes gaze, even for a moment, on that brilliance that outshines the sun? And can you hear the sound of harpers harping with their harps within that city whose streets are of pure gold?   
But suppose there was no door there and that our spirits had to go flying with awful beating of weary wing, round, and round, and round that solid wall, but never finding a gate where we could enter? What hope would there be for a soul shut out from the city of the perfect, the home of the blessed, because there was no door of entrance? Yet there would not have been any door if it had not been for Christ! Our sins had, as it were, walled up God and shut Him inand walled us up and shut us out! There would have been for us no going in to God, nor any coming out from God to us, had it not been for Christ, the Mediator through whom we draw near to God because, in Him, God has drawn near to us! See, then, the necessity for this door and, blessed be His holy name, see how Christ meets this necessity. We needed a door by which we can get to Godand Jesus says, I am the door.   
Next, observe the singularity of it. I am the door. Is there no other entrance, then, into the Divine Mercy? Is there no other entrance into the true Church? Is there no other entrance into the eternal blessedness of Heaven except by Him? No, there is no other, for He says, I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he shall be saved. But suppose a man will not enter by this doormay he not climb up some other way? If he should attempt to do so, he would be a thief and a robberand God would know how to deal with him! He may think himself a bold and cunning man, and a man to be praised, for he has tried to enter into eternal life and glory by a way of his own, but God calls him a thief and a robber, and out he must go to the prison where such evildoers abound!   
No, there is only one door. You may search the whole realm of Nature and you shall never discover another. Not by self-sufficiency, nor selfrighteousness, nor priests, nor rites and ceremoniesnot by anything of the will of the flesh, or of the will of man, can you obtain admission there   
*Could our zeal no respite know,   
Could our tears forever flow*   
there is no other name under Heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. Believe in Jesus! Put your trust in Him and you are saved! But, unless you come to Him in that way, there is only one sentence for youHe that believes not shall be damned. There is no hope of salvation by any other means. Our Lord Jesus Christ has Himself said, He that believes and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believes not shall be damned. So that there is singularity in the way by which God has supplied our necessity and, therefore, Christ said, I am the door.   
But, to my mind, the chief point in my text is personality. If we come to the Lord Jesus and say to Him, O Lord, You can teach us how to get to Heaven; will You be pleased to tell us how we can enter the house of mercy, and the Church of God, and the Kingdom of Glory at the last? He answers, I am the way. I am the door. What do You mean, great Master? Tell us, what is the door? I am the door. But, surely, Lord, You mean that by copying and imitating You, we shall enter in, right? He shakes His head and says, Not so. I am the door. But surely, You mean that by attending to certain rites which You have ordained, we shall enter, right? My Brothers and Sisters, He did not say that! He simply said, I am the door. But does not Christ mean that by being orthodox and believing certain doctrines which He has taught us, and which are identified with Himself, we shall thereby enter into life and be saved? He does not say that! He says, I am the door. But is not Baptism the door? No, for He says, I am the door. But is not the Lords Supper the door? No, for He says, I am the door. But, surely, holy living must be the way into the Kingdom of Heaven! No, it is not, for Jesus says, I am the door. Jesus Himself, personally, is the way into His Kingdom. There is no door into His sheepfold except HimselfHis own Person. So we must just come and believe in Him, and trust in Him, for He is the door!   
Would not some of the so-called priests lock us out of the fold if they had the keys? Thank God they have neither the key nor the charge of the door, for whoever believes in Jesus, to whatever church he belongs outwardly, or if he belongs to no visible church at all, if he does but come to God by Christ, he is saved, for Christ is the doorand nothing else is the way of entranceneither this opinion, nor that external doing, nor suchand-such works, nor such-and-such feelings, but Christ Himself, and Christ alone. The incarnate Godour substitutionary Sacrifice who rose again from the dead for our justification, who ascended up to the Majesty on high, whose, prevalent plea is always being presented on His peoples behalf and who is coming back again, by-and-byHe it is who is the doorand only by Him can we enter the true Church on earth, and the Church of the first-born, which are written in Heaven.   
Notice, dear Friends, in the fourth place, over this door the word suitability. Jesus says, I am the door. You know that every door has two sides to it and so has Christ. Our side of this door is His Humanity. Oh, how freely and how gladly we may come to Christ! I think that if any of us had seen Christ when He was here on earth, we would have felt no desire to get away from Him, but we would have been delighted to draw near to Him. If, in this place, just now, a little child could see Jesus Christ as He was in the days of His flesh, I am sure that the boy or girl would soon have his or her hand in Jesus Christs hand, for He was so sweet and loving, and tender, that the children gladly ran to Him. So that is our side of the doorChrists gentle Manhood. But what is Gods side of the door? It is the full splendor of Christs Godhead, for in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. So, our side of the door is Christs gentle loving Manhood, but what is Gods side of the door? It is the full splendor of Christs Godhead and we can only come to the Father through Him whose name is Emmanuel, God With Us.

And what do I see over that door but His own sprinkled blood, so that we may be quite sure of being accepted with God, for has not the Lord said to us, as He did to Israel in Egypt, when I see the blood, I will pass over you? Therefore, the door is Christ Jesus, so let me put the Truth very plainly and say that if any of you wish to be saved, it must be by coming to God through Christ Jesus! You cannot be saved in any other fashion or way. But you will certainly be saved if you come to God by Christ Jesus. He is the door and He is an open door and a door available for you if you will but enter in by Him! May His blessed Spirit sweetly incline you to do so! Then all the rich promises of this text shall be yours you shall be saved, and you shall go in and out and find pasture.   
II. Now, in the second place, I am to speak of THE USERS OF THIS DOOR. By Me if any man enters in.   
What is the main purpose of a door? It is to give admission to the house. There are some persons who stand and look at the door or perhaps praise it, saying, What a fine door that is! Yet they do not go in through it. And I have known people who liked to hear Christ extolled, yet they did not yield themselves to Him. They said, That was a rich Gospel sermon, but they did not trust the Christ who was preached! They looked at the doorthat was all.   
There are others who occasionally knock at the door. They tell me that they have often prayed to God, but that they have never been heard. Well, it is wise to knock at this door, but is not enough to knock, for the text does not say, By Me if any man knocks, he will be saved, but, by Me if any man enters in, he will be saved.   
I have known some persons who have sat down on the step of this doorsome of you have been sitting there a long time. You have been hearing the Gospel and you have listened to it with some degree of attention. So far, so good. But if you do nothing more, you are simply sitting down on the doorstep. Doors were not made for us to sit on the doorstep. Little children frequently do that at your houses, do they not? You often wish they did not, yet there they will sit and play. But that is not the purpose for which the door was intended. A door is made for us to pass through it, not for us to sit down in front of it. If a man stands and admires your door, or if he knocks at your door and yet still sits on your doorstep, he is not making the right use of the door. According to our text, the proper way to use a door is to enter in by itand that is the right way to use Christto enter in by Him!   
There are some who do not do that, but they very jealously guard the door. They stand like sentinels outside the door. They are true Protestants and their blood is on fire at the very thought of the Pope. They like to read books that bully everybody who does not agree with them. Only let a heretic come nearthey are orthodox enough to knock him down, directly. They are protecting the door, but they do not go through it. I have marveled to find some men downright bigots in defense of the Gospel which they have never received themselves! They would not allow anybody to say a word against it on any account whatever. They are righteously indignant at error, yet they have never been saved by the Truth! I would not like to be a hungry man set to guard a loaf of bread, to have to walk up and down like a soldier with bayonet fixed, and all the while to be dying of starvation, my bones sticking out through my skin, yet never eating a crumb. Taking care that no Zulu ever came near the bread, shooting anybody who approached it, but never getting a morsel to eat myself! There are numbers of people who are doing just thatthey are simply sentinels at the door, remaining outside all the while. But the proper use of the door of salvation is to enter in by it, so our Lord Jesus says in our text.   
Note, particularly, the description given of those who use the door. By Me if any man enters in. Christ does not say, By Me if any king or prince should enter in. No, thank God, He says, If any man enters in any man from the slums, any man from the abode of poverty or viceHe will be saved. Christ does not say, If any highly intelligent person is able to understand the plan of salvation, He will be saved. It is not difficult to understand, for it is only like going through a doorand everybody knows how to do that. You coal-heavers, who have strayed in here, and you squires from the country who have your pockets well lined, and you poor people who have your pockets empty. You who have good characters and you who would do better if you were to lose your present characters, for they are no good to you, my text is so broad in its comprehension that it shuts none of you out! By Me if any man enters in he will be saved.   
I want to call your special attention to this point, for, evidently, this entering in is irrespective of character because a man can go through a door whether he is the biggest thief that lives, or the most honest man in the world! He does not need to be a good fellow to go through a door. And when Christ says, any man, He means the sinner who deserves the deepest Hell. It means me. It means you, my Friends, who are in the same condition as I was in when I came to Jesus! By Me if any man enters in, he will be saved. Perhaps someone says, Do you mean to tell me that men are to go to Heaven without being holy? I tell you no such thing! But I say that they are to come to Christ without being holy. They trust in Christ and then He makes them fit to go to Heaven, but, at their first coming to Him, there is no fitness required. You are to come just as you aredownright bad, through and throughjust pass through this door!   
Going through a door is a very simple action. It may be performed by an idiot, or by a baby who can but just toddle. That is faithpassing from this side of Christ to the other sidepassing from where I am, in myself, to be reconciled with God by trusting in Jesus Christ. Passing through a door is not a long operation. It can be done in the twinkling of an eye, and so can a man be saved in the twinkling of an eye. Passing through a door is not a difficult operation if the door is openand coming to Christ is not a difficult operation. I will tell you when it is difficultwhen a man has an enormous load of what he calls, good works, upon his back! I have seen people in that condition. They could not get through the door at all! They had such a mountain of good works that they could not get through the doorway! A wagonload of hay was nothing to the load they carriedthey could not pass through the strait gate. The man who gets to Christ most quickly is the one who is utterly stripped of everything of his own.   
Some people cannot get through this door because they carry their heads too high. I believe that he who is bowed down to the dust, on his hands and kneels, is the man who gets in most easily. He who is nothing, he who is nobody, he who is undeserving, ill-deserving, Helldeserving, he who has no hope apart from Christ is the man who most quickly finds hope in Christ! Righteous self is very hard to get rid of, and that is the great difficulty of passing through this door.  
You see, then, that character is not set down as a fitness for Christ. Neither is feeling to be set down as a preparation for coming to Christ. Christ needs nothing to prepare a sinner for Him. That poor man who was wounded and left half-dead on the road to Jericho would have been in a still worse plight if the Samaritan had said to him, Now, my good man, I am willing to help you, but you are hardly fit to be helped. I am afraid you do not feel your wounds sufficiently. I am afraid you are not sensible enough of the bruises you have received. I am afraid that at the present moment you are scarcely awakened to your danger. You seem to me to be half stupefied by that crack you had on your head, so I must leave you, I am afraid, until you are able to feel a little more and to be better prepared for me to help you. He did nothing of the sort, but he just brought out his oil and wine and he tore his coat, took a piece of rag to bind up the wounds and lifted the poor fellow up and set him on his own beast and took him to the inn.   
Now our Lord Jesus Christ is far better than that good Samaritan, but He acts on the same principle. He comes to the sinner just where he is and He does not need him to feel this or feel that, or be this or be that, or do this or do thatjust to trust Him, to rest in Him and in Him alone, and He will pour in the oil and the wine, and heal the sin-sick soul! Feeling or no feeling, if you will pass through that door, you shall be saved! If you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, you are not condemned and, therefore, you are saved!   
So now I leave that point, only praying the Lord to make it very plain to all who have heard it. It may seem, to some of you, to be the plainest thing in the world, for you have heard it so often, but I tell you, Beloved, that the poor trembling sinner needs to hear this over and over and over again, for although it is put in the plainest Saxon that can be discovered, he will not understand it till the Holy Spirit opens his understanding. They still think there is something to do, like that old German Lutheran woman who said, I do not understand this. My minister asked me a hundred questions before he thought I was converted and, as for me. I was groaning and crying for many years before I dared believe in Jesus Christ. That is just the way with manythey will do anything except trust Jesus then and there! Yet the Gospelthe true simple Gospel is, Christ is all. Trust Him and be saved. He is Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End. The Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all, therefore, trust Him, trust Him, trust Him, trust Him and, then and there, salvation is yours! I am the door. If anyone enters by Methat is all he has to dohe will be saved.   
III. Now, very briefly, I want to speak of THE PRIVILEGES OF THOSE WHO USE THIS DOOR ARIGHT.

The first privilege of the right users of it is salvation. Those who have entered in by Christ, the Door, are saved. He says, By Me if any man enters in, he shall be savedsaved from the guilt of sin, saved also from the power of sin. He shall be saved from being what he has been in the past. He shall be so saved as to enter into holiness, and so saved as to enter into Heaven. What a grand salvation that is!   
Oh, says one, I could believe in Christ if I felt that I was saved. Never put the cart before the horse! That is reversing the proper order of things! Trust in Christ and then you are saved. Go through the door of which I have been speaking to you. Oh, but I wish I felt that I was saved. Go through the door, Man, for our Lord Jesus says, By Me if any man enters in, he will be saved. There is no text that says, If any man shall wait outside the door, he will be saved. There is no encouragement given to people to say, We will sit and wait till the angel troubles the pool. The command of Christ is, Rise, take up your bed, and walk. The message of the Gospel is, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved. A Gospel that tells sinners to wait is not the Gospel that our Lord Jesus Christ blesses. His word is, Behold, now is the accepted time. Behold, now is the day of salvation. By Me if any man enters in, he will be saved.   
And what follows this salvation? The next privilege is libertyHe shall go in and out. We do not come to Christ to be shut up in a prisonwe shall go in and out. There is no such liberty as you who believe in Jesus haveliberty to go to your bed at night and to feel that it does not matter whether you wake up here or not! Liberty to go out into the world and feel that losses and crosses cannot happen to you without your Fathers permission and that you will have Grace to bear them! Liberty to go wherever you please on the errands of God, always protected by His almighty power! Do not imagine that walking with God, as Enoch did, means a narrow and confined life. He only has true largeness of heart who has God dwelling in his heart.   
Then notice the further privilege that is included in this libertythat is, liberty of access. He shall go in. He who goes through the doorthat is, believes in Christshall go in to God in prayer to pour out his heart before the Lord. He shall go in to the Church to have fellowship with all the saints. He shall go in to that secret of the Lord which is with them that fear Him and, one day, he shall go into the innermost Heaven, into that blessed circle where God reveals His love in the highest degree. He shall go in.   
And he shall have liberty of egress, as well as liberty of access, for, after he has been with God in private, he shall go out and   
*Tell to sinners round   
What a dear Savior he has found.*   
He shall go out to bear his cross with joy and to lift up his Captains banner with confidence. He shall go out farther and farther afield, learning more of the things of Christ, discovering more and more how great are the estates of God which cannot be enclosed within a fence, but which exceed all space and can only be compared with eternity and infinity!   
Then there is added the privilege of nourishmentand shall find pasture. Whatever his heart needs to live upon, to fill it, to sustain it, to comfort it, to make it grow, to develop it, to perfect it, he shall find it all in Christ Jesus his Lord and Savior! When a soul comes to Christ and receives life, it does not receive a life that will ever die, for Jesus, who is our Life, is also the Bread of Life and we live upon Him, and feed upon Him, and so our life endures until, in its full expansion, we enter into our eternal inheritance before the Throne of God!   
These, then, are the privileges of those who enter in by Christ the Doorsalvation, liberty, access, egress and nourishment for the soul. Who will have all these things by entering the door? Sometimes, when I have preached the Gospel with all my might, I go home and think to myself, Oh, I am grieved for those people who will not lay hold upon Christ! I could cry my heart out over them. But, at other times, I feel that I must take Gods side of the matter and say, Well, if they will not have salvationif His Son has been torn from His own bosom and put to death to save men, and yet they despise Himif God writes His message of love in letters of blood, the blood of His own well-beloved Son, and still men refuse to accept itthen their blood be upon their own head! If Jehovah stoops right down from Heaven and says, Come now, and let us reason together, says the Lord: though your sins are as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be as woolif He goes out of His way, as it were, to plead with sinners, by His mighty love and by the precious blood of Christ, His Son, I sometimes think that if they will not come to Him then, I am more inclined to blame them than to pity them! If they will not see what God sets before them and they are then struck blind, who can blame the justice of God? Surely, they deserve the deepest Hell who refuse and reject the Christ of God!   
Suppose that a man was standing at your door and that he said he was starvingand that you pointed to the door and bade him enter? But he says, Yes, I see the door. Well, then, enter it and you shall have food. No, he says, I am very hungry, but I am afraid I do not feel my hunger enough to entitle me to go in. You say, My dear Fellow, enter in. ButbutbutIII he keeps on saying and you reply, My dear Fellow, do you see the door? Yes, he says. Well, then, enter in! He says that he is ready to faint, that he feels so sick, he needs medicine. You answer, Everything is inside that door and the only condition is, Enter in. Oh, dear, he cries, I am worse than I thought I was! I am covered all over with a foul disease. I dare not go in. Still you say to him, Enter in. Everything is ready, come along with youdo not wait outside any longer. But I cannot climb over the top of the roof. I did not ask you to do so! I said, Come in by the door. But I cannot dig through the cellar and come up that way. I did not ask you to do anything of the kind! Come in by the door.   
Is not that what the Apostle meant in the chapter we read? [Exposition at end of sermon.] Say not in yours heart, Who shall ascend into Heaven? (That is, to bring Christ down from above) or, Who shall descend into the deep? (That is, to bring up Christ again from the dead). But what does it say? The Word is near you, even in your mouth, and in your heart: that is, the Word of faith which we preach, that if you shall confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus, and shall believe in yours heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved.   
But I thoughtI thoughtthe man still says, that to get such great mercy as to be fed, and to be clothed, and to be healedI thought that there would be something for me, to do, some performance for me to go through. You say to him, My dear Man, I have told you over and over and over again that everything depends upon your just entering in by that door. Will you do it? He comes right up to the door. He looks through the doorway, it is wide enough for him to pass through, and there is all that he needs just on the other side of the door. He says, I am almost persuaded to enter, I am very near the Kingdom. But, you exclaim, my dear Fellow, you will perish, near as you are, if you do not take one step more, over the threshold, into the house! Receive what is provided and all will be well with you! But if you will not enter, you must perish.   
I think I hear somebody say, Then, I will do it! I will trust Christ, whether I may or may not. You are a saved man if you only did it while I was speaking the word, for there was never a soul that said, Christ shall be All-in-All to me, but Christ really was All-in-All to that soul! May the Holy Spirit bring many of you to that blessed decision! And God shall be glorified, and you shall share His joy forever and ever! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **ROMANS 10.**

Verse 1. Brethren, my hearts desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they might be saved. No curse falls from his lips, though they had persecuted him without mercy, hunted him from city to city and gnashed their teeth at the very mention of his name. Yet Paul has no desire for them but their salvation! He utters no malediction against them, but the prayer goes up from his very heart, that they might be saved. Let that be your worst wish for any living man. Whatever he may do to you, let this be your hearts desire and prayer for himthat he may be saved!

2, 3. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they, being ignorant of Gods righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. There are many, in these days, also, who are exactly in this condition. They are very zealous. They are full of piety of a certain kind, but it is with the view of setting up a righteousness of their own. Oh, that God would save them from this false way! For there is no acceptable righteousness but the righteousness which is of God in Christ Jesusand the more intensely they labor after the false righteousness, the more bitter will be their disappointment at the last. Man can only be truly righteous in Gods wayhe will never be so in his own.

4. For Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness to everyone that believes. He has put the Law away so far as His own people are concerned and, by that act, He has removed the possibility of selfrighteousness, since we are no longer under the Law. Though there can come no condemnation to us by it, there certainly can come no righteousness by it. Even Christs own people can never have any righteousness which comes by the Lawthey must look to Christ and find in Him alone all that can be demanded by the Law, for Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness to everyone that believes.

5. For Moses. The Holy Spirit wisely directed the Apostle to quote from Moses, for he was the lawgiver and was looked upon by the Jews as the great representative of the Law of God.

5-8. Describes the righteousness which is of the Law, That the man which does those things shall live by them. But the righteousness which is of faith speaks on this wise, Say not in your heart, Who shall ascend into Heaven? (That is, to bring Christ down from above) or, Who shall descend into the deep? (That is, to bring up Christ again from the dead). But what did it say? The Word is near you. Not up yonder, nor down there, neither in the heights nor in the abyss. The Word is near you.

8-10. Even in your mouth, and in your heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; that if you shall confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus, and shall believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved. For with the heart man believes unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. To trust the risen Savior, to put your soul into His hands and then to confess your faith by publicly declaring that you are on His sidethese are the things which He demands of us in order to our salvationand these He enables us to render. Are there any Believers here who have never confessed Christ? Let them question themselves how far they can be said to be true disciples of Him who demands that where there is faith, confession of it should be made! If you believe in Jesus, look at this Scripture and feel ashamed of yourself if you have been ashamed to acknowledge Him as your Savior, for is not the promise thisthat if you shall confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus, and shall believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved?

11. For the Scripture says, Whoever believes on Him shall not be ashamed. Shall not be ashamed of having done so, and shall not be ashamed of having missed the blessing which was promised, for he shall surely receive what God says shall follow his faith and confession.

12. For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek. In this matter of salvation there is no difference between them.

12. For the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon Him. Jews or Gentiles, they must come to Christ and come to Him by the same simple way of trusting Him. And if they do, they shall be saved.

13-15. For whoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they are sent? As it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! See, then, what an honor God has put upon the testimony of His Word! And be not slow, my dear Friends, to tell of His glorious Gospel. The Apostle does not merely mean preaching from the pulpit, but preaching anywhere and anyway making known the Gospel by any means! It is in that way that hearing comes and from hearing comes faith and from faith comes salvation. Who, then, would not tell out the glad news which God uses to the salvation of immortal souls?

16-18. But they have not all obeyed the Gospel. For Isaiah said, Lord, who has believed our report? So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God. But I say, Have they not heard? Is that the reason why many do not believebecause they have not heard the Gospel? Well, it is not the reason in the case of anybody here present, for I suppose all of you have heard the Gospelprobably have often heard it!

18, 19. Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth and their words unto the end of the world. But I say, Did not Israel know? Ah, that they did! The Gospel was sounded in their ears in a hundred ways, yet they rejected it.

19-21. First Moses said, I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people, and by a foolish nation I will anger you. But Isaiah is very bold and said, I was found of them that sought Me not; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after Me. But to Israel he said, All day long I have stretched forth My hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people. God grant that we may not be like they were! Amen.

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THE ONLY DOOR   
NO. 3287

A SERMON   
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 1912. DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

*I am the door: if anyone enters by Me, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.   
John 10:9.*

[Another Sermon by Mr. Spurgeon upon the same text is #2752, Volume 47THE DOOR read/download the entire sermon free of charge at http://www.spurgeongems.org.]

The Word of God tells us that in the midst of the great mass of men there are to be found a special peoplea people who were chosen of God out of the common race before the stars began to shinea people who were dear to Gods heart before the foundation of the world, a people who were redeemed by the precious blood of Jesus beyond and above the rest of mankind, a people who are the special property of Christ, the flock of His pasture, the sheep of His hand, a people over whom Providence watches, shaping their course amid the tangled maze of lifea people who are to be produced at the last, every one of them faultless before the Eternal Throne and fitted for the exalted destiny which, in the ages to come, He shall reveal! All through Scripture you read about this particular and special people. Sometimes they are called a seed, at other times a garden, at other times a treasure, and sometimes, as in the Chapter we have read, a flock. The common name in the New Testament for them is the Churchthe Church of God which He has purchased with His own blood. Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word.

Now, the all-important question is how can we obtain admission into this Church? Where is this community to be found? Who are the members of it? What is the way to become a partaker of the privileges which belong to it? Jesus Christ here tells us two thingsFirst, How to enter the Church. The way is through Himself as the door. Secondly, What are the benefits we shall receive through being members of Christs Church we shall be saved and shall go in and out and find pasture.

I. HOW A MAN CAN BECOME A MEMBER OF THAT CHURCH WHICH IS ELECTED, REDEEMED AND WILL BE SAVED, IS SIMPLY AND BRIEFLY SOLVED BY OUR LORDS FIRST ASSERTION.

Christ tells us that the only way to enter the Church is through Himself. He is the door, the only door. There is no other mode of admission into His Church but through Himself. Let it be understood, then, once and for all, that we cannot get into the Church of Christ through Baptism. There are tens of thousands, yes, there have been millions who have been baptized after a fashion, that is to say, they have been sprinkledand thousands have been immersedwho never were admitted into the Church of Christ! In consideration of the ordinance as it was administered to them, with, or more commonly, without their consent, they were recognized by some persons as being Christians. But let me tell you that unless they came to Christ by true faith, they are nothing better than baptized Pagans! They are still just sprinkled heathen! Why, you might hold a man in an everlasting shower, but you could not, thereby, make him a member of Christ. Or you might drag him through the Atlantic Ocean and if he survived the immersion, yet he still would not be one jot the better! The door is not baptism, but Christ! If you believe in Christ, you are a member of His Church. If your trust is stayed upon Christ, who is Gods great way of salvation, you have evidence that you were chosen of Him from before the foundation of the worldand that faith of yours entitles you to all the privileges which Christ has promised in His Word to Believers!

If Christ is the door, then it follows that men do not get into the Church by birthright. The Society of Friends has been one of the most useful communities in the world and it has maintained a good testimony upon most important points for many years. But it seems to me that the great evil in itthat which has done them the most mischiefis the admission of birthright membership. Do they not receive in their fellowship the children of their members as though they were necessarily proper persons to be received into the visible Church? My Brothers and Sisters, it is a great privilege to have Christian parents. It may prove a very great advantage if you use it rightly. But it involves a great responsibility, and if you use it wrongly, instead of being a blessing to you, it may be a fearful curse! Though you may be one of a long line of saints, Except a man is born-again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God. The most pious example, the most godly training cannot ensure conversionand without conversion, depend upon ityou cannot be Christs. Except you are converted and become as little children, you shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. Through our not practicing infant baptism, we do not so readily fall into this error as some denominationsstill, it is necessary to say even here that you have no right to Gospel privileges because of your mothers and fathers. You must yourselves be born-again! You have no right to the Covenant of Grace, nor to the blessings or promises thereof, except as by your own personal and individual faith you come to Christ! It is not your father nor your mother who can be the door into Christs Church for you, but Christ Himself. I, He said, I am the door. If you are in Christ, you are in His Church. If you have laid hold on Him, you are a member of that secret and invisible community of His elect and His redeemedbut it is not by Baptism, nor by birthright that you can ever be so!

Moreover, as Christ is the door, it is evident that a man does not come to be a member of the Church of Christ by making a profession of being so. He may prove himself to be a detestable hypocrite, but he cannot prove himself to be a genuine Christian by mere profession! Men do not get rich in this world by a lavish expenditure, or by a profession of being wealthy. They must hold the title deeds of their estate and have the cash in the strong box, or else they are poor in spite of all their pretensions! And you cannot become a Christian by coming forward and asking to be admitted into the Church, declaring that you believe and avowing that you repent. No, verily, but you must truly repent, or you shall perish! You must truly believe, or you shall have no part or lot in this matter! The mere saying, Yes, yes, I am willing to profess this, I am willing to say that, no more makes you a Christian than it would make cotton to be silk to call it so, or make mud to be gold by labeling it with that title! Beware of a false profession, for it is doubly hazardous. The man who has no Grace is in danger, but the man who makes a profession of having it when he has none, is in double danger, for he is the least likely to be awakened and he is certain, unless Sovereign Grace prevents, to make his profession a pillow for his wicked and slumbering head till he sleeps himself into Hell!

Further, and this may, perhaps, touch the point more closely a man does not get to be one of the Lords people, or to be one of Christs sheep, by being admitted into any visible church. He ought not to try to get into any visible church until he is in the true Church! He has no right to join the external organization until he has first got into the secret conclave by a living faith in Christ. If he leaves the door alone, and climbs over the wall and comes into the outward church without being a Believer in Christso far from being saved, Christ will say to him, You are a thief and a robber, for you have climbed up some other way and you came not in by the door. I believe we do rightly to subject the admission of members to the voice of all the Church. I believe we do rightly to examine candidates to see whether they make a creditable profession and whether they know what they are doing. But our examinationoh, tis nothing better than skin deep! We cannot search the heart and the best judgment of ever so many Christian men, though honest, and deserving to be treated with great respect, would be a very poor thing to rest upon. If you have not Christ, your church certificates are waste paper and your membership with any people, however pure and Apostolic they may be, is but a name to live while you are deadfor the only way, the sole way of getting into the real, vital, living Church of Christ is by coming to Christ who is Himself the door!

The plain English of this metaphor then, is just this to be one of Gods people, the essential thing is a simple dependence upon Jesus Christ. If you have not thisno matter who baptizes you, or who gives you the consecrated bread and wine, or who preaches to you about a hope of salvation for which there is no warrantyou will die in your sins, notwithstanding all your sacraments unless you come to Christ! No other admittance to Heaven can there be but by a simple dependence upon Him who has bled and died on Calvarys Cross! The preaching of any other system is a mere delusion against which the warning voice went forth or ever the snare was laid to trap the unwary!

Mark you, simple faith, where it is genuine, makes it plain that you do enter by Christ, the door, because such faith leads to obedience. How can you suppose that you are a member of His Church if you are not obedient to Christ? It is necessary that the man or woman who trusts Christ should become the servant of Christ. Real faith never kicks at this rule, but rather delights in it. If you love Me, says Christ, keep My commandments. Unless we keep Christs commandments out of a principle of love to Him, our religion is vain. Without holiness no man shall see the Lord. We may talk as we will about inward experiences and believing, but by their fruits you shall know them. The Spirit of God is the Spirit of holiness. When Christ comes into the soul, all iniquity must be purged out of the soul. You know how Malachi describes His Advent. He proclaims to us the promise that the Lord whom we seek shall suddenly come to His Templethat is, seekers shall be finders! Do you know what he adds? But who may abide the day of His coming? For He is like a refiners fire and like fullers soap. Now, the refiners fire burns up the dross, and fullers soap takes out the stainsand so, if Christ is in you, you will pass through a refining that will burn up your outward sinand you will be subjected to a washing like that of the fullers soap which will cleanse you from all your iniquities. Be not deceived, God is not mocked: for whatever a man sows, that shall he also reap. If you live after the flesh, you shall die! But if, through the Grace of Christ, you are living in Him, trusting in Him, always serving Himservice being the evidence of trust and trust being the evidence of your electionyou have then come into the Church through the doorand it is well with you!

Now, if it is so, that Christ is the door into the Church, and if we have entered the Church through that door, it does not matter much to us what the old gentleman at Rome thinks of us. He may excommunicate us. This he is very fond of doing, for he is a rare hand at cursing, but what does it matter? It matters not one jot, if I am a new creature in Christ Jesus, how much the Pope may rail at me! Besides, there are plenty of revilers nowadays who are saying, You Non-Conformists are only a pack of heretics! We have the Apostolic succession! We have the sacraments and the priests. Ah, they vaunt themselves as being Catholic, though their claim is disallowed alike by the Babylon which is here below, and by the Jerusalem which is above! Let them vaunt if they will. As long as we have Christ, they may keep their Apostolic succession and all their other rubbish! Christ is the door and if we have come through Him, it is well with us!

I like that story of the Sandwich Islanders who had been converted through some of our missionaries and the Gospel had been preached to them for years. At last, two or three gentlemen in long black gowns landed there and the people asked them what they had come for. They said they were come to instruct them in the true faith and to teach them. Well, they said, they should be glad to hear it. If their teaching was true and like the Scriptures, they would listen to them. By-and-by, a little diagram was exhibited to the natives after the similitude of a tree. This tree had many branches. The twigs which were farthest off were the different saints, the Believers, those who do good works. Then the limbs, which were a little larger, were the priests. The bigger branches were bishops, the biggest were the cardinals and, at last, these all joined on to the trunkwhich was the Popeand that went all the way down to the bottom till it came to Peter, who was the root, deriving his authority immediately from Christ. So the natives asked about all these twigs, branches and especially about certain rotten branches that were tumbling off into a fire. What were they? They were Luther, and Calvin, and other heretics who had been cut off from the true tree of the church. Well, said one of the islanders, and pray what is the root of the tree? Of course that was allowed to be Jesus Christ. So they clapped their hands at once for joy, and said, Never mind about the branches, and stems, and twigswe have never heard of thembut we have got the Root, and that will do to grow on. In like manner, Brothers and Sisters, we can say tonight, if we have Christ, we have got the root out of a dry ground. We have got the root of the matter, the basis, the sum, the substance of it

*Let others trust what forms they please,*

*Their hopes well not contest.*   
Let them go about their business and rejoice in their fanciesbut Christ is the door! We have Christ! We have entered by the Door! We have believed in Him, we have entered through Him into faith, and into joy, and into peace! We will be content with thislet others clamber up some other way if they please.

Before I leave this point, a question suggests itself Have we all entered by the Door? We are agreed that Christ is the Door, have we entered by the Door? You who are growing oldI always feel much pleasure in seeing gray heads, the type of mellowed years, in the concourse of worshippershave you all believed in Jesus? You know the Truthyou would not like to hear anything but the simple Gospel preached! But have you laid hold on the Gospel? A man my starve with bread on the table if he does not eat. And he may perish with thirst, though he is up to his neck in water, if he does not drink. Have you trusted Christ? If not, how can you remain in a state of unbelief, for he that believes not is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God? Men and women in middle life, struggling with the cares of business, have you trusted in Christ? I know your thoughts are much taken up and necessarily so, with the world. But have you not time to think upon this question or dare you neglect itDo you believe on the Son of God? If not, O man, your life hangs on a thread and that snapped, your ruin is certain! And, oh, you young people, what a mercy it is to see you willing to come and hear the Word! But have you all heard it with your inward ears? Have you looked to my Master? Oh, it is sweet to come to Christ in the early morning of life, to have a long day of happiness before you! May it be the blessedness of each one of you! It is vain to look at the Door unless you enter. God give you Grace to come in if you have never entered before!

II. Our Lord and Master tells us WHAT ARE THE PRIVILEGES OF ENTERING THROUGH HIM, THE DOOR.

The man who enters by Christ shall be saved and he shall go in and out, and he shall find pasture.   
He shall be saved. The man who believes in Jesus Christ shall be saved. He is saved and he shall be saved! A man has by accident killed his fellow man. The next of kin to the murdered man will be sure to kill the manslayer out of revenge if he can get at him. Therefore the poor man takes flight as quickly as he can towards the City of Refuge. How his heart beats, how his footsteps bound, how he flies with all his might! There is a signpost with the word, Refuge, upon it, and on he continues his way. But, presently, while he is running, he turns his head and finds that the avenger of blood is after him. He sees that he is gaining upon him! He feels that he will probably overtake him. Oh, how he picks his steps lest he should trip on a stone! How he skims the ground, swift as a roe! He runs until he can see the city gates. That is the fair CITY OF REFUGE, he says. But he does not rest then, for a sight of the city will not secure himso he quickens his speed as if he would outstrip the wind till he shoots through the archway and he is in the broad street of the city! Now he stops. Now he breathes. Now he wipes the hot sweat from his brow. Now I am safe, he says, for no avenger of blood dares cross that threshold. He that once escapes here is delivered. So with the sinner when sin pursues him, when he discovers that he has offended God! He hears the furious coursers of Divine Vengeance coming on swiftly behind him and his conscience flies, and his soul speeds towards the Cross. He gets a little hope. He hears of a Savior, but that is not enough. He will never rest, he will never say he is at peace until he has passed the gate of faith and can say, Now I do believe that Jesus died for me.   
He that enters in by the door shall be saved. Noahs ark was built in the olden times to preserve Noah and his family from the great flood. It could not be said that Noah was saved till he had passed through the doorbut when he had done that, a Divine hand, quite unseen, shut the door and as Noah heard it fastened and understood that the Lord had shut him in, he felt quite safe. If God shuts us in, the floods from beneath cannot drown us and the rains from above cannot penetrate to injure us. He must be safe whom God shuts in! The moment that a poor sinner trusts in Christ, God shuts the door. There he is and there he shall be till time shall be no more! He is secure. The infernal powers shall not destroy him and the vengeance of God cannot touch him! He has passed the door and he shall be saved.   
I read a story the other day of some Russians crossing wide plains studded over here and there with forests. The villages were ten or a dozen miles from each other, the wolves were out, the horses were rushing forward madly, the travelers could hear the baying of the wolves behind them. And though the horses tore along with all speed, yet the wolves were close behind and they only escaped, as we say, by the skin of their teeth, managing just to get inside some hut that stood in the road and to shut the door. Then they could hear the wolves leap on the roof, they could hear them dash against the sides of the hut, they could hear them gnawing at the door and howling, and making all sorts of dismal noises but the travelers were safe because they had entered in by the door and the door was shut! Now, when a man is in Christ, he can hear, as it were, the devils howling like wolves, all fierce and hungry for him. And his own sins, like wolves, are seeking to drag him down to destruction! But he has got in to Christ and He is such a shelter that all the devils in the world, if they were to come at once, could not harm a single beam of that Eternal Refuge! It must stand fast, though earth and Heaven should pass away!   
Now, to every man and woman, Christ says that if they have entered in by the door, they shall be saved. Do not have any doubt about it! Do not let anybody raise the question whether you may be or you may not beyou shall be! Oh, clutch at that blessed, shall. Sir, if you have been a drunk, yet, if you trust in Christ, you shall be saved! You shall not go back to your old drunkenness, but you shall be saved from it if you believe in Him. O Woman, if you have stained your character to the worst, yet if you believe in Christ, none of your old sins shall ruin you, but you shall be saved! Ah, though you are tempted every day of your lives, tempted as none ever were before, yet God is true and cannot lieif you come through Christ, the Door, you shall be saved! Do you understand what it is to come through the door? It is to depend upon Jesus, to give yourselves to Him, to rest on Him. When you hang up your jugs and mugs on the nail in the cupboard, what keeps them from falling? Nothing but the nail! And if that holds well, nothing can fall that hangs on it. Now, you must trust in Christ as the vessel hangs on the nailand if you do so, He is fastened as a nail in a sure placeand you cannot and shall not perish! That is the first privilegehe shall be saved.   
He that enters in by the door shall go in. The man who believes in Christ shall go into rest and peace, for there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. He shall go in to secret knowledge. He shall become a scholar and shall be taught by Christ as his Rabbi. He shall go in unto God with holy boldness in prayer. He shall go in unto that which is within the veil and speak to God from before the Mercy Seat. He shall go in unto the childs place and shall stand as an adopted heir of Heaven. He shall go in unto close communion with God. He shall speak with his Maker. The Lord shall lift up the light of His Countenance upon him. He shall go in unto the highest attainment in spiritual things. He shall go in to the treasure house of the Covenant and say, All this is mine! He shall go in to the store house of the promises and take whatever his soul needs. He shall go in, passing from circle to circle, till he comes to the innermost place where the love of God is most graciously shed abroad!   
He that enters in by the door shall be saved, and he shall go in. If you know what this means, go in! Go in further. Go in more constantly. Do not stop where you are, but go in till you have got a little more. If you love Christ, come nearer to Him and nearer, and still nearer! But if you want to get into anything that is Divine, you must get in through Christ. O you who open your Bibles and want to understand a textthe way to get into the meaning of a text is through the Door, Christ! O you who want to get more holiness, come through the Doorthe way to holiness is not through Moses, but through Christ! O you who would have closer communion with your heavenly Father, the way to come in is not through your own efforts, but through Christ! You came to Christ at first to get salvationyou must still come to Christ to get sanctification! Never look for another door, for there is but one, and that one door will let you into life, love, peace, knowledge and sanctificationit will let you into Heaven! Christ is the master key of all the rooms in the palace of mercy! And if you get Christ, you shall go in. Nothing shall keep you out of any of the secret chambers. You shall go in, in Gods name, through Christ, the Door!   
The next privilege is that he shall go out. Putting the two togetherhe shall go in and outthey signify liberty. The Christian does not come into the Church as into a prison, but he comes in as a free man, walking in and out of his own house. But what does it mean to go out? I think it means this, Brothers and Sisters. The men that trust in Christ go out to their daily business through Christ, the Door. I wonder how many of you ever thought of this? You know sometimes you get up, put on your clothes and go blundering out to work. And then you find yourselves very weak all day. Well, I do no wonder at it, for you do not go out through Christ, the Door. Suppose you had given yourselves to Christ for the day and though you had time but for a few minutes prayer, yet you had put it thus, Lord, I am Yours. Take care of me today. I am going out where there will be many to tempt me and try me. I do not know what may happen, but, Lord, I am going out in Your name and resting in Your strength. If there is anything that I can do for You, I desire to do it. If there is anything to suffer, I wish to suffer it for Your sake, but take care of me, Lord. I will not go out and face my fellow men until I have seen Your face. And I do not want to speak to them until I have spoken to You, nor to hear what they have to say till I have heard what God the Lord will speak. Depend upon it, it is blessed going out when you go thus through the Door! You will be sure to come home happy when you go out after this sort!   
May not this going out also mean to go out to suffering? You and I are sometimes called to bear great bodily pain, or losses, or bereavements. Well now, what a sweet thing it is to go out to suffer these things through the Door, and to be able to say, Now, my Master, this is a cross, but I will carry it, not in my own strength, but in Yours. Do what You will with meI shall drink the cup because You appoint it. Whenever you can see Christs hand in it, it makes the bitter sweet and heavy things soon grow light! Go to your sickbed as you hope to go to your deathbedthrough the Door, that is, through Christ!   
And when, as sometimes happens, we have to go out, as it were, away from fellowship with Christ, to fight with our inward sinsthe right way is to go out to resist them through the Door. If you ever try to fight with sin in your own strength, or on a legal footing, or because you feel that you will be condemned if you do not overcome those sins, you will be as weak as water! The way of victory is through the blood of the Lamb. There is no killing sin except by throwing the blood of Christ upon it. When once the blood of Christ comes into contact with the besetting sin, that sin withers straight away! Go to your spiritual conflicts through the Door.

And so, Beloved, we ought, in all that we do for the Lord, to go out through the Door. It is always sweet preaching for me when I feel that I come forth in the name of my Masterwhen I do not come to tell you what ideas I have woven out of my own brain, nor to put attractive figures before you, as I would like to do sometimesbut rather, when I come to tell you just what my Lord would have you know, telling it as a message to you from your God and cherishing in my own heart His great love toward perishing sinners. Then, indeed, to minister is joy! You Sunday school teachers will always teach well when you go down to the schoolroom through the Door, that is, having been with Christ, having sought and enjoyed His company. I know, my dear Brothers and Sisters, you who are teaching larger classes, you who are engaged in instructing or exhorting, you who go about any holy workyou always do it well when you have Gods smile upon you in the doing of itand you shall have great success in the doing of it if you always go to it through Christ, the Doorif you serve Christ through Christ, and do it not only for Him, but through Him and by Him! Our own strength is perfect weakness, but the strength which comes through simple dependence upon the everliving Christ who has said, Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the worldthis is the strength which wins the conquest! God give you Grace not only to go in, but also to go out through the Door.   
The last privilege named in the text is, and shall find pasture. I suppose this is what you come here for, you who love the Lordyou come here for pasture. It is a great blessing if when we come to hear the Gospel, it becomes real pasture to us. We do know some who say that the troubles of the week become unbearable because they have such barren Sabbaths. Ah, if you are members of a church that is torn with discord, where the ministry abounds in anything but Christ, you will soon begin to cry out and you will value the privilege of hearing Jesus Christ lifted up among you! But who are the people who get the pasture where Jesus Christ is preached? Not all who hear of Him, nor yet all Believers. There are times when you may hear a sermon that is of no use to youand yet your Brother and Sister by your side may be greatly instructed and comforted thereby. In such a case, I should not wonder if it was because your friend came in to the service through the Door, and you did not.   
Do you remember the story of Mr. Erskine and the good lady who went to hear him preach at the Communion? It was such sweet preaching, she thought she had never heard the like. So, after service, she asked who the gentleman was that had preached and, on being told that it was Mr. Ebenezer Erskine, she said, I will come and hear him again next Sabbath morning. She went, she listened and she thought to herself, Well, this is very dry, very heavy preaching. She was not at all comforted by it! Then like a foolish woman, as I should think she must have been, she went into the vestry, and said, Oh, Mr. Erskine, I heard you last Sabbath with much pleasure! Sir, I was never so edified and I came again this morning, but I have been dreadfully disappointed. So the good man said very calmly, Pray, Madam, when you came to the kirk last Sabbath, what did you come for? She said, I came to Communion, Sir. To have fellowship with Christ, I suppose? he asked. Yes, Sir. Well you came for it and you had it. And pray, what did you come here this morning for? She said, I came to hear you, Sir. And you had it, woman, he said. You had it and you had not anything else, because you did not come for anything more than that.   
Well now, when people come merely to hear a minister, or for customs sake, or for forms sakedo they not always get what they come for? If people come to find fault, we always give them plenty of our imperfections to be entertained with, so they need not be disappointed! If others come merely out of custom, they say, Well, this is my work, I have performed my duty. Of course it is, but if you had come in through the Door, that is, looking to Christ, looking for Christ, desiring not to see the preacher, but the Lordnot to get the word of man, but the Word of God as food for your soul, I believe you would have found pasture! Brothers, the sheep need pasture. No other food will suit them. So your soul needs heavenly Truth and if you come to the House of God through Christ, you will get it! If you turn to the Bible through Christ, you will find it a rich storehouse! If you come to prayer through the door of Christ, you will find it comforting and so you shall find pasture.   
I think the text may mean that he who rests in Christ shall have all his needs supplied. If the text does not mean so, another does, The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me to lie down in green pastures: He leads me beside the still waters. Some of you are very poor, but if you have trusted in Christ, you may plead this promise, You have said that I shall find pasture. Your Word declares that no good thing will he withheld from them that walk uprightly. Lord, make this true to me.   
I would to God that some who have never yet entered into the fold might now be drawn to Jesus. Oh, that you would come through the Door into these four choice privileges! You may never have such another opportunity. You may never feel any of the motions of the Spirit of God again. Oh that, without delay, you would just cast your helpless souls into the Saviors gracious arms, who is able and willing to save, that you might be saved now!

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **JOHN 10:1-18.**

Verses 1, 2. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that enters not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbs up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he that enters in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. The true Shepherd cares for the flock. The false ones are thieves and robbers who only care for the flesh or the fleece.

3. To him the doorkeeper opens and the sheep hear his voice: and he calls his own sheep by name, and leads them out. [See Sermon #2359, Volume  
40PERSONAL AND EFFECTUAL CALLINGRead/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at

http://www.spurgeongems.org.] John the Baptist was the doorkeeper who opened the door of Christs earthly ministry by bearing witness that He was the Son of God.

4, 5. And when he puts forth his own sheep, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers. Christ is the great Leader of His people and they will never go astray as long as they follow Him. The sheep of Christ recognize their Shepherds voice and come at His call. But strangers call to them in vain.

6, 7. This parable spoke Jesus unto them: but they understood not what things they were which He spoke unto them. Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. No one metaphor can fully describe our glorious Lord, for He is both Shepherd and Door to the sheep, and all else that they need

*O my Savior! Shield and Sun,   
Shepherd, Brother, Husband, Friend   
Every precious name in one,   
I will love You without end!*

8-10. All that ever came before Me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door: by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. The thief comes not but to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. [See Sermon #1150, Volume 20

LIFE MORE ABUNDANTRead/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at

http://www.spurgeongems.org.] The thief came to take away life, but Christ came to give lifethat abundant life which shall last forever and ever! But see what it cost Him to give that life

11-13. I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd gives His life for the sheep. But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep, and flees: and the wolf catches them, and scatters the sheep. The hireling flees because he is an hireling, and cares not for the sheep. Just now the contrast was between the Shepherd and the thief, here it is between the Shepherd and the hireling. The hireling cares for himself. The Shepherd cares for the sheep and provides for them and cares for them even at the cost of His life.

14, 15. I am the good shepherd, and know My sheep, and am known of Mine. As the Father knows Me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down  
My life for the sheep. [See Sermon #1877, Volume 32OUR OWN DEAR SHEPHERD Read/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.] There is  
mutual knowledge between the Shepherd and the sheep, and between the Father and the Son.   
16. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: they also I must bring, and they shall hear My voice: and there shall be one fold, and one   
shepherd. [See Sermon #1713, Volume 29OTHER SHEEP AND ONE FLOCKRead/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.] Or, more correctly, one

flock, one Shepherd. The flock would never be complete without those other sheep which the Shepherd says He must bring into the fold, and which He says shall hear His voice. Not one of them will be missing in the day when they pass again under the hand of Him that counts them.

17, 18. Therefore does My Father love Me, because I lay down My life, that I might take it again. No man takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of My Father. The voluntariness of Christs Sacrifice is its Glory, and well may His Father love Him because of it and well may we, who are eternally to benefit by His deathalso love Him!

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**LIFE MORE ABUNDANT   
NO. 1150**

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, JANUARY 4, 1874, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.   
John 10:10.**

THE thief comes not but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. False teachers, whatever their professions, seriously injure and endanger the souls of men and in the end cause their destruction. Their selfish ends can only be answered by the ruin of their dupes. The Lord Jesus, the true Teacher of men, causes injury to none, and brings death to no mans door. His teaching is full of goodness, kindness and love. It works most effectually for human happiness and benefit. Error is deadly. The Truth of God is life-giving. The coming of the old serpent worked our death. The Advent of the womans Seed has brought us life. We shall omit all preface and ask you to note that, according to the text, Jesus Christ is come, first, that His people may have life. And, secondly, that where life is already given it may be enjoyed more abundantly.

I. The first Truth is that JESUS CHRIST HAS COME THAT MEN MAY HAVE LIFE. I will not dwell upon the thought that even the prolonged natural life of the sinner is due, in a large measure, to the coming of Christ. That barren tree would not stand so long in the garden of life if it were not that the dresser of the vineyard intercedes and cries, Spare it yet another year, until I dig about it and fertilize it. The interposition of the Mediator accounts for the lengthened lives of gross offenders whose crimes tax the long-suffering of Heaven. If the prayers of our great Intercessor should cease for a single hour, the ungodly among mankind would, perhaps, sink down quickly into Hell, as Korah, Dathan and Abiram did when the Lords anger broke forth upon them.

That, however, is not the drift of the text. Life, in the sense of pardon and deliverance from the death penalty, is a great result of Christs coming. All men in their natural condition are under sentence of death, for they have sinned, and they must be shortly taken to the place of execution, there to suffer the full penalty of the second death. If any of us are delivered at this time from the sentence of death and have now the promise of the crown of life, we owe the change to the coming of the Redeemer to be a Sacrifice for our sins. Every man among us must go down to the endless death unless, through Him who came to earth and hung upon the tree as the sinners Substitute, we obtain full remission for all offenses and the verdict of life instead of death. There is life in a look at Jesus, but apart from Him, the sons of Adam are under sentence of death.

Moreover, we are all, by nature, dead in trespasses and sins. In the day when our first parents broke the Law, they died spiritually, and all of us died in them. And now, today, apart from Christ, we are all dead to

spiritual things, being devoid of that living Spirit which enables us to have communion with God and to understand and enjoy spiritual things. All men are by nature without the Spirit which quickens to the highest form of life. Unregenerate men have physical life and mental life, but spiritual life they have notnor will they ever have it except as Jesus gives it to them. The Spirit of God goes forth according to the Divine will and implants in us a living and incorruptible seed which is akin to the Divine Nature. He confers on us a new life, by virtue of which we live in the realm of spiritual things, comprehend spiritual teachings, seek spiritual objects and are alive unto God, who is a Spirit.

No one among us has any life of this kind by birth, neither can it be bestowed upon us by ceremonial rites, nor obtained by human merit. The dead cannot rise to life except by miracleneither can man rise to spiritual life except by the working of the Spirit of God upon him, for it is He, alone, who can quicken us. Christ Jesus has come to call us from the graves of sin. Many have already heard His voice and live. This spiritual life is the same life which will be continued and perfected in Heaven. We shall not, when we rise again from the grave, obtain a life which we do not possess on earthwe must be alive unto God here or take our places among those whose worm dies not and whose fire is not quenched.

There beats within the Believers heart this day the same life which shall enjoy the fullness of joy in the Divine Presence. If you have only looked to Jesus a few minutes ago, yet there is now in your heart the blessed life. The incorruptible seed is sown in you which lives and abides forever. The heavenly life is within you and this Jesus Christ came to bestow upon us. The Truth that Jesus is the life-giver is clear enough in the text and it leads to the following practical reflectionlife for your soul is only to be had in Jesus. If, then, you are, this day, seeking salvation, you are instructed as to the only source of it!

Spiritual life is not the result of workinghow can the dead work for life? Must they not be quickened, first, and then will they not rather work from life than for life? Life is a gift and its bestowal upon any man must be the act of God. The Gospel preaches life by Jesus Christ. Sinner, see where you must look! You are wholly dependent upon the quickening voice of Him who is the Resurrection and the Life. This, says one, is very discouraging to us. It is intended to be! It is kindness to discourage men when they are acting upon wrong principles. As long as you think that your salvation can be effected by your own efforts, or merits, or anything else that can arise out of yourself, you are on the wrong trackand it is our duty to discourage you.

The way to life lies in the opposite direction. You must look right away from yourself to the Lord Jesus Christ! You must rely upon what He has done and not upon what you can do. And you must have respect not to what you can work in yourself, but to what He can work in you. Remember that Gods declaration is that, Whoever believes in Jesus has everlasting life. If, therefore, you are enabled to come and cast yourselves upon the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ, you have that eternal life immediatelywhich all your prayers, tears, repentance, churchgoing, chapel-going and sacraments could never bring to you!

Jesus can give it to you freely at this moment, but you cannot work it in yourself. You may imitate it and deceive yourself. You may garnish the corpse and make it seem as though it were aliveand you can galvanize it into a spasmodic motionbut life is a Divine fire and you can not steal the flame, or kindle it for yourself! It belongs to God, alone, to make alive, and therefore I charge you look alone to God in Christ Jesus! Christ has come that we may have life! If we could have obtained life without His coming, why did He need to come? If life could come to sinners apart from the Cross, why nail the Lord of Glory to the shameful tree? Why Your bleeding wounds, Immanuel, if life could come by some other door?

Yet, further, why did the Spirit of God descend at Pentecost, and why does He still abide among men if they can be quickened without Him? If life is to be obtained apart from the Holy Spirit, to what end does He work in the human heart? The bleeding Savior and the indwelling Spirit are convincing proofs that our life it not from ourselves, but from above. Away, then, from yourself, O Trembler! Seek not the living among the dead! Search not in the sepulcher of self for the Divine Life. The life of men is in yonder Savior and whoever believes in Him shall never die!

II. But we intend to spend the most of our time at this time upon the second Truth of God, namely, that JESUS HAS COME THAT THOSE TO WHOM HE HAS GIVEN LIFE MAY HAVE IT MORE ABUNDANTLY. Life is a matter of degrees. Some have life, but it flickers like a dying candle and is indistinct as the fire in the smoking flax. Others are full of life and are bright and vehement, like the fire upon the blacksmiths forge when the bellows are in full blast. Christ has come that His people may have life in all its fullness.

Increase of life may be seen in several ways. It may be seen in healing. A man lies sick upon his bedhe is alive, but he can hardly move a limbhe is helplessly dependent upon those around him. His life is in him, but how little is its power! Now, if that man recovers, rises from his bed and takes his place in the worlds battle, it is evident that he has life more abundantly than in his illness! Even thus there are sick Christians of whom we need to say, Strengthen you the weak hands and confirm the feeble knees. Their spiritual constitution is weak, they do but little. When the Lord Jesus restores them, strengthens their faith, brightens their hope and makes them healthy, then they not only have life, but they have it yet more abundantly!

Our Lord desires to have us in spiritual health. He has for that end become the Physician of our souls. He heals all our diseases and is the health of our countenance. A person may, however, be in health and yet you may desire he had more life. Yonder little child, for instance, is in perfect health, but as yet it cannot run alone. Put it upon the ground, it totters a little way, and is ready to fall. Those bones must harden, those muscles must gather strength. When the boy becomes a man, he will have life more abundantly than when he was a babe. We grow in Divine Grace, we advance in knowledge, in experience, in confidence and in conformity to the image of our Lord. From babes in Christ Jesus we advance to

young men. And from young men we become fathers in the Church. Jesus would have us grow. This is one of the designs of His coming and thus do we possess life more abundantly.

A person might, however, have both health and growth, and yet enjoy a stinted measure of life. Suppose he is confined as a prisoner in a narrow cell where chains and granite walls perpetually bound his motionscan you call his existence, life? Might it not be accurate to speak of him as dead while he lives and to describe his dungeon as a living tomb? Can that be life which is forbidden pure air which is the poorest mans estate? Denied the sun which shines for all that breathe? He lives, for he consumes that piece of dry bread and empties the pitcher placed daily upon the stone floor, but in the truest sense he is shut out from life, for he is denied liberty. When the poor prisoner once more climbs the hill, crosses the oceans wave and wanders where he will, he will gratefully know what it is to have life more abundantly.

Now, mark well that if the Son of God shall make you free, you shall be free, indeed, and in that freedom find life sparkling, flashing and overflowing like the streams of a fountain! To be under bondage through fear of death is scarcely life. To be continually fretted with mistrusts and receive the spirit of bondage, again, to fear, genders unto death. But it is truly life to be able to cry, You have loosed my bonds! Yet I can suppose a man at liberty and in health who might have still more abundant life. He is extremely poor. He may wander where he wills, it is true, but no foot of ground can he call his own. He may live where he chooses, if he can live, but he has scarcely bread for his body, covering for his limbs, or shelter from the night. He is extremely poor.

The poor man works from before the sun proclaims the morning till far into the night to earn a miserable pittance. This toil is exacting to the last degree and his remuneration barely sufficient to provide necessities. He can scarcely keep body and soul together. Is this life? It is almost a sarcasm to name it so! When we have met with persons compelled to sleep upon the bare floor, or who have for many hours been without a morsel to eat, we have said, These poor creatures exist, but they do not live. This saying is true. And so, sometimes, there are Believers who rather exist than live. They are starving. They do not feed upon the promises. They do not enjoy the rich things which Christ has stored up in the Covenant of Grace. When the Lord Jesus enables them to partake of the fat things full of marrow, and the wines on the lees well-refined, then they not only have life, but they have it more abundantly.

I can still suppose a person who is free, in health and in the enjoyment of abundance, who needs more life. He is mean and despiseda pariah and a castaway. He has none to love him or look up to him with respect. He does not even respect himself! He slinks along as if the mark of Cain were upon him. He has forgotten hope and bid farewell to love. You pity such a man every time you think of him. To possess the love and esteem of our fellows is necessary if we would live. When under conviction of sin a man has felt himself to be less than nothing, a sinner unworthy to lift his eyes to Heaven, a leper fit to be shut up among the unclean, or as a dead man, forgotten and out of mindthen, I tell you by experiencehe finds it a mighty addition to his life when the Lord Jesus lifts him up from the dunghill and puts him among princes, even the princes of His people!

Brothers and Sisters, to know that you are no longer a slave, but a son, an heir of Heaven, a joint heir with Jesus Christ for whom the saints are companions and to whom the angels are servitorsthis is to have life more abundantly! Is it not? I have thus hastily hinted at some of the points in which increased life reveals itself. I will now set forth the same subject in another way. I would lay before you seven particulars in which Christians should seek after more abundant life. First, let them desire more stamina. An embankment is to be thrown up, or a cutting to be dug out. You need laborers. Here are your spades, your picks and your wheelbarrowsonly men are required. Look, a number of persons offer themselves for hire. They are very thin, they have singularly bright eyes, sunken cheeks and hollow churchyard coughsthey are a choice company from the Consumptive Hospital!

Will you hire them? Why do you look so dubious? These men have life. Oh, yes, you say, but I wish they had it more abundantlythey cannot do such work as I have to offer them. We must send these poor men away, they must go to the doctor and be taken care of. Look yonder another band of rough, stalwart fellows! These men will suit your purpose. Look at their ruddy faces, their broad shoulders, their mighty limbs hand them the picks and the spades and the barrows and you will see what British workers can do! What is the difference between the two sets of menthese laborers and those consumptives?

Why the difference lies in the presence or absence of stamina in their constitutions! There is a somethingwe cannot exactly say what it is, perhaps the physician himself cannot put his finger upon itbut the one set of men without it are weak, and the others with it are full of force! Our Lord Jesus has come that, in a spiritual sense, we may have stamina, may have a well-founded, well-furnished, well-established, confirmed and vigorous life so that we may be capable of arduous service and powerful action! He would have us walk without weariness and run without fainting. He would have us quit ourselves like men and be strong.

Beloved, do you not see how great a difference there is between some Christian men and others? Are not some of them spiritual invalids? They believe, but their favorite prayer is, Lord, help our unbelief! They hope, but fear is almost as fully in possession of their hearts. They have love to Christ, but they often sing

*Do I love the Lord or not?*

*Am I His or am I not?*   
They need medicine and nursing. Give them any work to do for the Lord and how soon they grow weary! Discourage them a little and they are in despair! Oh that the Spirit of God would give them life more abundantly! I am afraid that a very large proportion of Christian men in this day are on the sick list. They are in a decline from need of deep-seated principle and sound vitality of godliness, which is what I mean by stamina.

It is sad to see how some professing Christians are led astray by any error which is plausibly put before them. If all Christians were alike, then Popery might easily become the universal religion of the country, for they have no Protestant principle, no grounding in doctrine, no firmness in the faith! They believe, but they know not why or what, and cannot give a reason for the hope which is in them. It is to be feared that they do not profess the Truth of God because others go this way and that, and some eloquent preacher wins their affection and becomes their oracle. They have not the stuff in them of which martyrs are made. They have no grit in their nature, no decision, no tenacity of belief, no firmness of grip!

Consequently, whenever persecuting times come over this land, they will be our weakness. We shall have to look after such puny camp followers and put them in the rearor the enemy will make sad havoc among them. Those who have life more abundantly are good soldiers of Jesus Christ. They have learned to stand fast in the Truth, and by the blessing of God they are more than a match for the teachers of error, for they know what they know and are able to put to silence the fair speeches of deceivers. They are not carried away with every wind of doctrine, but abide in the Truth of God as they have been taught. They cry, O God, my heart is fixed! They are strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.

I pray that every member of this Church may be a man of inward staminanot one of those spiritual babies whom we have to be looking after every day and feeding with spiritual spoon victuals every Sundaybut men who, by the blessing of God, have got something in them which they know the value of, and which they could not give up if all the world should tempt or threaten them! I compared such strong Believers to navigators and I shall not withdraw the comparison, for we need men who can say to the mountains, Be you removed, and to the valleys, Be you exalted. It is by such agents that the Lord will make straight in the wilderness a highway for His march of mercy.

In a second sense we have life more abundantly by the enlargement of the sphere of our life. To some forms of human life the range is very narrow. Wordsworths farmer had no great abundance of life, for

*The primrose by the rivers brim   
A yellow primrose was to him,   
And nothing more.*

To plow and sow, and reap and mow, were his philosophy. The seasons preached no sacred homilies to him. The birds sang, but he would have been as much pleased if they had been silent. The hills were a weariness to climb and the view from their summit he thought nothing of. His soul was inside his smock frock and his corduroys, and never wished to go beyond them.

Nor in the fields, alone, are there such beings. Our streets swarm with men in broadcloth of the same race, to whom the music of the spheres means the clink of sovereignsand whose choice quotations relate to the price of stocks and changes of the market. Over the Exchange we read, The earth is the Lords and the fullness thereof, but they read it, This earth is our God and the fullness thereof is our all. The souls of such men live like squirrels in cages, and each day their wheel revolvesit is all the world they know. Jesus Christ has come to give His people a wider, broader life than this!

True, there are many men upon whom Christ has never looked, whose life traverses wider areas than those which content the baser sort. Such men map out the stars and fathom the seathey read the mysterious story of the rocks and of the ages past. They are deep in philosophy and force their way into the secret chambers where the immature principles of things are nestling. They have a life which is bounded only by time and space. But, Beloved, when Jesus comes, He enlarges the sphere of the most capacious mind and makes the greatest intellect to feel that it was but cabined, cribbed, confined, until He set it free. Beyond time and space does Jesus lead us! The life which He has given us has been tossed upon the stormy sea of sin and has descended into the deeps of the tremendous ocean of terror.

We have been like Jonah at the bottom of the mountains, where the earth with her bars seemed about us forever. The Grace of our pardoning God has now set us on a rock and given us to behold the paradise of pardon! What a blessed thing it is to be forgiven, to be dear to the Fathers heart and to feel the Fathers kiss! This is a new world to usto live as they live who live at home with Godto see His smile and feast upon His love! This is a life of no mean dimensions, for we dwell in God and are in fellowship with the Infinite. We are no longer shut up to self, but we hold conversation with the spirits before the Throne of God and commune with all the saints redeemed by blood!

Now we have seen those mysteries which were before hidden from our eyes. The path which the eagles eyes have not seen we have gazed upon, and the way which the lions whelp has not trod we have traversed! We have entered into the mysteries of the invisible and have stood within the veil! We were as little birds within their shells, but the Lord has broken our prison and His Spirit has led us into all Truth and shown us that which was hid from ages and from generations. In this sense we have life more abundantly.

Thirdly, our life in Christ becomes more abundant as our powers are brought into exercise. I suppose all the powers of the man are in the child, but many of them are dormant and will only be exercised when life is more abundant. None of us know what we may be, we are but in our infancy. Christ has come to give us a fuller life than we have yet attained. Look at the Apostles! Before Pentecost they were mere junior scholars, only fit to occupy the lower forms. They were often ambitious and contentious among themselvesbut when Jesus had given them the Spirit, what different men they were! Would you believe that the Peter of the Gospels could be the same person as the Peter of the Acts? Yet he was the same man! Pentecost had developed in him new powers.

When I hear him saying, I know not the Man, and a few weeks after see him standing up in the midst of the Parthians, Medes, and Elamites, boldly preaching Christ, I ask, What has happened to this man? And the reply is, Christ has given him life more abundantly and he has developed in himself powers which were concealed before! Beloved, you pray, yes,

but if God gives you more life, you will pray as prevalently as Elijah! Even now you seek after holiness, but if you have life more abundantly, you will walk before the Lord in glorious uprightness as Abraham did! I know that you praise the Lord, but if the more abundant life fills you, you will rival the angels in their songs! I repeat what I have already said to youwe do not know what we may become.

Gladly would I fire you with a holy ambition! Pray to Jesus to make you all you can be. Say to Him, Lord, nurture in me all the Graces, powers and faculties by which I can glorify You. To the fullness of my manhood use me. Send a full stream of life upon me that all my soul may wake up and all that is within me may magnify You. Get all out of me that can possibly come out of such a poor thing as I am. Let Your Spirit work in me to the praise of the glory of Your Grace. I desire, Brethren, for myself and you, that we may be alive all over, for some professors appear to be more dead than alive! Life has only reached a fraction of their manhood! Life is in their hearts, blessed be God for thatbut is only partially in their headsfor they do not study the Gospel nor use their brains to understand its Truths. Life has not touched their silent tongues, nor their idle hands, nor their frost-bitten pockets. Their house is on fire, but it is only at one corner, and the devil is doing his best to put out the flame.

They remind me of a picture I once saw in which the artist had labored to depict Ezekiels vision of the dead bodies in course of resurrection. The bones were coming together and flesh gradually clothing themand he represents one body in which the head is perfectly formed, but the body is a skeletonwhile in another place the body is well covered, but the arms and legs remain bare bones. Some Christians, I say, are much in the same statethey are alive only in partsand in some it must be some very hidden part which is quickened, for little or nothing is to be seen of practical love or zeal. Oh for men who are alive from head to feet! Whose entire existence is full of consecration to Jesus and zeal for the Divine Glorythese have life more abundantly.

Fourthly, an increased degree of energy is intended in the text. We may have the powers, but may not exercise them, and no doubt many men have great spiritual capacities, but they lie still for lack of intensity of purpose. Now, when is a man most alive? Some are so alive when they are in determined pursuit of a favorite purpose. They have formed a resolution and they mean to carry it out. You can see their whole man pressing forward upon the track, all aroused and full of eagerness. Now, the Lord Jesus has furnished us with a purpose which is sure to stimulate us to energetic life, for the love of Christ constrains us.

He has given us a motive and an impulse which we cannot resist and we are in covenant with Him that we will glorify His name so long as we have any being. We are solemnly resolved and earnestly set to seek His honor. This gives an intensity to life which increases its abundance by arousing it all. A man is said to be full of life when he is worked up into excitement and livid with passion. Enthusiasm is life effervescing, life in volcanic eruption. Where there is determined resolve, if you arouse the man by opposition, you will see his whole life come into action. He was quiet enough before, but you have awakened the lion in him! His life was slumbering at ebbnow it is dashing up at flood.

The man is carried right away! In his look and speech he is all alive. And in his actions he is energetic to the last degree. Our Divine Master has aroused the flame of our life by inspiring us with the glorious passion of love to Himself. This provides us with stimulus and impetus. A heart which is wholly surrendered to the love of Jesus is capable of thoughts and deeds to which colder souls must forever be strangers! Energetic, forceful, triumphant life belongs to souls enamored with the Cross and espoused in ardent love to the heavenly Bridegroom!

Abundance of a kind of life is painfully manifest in insane persons. The demoniac in the Scripture burst the chains with which he was bound, for he had unusual strength when the sudden outburst of his rage was on him. Now, if possession by an evil spirit arouses men to an unusual force of life, how much more shall possession by the Divine Spirit gird a man with extraordinary energy! It is not possible for us to tell how potent for good any man among us may become. As the man who was feeble enough before, when he became possessed with an evil spirit refused to be held in bondage, so the man possessed by the Divine Spirit becomes supernaturally strong and refuses to be the captive of sin or Satan!

Look at Martin Luther! Could you have believed that such a poor monk would shake the Vatican? And yet in his zeal for the Truth of God and hatred of error he did it! Look at other men in other times who have been raised up of God for a special purposewhat abundant life their holy ardor gave them! They were like Samson of old. Go up to Samson, feel his flesh, look at his boneshe is no larger than another man! Though his thighs indicate enormous strength, yet he does not seem so surprisingly superior to others. But wait till the Spirit of God moves him in the camp of Dan, and then woe to the thousands of the Philistines! Look how he piles them heaps upon heaps, while hip and thigh he smites them! See how he takes the pillars of their temple and rocks them to and fro and brings the edifice down upon their heads! The Spirit of God is on the man and He works wondrously! If the Spirit of God shall come upon you, it will make you do greater things than these and achieve loftier victories. Only believe it, and come to Christ, for abundant life is yet to be had.

We will change the line of our thought, and, coming to the fifth point, we will say that abundance of life is often seen in the overflow of enjoyment. On a spring morning, when you walk in the field and see the lambs frisking so merrily, you have said, There is life for you. You see a company of little children, all in excellent healthhow they amuse themselves and what pranks they play! You say, What life there is in those children! Catch one of the little urchins and see if he does not wriggle out of your arms, and you say, Why, he is all life. Just so, and therefore his happiness! In youth there is much life and overflow of spirits. When Israel came out of Egypt, she was young Israel, and how merrily did she smite her timbrels and dance before Jehovah!

When Churches are revived, what life there is in them, and then what singing! Never comes a revival of religion without a revival of singing! As soon as Luthers Reformation comes, the Psalms are translated and sung in all languages! And when Whitfield and Wesley are preaching, then Charles Wesley and Toplady must be making hymns for the people to sing, for they must show their joy, a joy born of life! When the Lord gives you, dear Friend, more life, you also will have more joy. You will no more go moping about the house, or be thought melancholy and dull when the Lord gives you life more abundantly!

I should not wonder but what you will get into the habit of singing at work and humming tunes in your walks. I should not wonder if people ask, What makes So-and-So so happy? What makes his eyes twinkle as with some strange delight? He is poor. He is sick, but how blissful he appears to be! This will be seen, Brothers and Sisters, when you not only have life, but when you have it more abundantly!

Now, sixthly, this is a somewhat peculiar fact, but I think it should not be omitted. The abundance of life will be seen in delicacy of feeling. No doubt there is a very great deal of difference as to the amount of pain which persons suffer under the same operation. There are persons so constituted that you might cut off an arm and they would scarcely feel more than another person would suffer during the drawing of a tooth. There are some, on the other hand, to whom the slightest pain involves a thrill of horror, they are so sensitive. Whether it is an advantage or a disadvantage I cannot tell, but it has certainly been observed by skillful physicians that those persons who have strong mental constitutionswho use their brains a lot and have a fine mental organizationare usually those who suffer most when subjected to pain. There is more life in them of a certain sort, and they are more sensitive for that reason.

Now, when the Lord Jesus Christ gives His people life in its higher forms, they become more capable of pain. The same sin will pain them a hundred times more than it used to doand they will shrink from it with greater anxiety to avoid it. If you are only just a Christian, you may do wrong and you will be penitent. But if you have much life and you do wrong, ah, then your heart will be wrung with anguish and you will loathe yourself before God! The man full of delicate life will not only suffer more, but he has probably more pleasurehe is sensitive to joys unknown to othersand his whole constitution thrills with a pleasure which another but faintly perceives.

The name of Jesus is inexpressibly sweet to those who have abundant life! It is precious if you only have life, but it is beyond all price to those who have very tender hearts which swell with exuberant life. I have met with some Christians who say they cannot understand Solomons Song, and I have often wondered at it, myself. That is a test book for sensitive soulsand when men have much of the life of lovethat sacred canticle suits their feelings better than any other book in the Bible, because it is a tender book of sacred love and glows like altar coals! Oh, I pray you, have much of the tenderness of the intense life!

Nor is this all I mean by delicacy. I mean this. There is a delicacy of hands which a man may acquire by long practice which renders that wonderful member a great worker of feats. The fingers and palms are all life and can execute manipulations of a most surprising kind. Even so, the hands of educated faith can not only grasp but handle the good Word of Life. When gifted with this faculty, we pry into the mysteries of the heart of Jesus as others cannot! The lips, also, can become sensitive. Laura Bridgman learned to read with her lips, the raised lettersblind persons very generally have a wonderful life in the ends of their fingers which others of us have not yet developed. So the Lord would have His people enjoy a sensitively discerning life which shall reveal to them what they would never have felt and known. Oh, when your soul is blest with holy delicacy! When every part of your nature has become full and brimming over with intense sensitiveness! And, when you have an educated sensitiveness to the Divine mind and will, then are you getting where Christ would have you to be!

Once more, this delicacy shows itself in a marvelous apprehensiveness and keenness of perception which had not been there before, The Indian will put his ear to the ground and say, There is an enemy on the way, while you cannot hear a sound. When he comes to a turn in the forest, There is the trail, he says, to the right, though you cannot see that a stick has been moved, or that a single blade of grass has been bent. His faculties are full of life and therefore he has a better ear and a better eye than you. Remember the story of the Siege of Lucknow? When the Highland woman said, Dinna you hear it?dinna you hear it? She could hear the sound of the Highland music when it was far away. I do not doubt she heard it, though others did nother ear was quicker then theirs.

Jesus would have us quick of understanding in the fear of the Lord so that we shall say, He is comingHe is coming! I can hear His footsteps! And the world will say, You are mad! Let us eat, and drink, and be married and given in marriage. We want to be able to say, I can hear the Bridegrooms voice, when others will say, Not so, it is mere imagination. We need eyes which will see the land which is very far off so that the golden gates of our heavenly home shall be visible to us. Thus shall we have life more abundantly.

The seventh point is thislife, when it is in abundance, becomes supreme. Some races of men have physical life, but have it not abundantly. For instance, the Red Indian and the Australian races have life, but after awhile they perish and die from off the face of the earth, while other races of more vigorous life battle with their surroundings and survive. Christians should have such abundant life that their circumstances should not be able to overcome themsuch abundant life that in poverty they are rich, in sickness they are in spiritual health, in contempt they are full of triumphand in death full of glory!

Glorious is that life which defies circumstances! Christ has given to us, Brothers and Sisters, a supreme life, supreme in its tenacityit cannot be destroyed, none can cut its thread. Who shall separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord? Neither things present, nor

things to come shall ever avail to do this. We have life so abundantly that it triumphs over all. What I desire for us, beyond everything is to have this life so abundant that it may be supreme over our entire selves. There is death within us and that death struggles with our life. Our life has dashed Death down and holds it beneath its feetbut tremendous is the struggle of Death to rise again and get the mastery.

Brethren, we must hold Death down, we must grip him as with bands of iron and hold him downand plant the knee of prayer upon his bosom and press him to the earth. We must not suffer sin to have dominion over us, but life more abundant must, through Divine Grace, triumph over inward corruption! There is yet much beyond you, Christian Brethren, but that much is attainable. You are not to sit down and say, We must be always captives to the flesh, to yield it obedience. Beloved, you may overcome! Gods Grace being in you, you may overcome!

You shall not, this side of the grave, congratulate yourselves upon perfectionsuch boasting be far from you! But in the strength of God, the life of God which is in you may be increased and shall be increased, for Christ has come to increase it, till Death shall be trod down and you shall be more than conquerors through Him that has loved you!

My time has gone, the subject is too large for me. Only this I conclude withif you need life, you must get it from Christ. If you need more life, you must go to the same place. Do not look to Christ for the beginnings and then somewhere else for the ending! Christ has come that you might have more life. Come to Him by faith. Do not look to ceremonies or outward services or anything else for growth in Grace, apart from Jesus, but fly to Him and He will give it to youand you shall be rich to all intents of bliss.

God grant that all the members of this Church may have this great blessing for Christs sake. Amen.   
**PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMONJOHN 10.** HYMN FROM OUR OWN HYMN BOOK46 (VERSION II) 798, 818.  
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WHOSE GOODNESS NEVER FAILS   
NO. 2919

A SERMON   
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, JANUARY 19, 1905.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, OCTOBER 1, 1876.

**I am the Good Shepherd: the Good Shepherd gives His life for the sheep. John 10:11.**

THESE words were spoken when our Lord was among His own people. Perhaps as you hear them there comes a whisper in your soul, I wonder whether that is true now? If the Lord Jesus in His flesh were here at this moment, in the midst of us, and if He said, I am the Good Shepherd, we might find it easy to believe it. But He has gone. What assurance have we that it is the same now, when He is no longer among us? I answer, Dear Brothers and Sisters, we know it is true because Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever. That in itself were enough, but we have the added assurance that in this place He meant to say it was so, for, if you notice, He was evidently looking to the future when He said, I am, seeing that He added, The Good Shepherd gives His life for the sheep, when as yet He had not done it. There was an interval between the time when He said these words and the laying down of His life upon the Cross. As He went on further in His discourse and said, Other sheep I have which are not of this fold: them also, I must bring, and they shall hear My voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd,

He was looking to the future you see. He spoke of HimselfI was almost going to say in momentary unconsciousness of His Deity without meaning, perhaps, to speak as God. He says, I Am, using the very name of Jehovah and speaking of the future as though it were present. It was as if He had said, I am the Good Shepherd and I am going to gather in the wandering people that, as yet, are not of My flock. So that, the meaning and force of the I am, evidently runs right on till He has gathered in all the other sheep that were not, when He spoke the words, included in His fold. Yes, He means you to understand that He is speaking the same words as much to you, Brothers and Sisters, as to Peter and James and John. To you He is saying, I am the Good Shepherd: the Good Shepherd gives His life for the sheep.

First, let us look at our great Masters claim, I am the Good Shepherd. Then we shall observe the proof of it. That, though it had not been completed when He uttered these words at the first, is now completeHe gives His life for the sheep. When we have talked rapidly on these two points, let us try and chew the cud and see if there is not something to be found here of very practical use to us. On these Communion nights the time is very shorttherefore I must try to speak without many words upon any one point.

I. First, then, I say, let us look at CHRISTS CLAIM, I am the Good Shepherd. He means us to understand three things. It is as if He said, I am a Shepherd, and then, I am a Good Shepherd, and, last of all, I am the Good Shepherdthat Good Shepherd who is spoken of in the Old Testament.

I am a Shepherd, He says first. That is to say, He stands in the same relationship to His people as a shepherd does to his flock. He owns His peopleevery one of them belong to Him. He prizes them because they are Hissets a value upon each of them. He takes care of them, remembering them both night and day. His heart is never off them and because of His inward love there is an outward goodness which He constantly extends to them. He protects them from the wolf. He guards them from a thousand dangers. He sees to the supply of all their needs. He guides them in the right way. He brings them back when they wander. He strengthens them when they are weak. He carries them when they are too feeble to go. He sees that they are a weak flock, a silly flock and a wandering flocktherefore is He their strength, their wisdom, their righteousness, their all. No creature, perhaps, has more diseases than a sheepexcept a man. No creature is more dependent upon another and higher creature than a sheep is, for it seems only half itself till it is under the care of man. And none of us, Brothers and Sisters, can be said to be less dependent than the sheep are, for we are not true men till we get near to Christ. We are without life and without strength till we find life and strength in Him. As a sheep would be sure to wander and, wandering, would be very likely to wander into a desertwould be sure not to better itselfwould be certain in the end to come to nothingso is it with us. Without Him who is our Shepherd we would wander farther and farther into misery and sinand our ruin would be certain. We are more dependent upon Christ than sheep are upon the shepherd. You see, then, why Christ says, I am a Shepherd. Towards His own people whom He has redeemed with precious blood He stands in the position of a Proprietor, a Leader and Guide, a Father, a Kingall of which may be condensed into this one worda Shepherd.

But He is not only a Shepherd, He is a Good Shepherd, for what He does He does well. Never does He neglect His flock. Not one ever perished because He forgot it. Since He never forgets, not one ever perished at all. He is a Good Shepherd because all that ought to be doneall that can be doneall that may be wished to be done towards His sheepHe does. Never shepherd so intensely threw His heart into His calling as Christ throws His heart and soul into the sacred calling of the Shepherd of Israel. He gives for His people all that He has, yes, He gives Himself! His power is their defense. He lifts up His hand and says, I give to My sheep eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand. His Wisdom is their guidance. His Love is their perpetual shield. His Infinity is their storehouse. His Omniscience is their protection. Human and Divine are You, O Christ, in Your Person, but the Human and the Divine are both alike for Your people. You have a thousand of offices, and You exercise them all on the behalf of Your own flock. Oh, Christ is a Good Shepherd, indeed! He is skilled as well as zealous in the art of shepherdry. He knows all the diseases of the flock, for He, Himself, has felt all their griefs and woes. He has studied human nature oh, how long! He knows it by a personal experience and therefore knows it in such a way as it can be known only by Himself. He is a Good Shepherd. Was there ever imagined one that could be compared to Him?

But then He says, I am the Good Shepherd. Emphasis is to be laid upon the fact that He is supreme and sufficient for all the needs of His people. There have been other shepherds appointed by Him that have, in their measure, been good, but He is the Shepherdthe Great Shepherd of the sheep. He it is of whom we read that when the Chief Shepherd shall appear, then shall we also appear with Him in Glory. None of us are the shepherd. We have to take our little share of the work beneath His eyes and do it for His sake, though never to our own satisfaction. It will be a joy to us, indeed, if He shall be satisfied with us and say, Well done. But all the under shepherds in the world put together are poor things compared with the Head Shepherd of the sheep! He is the Good Shepherd of the sheeppreeminently goodgood beyond all that are good! The Shepherd of the shepherds, as well as the Shepherd of the sheep. Good because the whole company of the faithful, if they have any good in themselves, received it from Him. I am the Good Shepherd.

Now that being the meaning of the words, let us see Christs claim in this chapter. Observe how He works it out. He says, if you notice the verse that comes before the text, The thief comes not but to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. See, then, He is our Good Shepherd because He gives life to His sheep. No shepherd can say about his flock what Christ says about His. I have given all these sheep of Mine the life that they have. What a Good Shepherd must He be! They were dead dead as the dry bones of Ezekiels vision, He says, but I have given them life. Listen to this, you that are the sheep of His pastureyou have spiritual life, but He gave it to you! Lift up your eyes and bless Him that your heart ever came to know what repentance is, what faith is, what prayer is and what praise is, for now that you live unto God, you see that it was He that quickened you. To your Shepherd you owe everything! We are His people and the sheep of His pasture. It is He that made us, He that new-made usnot we ourselves.

Do you notice how He adds, I am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly? So, Beloved, if you now feel cold and dead, I ask you not to look to yourself, or to the pasture in which you are at the moment, or to the under shepherd who seeks to care for you, but to Him, the Chief and Choice Shepherd! He gave you life at first and He will give you more of it, that you may have it abundantly. If there is any one of you whose heart is leaping for joy because the love of God is shed abroad within you by the Holy SpiritBrother, Sister, you have got all that from Him! Bless Him for it! If, on the other hand, another one is mourning because he feels the life within him to be so feebledear Friend, you may have it strengthened by Him who gave it at the first! All the praise and glory must be to your Good Shepherd who is, indeed, good because the very life of His flock is His giftand their increase in life is worked by His Sovereign Power. Oh, how good You are, dear Lord, Author and Source of our very being!

Our Lord shows us His Good Shepherdry further on when He says, He that is a hireling and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flock; and the wolf catches them and scatters the sheep. The hireling flees because he is a hireling, and cares not for the sheep. So see, secondly, the Good Shepherd is good because He cares for the life which He has, Himself, bestowed. First He gives it and then He protects it. The wolf is always around about the fold. When we do not hear him howling, yet we know that he is seeking to find an entrance somewhere. When he gets in, it is said that he comes to kill and to destroyand what can poor sheep do against a wolf if the shepherd is away? And what would you and I do against Satan in the world and in the temptations of the flesh if Christ were away? We would soon fall a prey to the wicked adversary. But our good Master cares for us.

You know that precious promise, I, the Lord, do keep it; I will water it every moment. Lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day? Though the simile is changed, the meaning is the same. Our Saviorour blessed Shepherdby night, though the frost is upon Him, watches His flock. And by day, though the sun lights on Him with its fervent heat, He still watches. His very life seems to be nothing to Him in comparison with the protection of His people. Oh, Brothers and Sisters, what battles our Shepherd has had with the wolf for us! I need not go into the story of our glorious Davids prowess, even for the little lambs of His flock. But He may say truly to His Father, Your servant slew both the lion and the bear because they came and took the lamb out of the flock. Jesus takes even the feeblest from between the teeth of the foe and will not suffer one to perish because He cares for us! You know the meaning of caring for us, do you not? Well, I do not think that I can explain it except by asking you to think of what it is to care for your children. That is how the Lord Jesus cares for you. As for the children, poor little dears, they cannot take care of themselvesnor can you, though you try hard to do it. And as your little children leave their cares with you and you care for them, you may leave your cares with your Shepherd. It is a very comprehensive thought. Your care springs out of your love and that love makes you think of the welfare of your family. But your care is not all thinkingyou are actively engaged for them, too, and before they even know their needs, you supply them. In fact, they hardly know they have any needs because you never leave them unsupplied long enough to let them discover that they need anything. You meet all their needs by caring for them. Even so does Jesus, the Good Shepherd, care for His people. He gives them life, increases that life, cares for that life and protects it from all harm!

But just read on and you will see still further what a Good Shepherd He is. I am the Good Shepherd, and know My sheep and am known of Mine. As the Father knows Me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down My life for the sheep. That is to say, As much as I and My Father know each other, so do I and My people know each other. He is the Good Shepherd because He lives among His sheep, He treats them as His children and so cares for them that He actually has communion with them. Sheep understand a good deal of what the shepherd says. There is a shepherds language which you and I do not understand, but the sheep do. They know his whistle. They know his frown. They know the motion of his hands. He has a language which he speaks to them. When Jesus Christ says, I know My sheep, it means not only that He knows who are His and who are not, but that He knows all about each one. He knows your trouble at this instant, dear Friendyour infirmity, your sin, your sorrow. He knows you a great deal better than you know yourself and He sums you up and understands you much better than the dearest friend you have. He never misunderstands youHe knows you so thoroughly. Oh, it is a wonderful word, thatone of those great deeps into which I drop my plumb line but cannot find the bottomI know My sheep. It means that He owns them. He knows them so that in the Presence of God and of the holy angels, He will say, Yes, those are My sheep. What? That one with the torn wool? That one with the lame foot? That one with a split ear? There is not much beauty in any of them. Yet the Shepherd will not be ashamed of even the least. It is Mine, He says, and though it is not beautiful to any besides, it is beautiful to Me, for I bought it with My blood and I have fought the lion on its behalf and, therefore, it is very dear to My soul. He knows His sheep. A man can scarcely enter into the feeling of a sheep, can he? And yet Jesus Christ, though He is God, makes a stoop of condescension and enters into the feeling of the poorest and the most ignorantyes, and the most sinful of all His children! Bone of their bone does He become, so intimate is His union with them.

But then He says, I am known of Mine. Now we might think that a sheep cannot know much about the shepherd, but they do. They get to love him. Among the eastern flocks there are often sheep that are peculiarly attached to the shepherd. They always follow at his heels they never seem to care so much for the pasture as they do for him. They are always first and, I may add, generally fattest, for they that keep nearest to him are pretty sure to get the sweetest bits of grass. And so, in the Church of God there are some that keep near the Shepherd and that know Him well. And all His people know something of Him. What a condescension this isthat the Good Shepherd so comes and lives among His people that He not merely knows

them, but teaches them to know Him. Blessed be His name for this! Try whether you cannot drink in the glorious meaning of this deep mystery!

But yet fartherand to close this pointour Lord is a Good Shepherd because He gathers all His sheep. Read the 16th verse. And other sheep I have which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear My voice: and there shall be one fold and one shepherd. While His eyes were on the Jews, His heart was on the Gentiles, too. He is a Shepherd who is not content with the ninety-nine, but when He counts the flock over and knows there ought to be a hundred, His heart begins to care for the lost oneand He folds the 99 and lets them rest. But, as for Himself, He gets away upon the mountains bleak side so that He may find the lost one. Ah, my Lord, You are a Good Shepherd, indeeda much better Shepherd than any among Your ChurchYour workers are! We often forget the wandering one. We get a church together. Perhaps the building is full and we have too little missionary enterprise to look after the masses that are in ignorance. We see England bathed in the Light of the Gospel, but feel little zeal for sending the Word to the distant heathen lands. It ought not to be! It is not so with Christ, for if He has an elect one, be he where he may, He knows him and His eyes are on himand He must bring him in!

I wonder whether there is someone here tonight that He must bring in? You did not think when you came in to the Tabernacle that Christ was seeking you, but, perhaps My Lord Jesus has bought you with His precious blood and His Father gave you to Him from before the foundations of the world! And perhaps He brought you here that you may know this and come to Him tonight. Thus says the Lord, I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn you. Come, poor Wanderercome to the Good Shepherds feet and lay yourself down all helpless and forlorn! He will put you on His shoulders and carry you back rejoicing! Is He not a Good Shepherd, giving life, sustaining life, defending life, knowing life, teaching life to know Him and going after poor wanderers to bring them to Himself? That is Christs claim.

II. Now I can say but very little, in the second place, about CHRISTS PROOF OF HIS CLAIM, for I have already proved it. I am the Good Shepherd, He says. The Good Shepherd gives His life for the sheep. Christ has given His life for us many times over. If I read the text without referring it to the one act of His death, it seems to me to be very full of meaning. In Heaven He gave His life for them. He had a life in Heaven, such as we may guess at from a distance, but can never fully understand. He dwelt as God inhabiting the praises of eternity but you know He gave up that life for us. He laid aside

*That most Divine array,   
And wrapped His godhead in a veil   
Of our inferior clay.*

To leave the harps and hymns of Heaven for the sorrows and sins of earth was giving up His life for His sheep.

When He was here, you know while He lived on earth He gave His life for the sheep, for every moment of that life was spent for them. There was a connection between His private life in the carpenters shop and their salvationan intimate connection. In His public life what did He strain all His powers for, but thisthat He might seek and save that which was lost! For His people were those prayers on the cold mountain side at night! For His people those earnest pleas in the midst of the crowd by day! For them the weary journeys! For them the hunger and the thirst! For them the homelessness which forbade Him to have a place where to lay His head! He gave His life up to them as long as He was here.

Then one dark night did He give His life for His sheep in the sense, I doubt not, intended here. On that dread nightyou know itthat night to be remembered, for it was the night of Gods Passover, the Shepherd went round His flock and the sheep were sleeping, but there came the wolf and the Shepherd knew his snarl. The sheep, all startled at the howls, were scatteredthey forsook the Shepherd and fled. That night He had enough to do to meet the wolf. But He stood at the fold to watch the sheep and let them all go in safety. And then He confronted the grim monster who leaped into the fold thirsty for the blood of the sheep, but the Shepherd caught him and then came a desperate struggle between the two. The shepherd did bleed and sweat, did bleed and sweat and bleed again. Great drops of blood fell to the ground, but He held the monster fast and firm. Our Great Shepherd was wounded on His head, on His shoulders, on His hands and feetand one awful fang tore open His side, but He held the wolfheld Him till He had slain him! Then, dashing down his body to the ground and putting His foot upon him, He shouted, It is finished! But in the same moment, the Great Shepherd fell. In slaying our foe He had, Himself, been slain! But scarcely had the Shepherd touched the earth than, as if reanimated, up He sprang again and said, I lay down My life that I might take it again; therefore does My Father love Me because I lay down My life for the sheep. You know that story and need not that I tell it again at any length. But, oh, love Him! Love Him! Kiss His wounds! Worship this blessed Shepherd who has conquered your foe and delivered you from the jaw of the lion and from the paw of the bearand set you forever safely in His fold! The Good Shepherd gives His life for the sheep.

He is still giving His life . The life that is in the Man, Christ Jesus, He is always giving for us. It is for us He lives and because He lives, we also live. He lives to plead for us. He lives to represent us in Heaven. He lives to rule Providence for us. He lives to prepare our mansions for us, where we are going. He lives that He may come again and receive us to Himself, that where He is, there we may also be. Truly the Good Shepherd has proved His claimHe gives His life for the sheep.

III. Now let us finish by trying to GET SOME JUICE OUT OF THESE THINGS, as I hope that we have done as we have gone along.   
First, dear Friends, if the Good Shepherd gives life, let us try and get life abundantly. Sometimes I wish I could leave off preaching any sermons and do as I have seen the sergeant do when he is drilling a lot of men. He only says a word, First position, and they take up the position! Second position, and they take up that position. He has not a lot of eloquent talk, but he just tells them what to do. Now then, try if you can, to take up your position. More life is to be had. Breathe the prayer, Good Shepherd, You have given me lifegive it to me more abundantly! May I know You more, love You more, trust You more, serve You more and be more like You. Quicken me, O Lord, according to Your word.   
That will do. Go on. Take another position. If He is the Good Shepherd, let us feel like sheep who have a Good Shepherd. How do they feel? I do not think I know a sight that is more peaceable and happy than that of flocks at eventide when they have been gathered into a good pasture, or are folded among some prolific root crop. They have eaten as much as they can and they lie down on the grass to rest. No care enters their woolly heads. They have nothing to fret about. They might have if they could worry about the future as some of us do. Will there be turnips enough tomorrow? When there is dry weather, will there be grass enough? There is that butcherwhen will he come? If they could understand me, I could suggest no end of cares and doubts and fears to sheep! But it does not enter into their constitution. I wish it did not enter into yours and mine! The shepherd cares for the sheep.   
Dear Brother, dear Sister, will Jesus Christ care for you? I have heard of men that have kept sheep and cattle who have let them starve. You do not often hear of such things, for self-interest leads men to cherish their sheep. But I never heard of Christ neglecting any part of His flock. Come, then, let us feel quite quiet in His care. May the Lord help us to be so! Away with your doubts and fears and cares. There, begone, begone, all of it! What is the use of it? It never gave me any pasture. O care and anxiety and fretfulness, you did never feed me, nor strengthen me, nor help me! You have worried me and weakened me, but you have done nothing else. Begone! As for us, Brothers and Sisters, if Christ is our Shepherd, let us begin to say, I shall not want. He makes me to lie down in green pastures: He leads me beside the still water. He restores my soul: He leads me in the paths of righteousness for His names sake. Yes, though I walk through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, I will fear no evil, for You are with me: Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. That is a happy religion, is it not? And it is a very important thing that all Christians should be happy. The enjoyments of Believers lie very near their holiness. The joy of the Lord is your strength. Now, Brothers and Sisters, do not begin behaving like dogs, but try and be such sheep as you ought to be with such a Shepherd!   
Next, let us be His own. Jesus Christ says of the hireling, whose own the sheep are not, for he leaves the sheep, and in that He implies that when He tends the sheep, they are His own. Come, then, let us be His own! Brother, Sister, have you ever given yourself up wholly to Christ altogether to Christ? I am afraid we sing a great many things that are not true. I have heard you say   
*Yet if I might make some reserve,   
And duty did not call,   
I love My God with zeal so great,   
That I would give Him all.*

I leave it to your own conscience whether you get anywhere near that anywhere near it at all. We say that we belong to Christ and we are not our own, but bought with a price. Do we live as if it were true? Come, let us take up the position of being altogether Christs own sheep. If the sheep could speak it would say, There is not a fragment of wool on my back that belongs to me: there is no part of me that is my own. I belong to my shepherd, and I am glad to have it so. You belong to Christ as absolutely as that.

The next thought to take up is, let us try to know more of Him. He says, I know My sheep and am known of Mine. Let us then know Him better. You know how you come to know a man by getting into his company, by hearing his words, by marking his actions, by telling him your secrets and letting him tell you his secrets. Come and know Christ in this fashion. Let your head be on His bosom and your whole self come into communion with His blessed Self. Ask for that Grace tonight while you are around the table. Say, Good Master, You know me. Let me know You. Oh, let my communion with You be as nearly as possible equal to that which You have with Your Father and Your Father with You, that we may be one together.

The next and last is, let us love Him more. Did you notice how He says in the 17th verse, Therefore does My Father love Me, because I lay down My life that I might take it again. Let us make another verse and say, Therefore do My people love Me because I lay down My life. Jesus did not say that, but let us make it true. Oh, how we ought to love our dear and ever-blessed Lord! Do you feel love stirring in your bosom? Perhaps you say, I wish I did feel it more. I am glad you say that. I think that is often as far as we can get. I do not, I cannot love You, O Lord, as I

ought *Yet I love You and adore   
Oh for Grace to love You more!*   
I am persuaded that the man who loves Christ best is just the man who   
is most discontented with his own love. When a man lives wholly for   
Christ, he is the very man who still looks for something yet beyond and   
desires to serve Christ still more. Now, indulge your love tonight! Sit still   
and meditate on His loveenjoy His love! Say to yourself   
*I am so glad that Jesus loves me!   
Even me!*   
And then add, I am so glad that I can say that I love Him. He knows all  
things and He knows that I love Him. Just let those two seas meet.  
Seas, did I say? I must not say that. Let the little brook of your love to  
Him flow into the mighty ocean of His love to youand so let them blend   
and join! I have seen the Thames flowing on in its majestic course toward  
the sea and every here and there a little hill drops into view for a while,  
but the meadows stretch between. The mighty river and the brook go side   
by side, but as they flow on, at last they melt into one. So let my poor  
souls love tonight flow in the same course with the great love of Jesus till   
at last it melts into His and life becomes, Not I, but Christ in me and   
my soul be forever content!   
Now I have done, but I hope the Lord Jesus has not done. We are going to hold the Communion service and there are many of you that are going away, and going away rightly, too, because you could not come to the Table of the Lord without being hypocrites. You know that you do not love Jesus and have not trusted in Him. As you go away I pray the Good Shepherd to go after youand before you reach your houses tonight I pray that He may get such a grip of you with those strong but tender hands of His, that He may never let you go till He brings you, also, into His fold! If not here, yet somewhere else, for I am sure that in this house He has other sheep which are not yet of His fold, whom He must bring that there may be one flock and one Shepherd! May He bring you in tonight, for His mercys sake. Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **PSALM 23; ISAIAH 40:9-11; EZEKIEL 34:11-25.**

We shall view Christ in the office of a Shepherd and the first passage we read sets before us faith proving Christ in that officeaccepting Him, trusting Him, following Him.

Psalm 23:1-2. The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me to lie down in green pastures: He leads me beside the still waters. Can you say that for yourself, dear Friend? There is the sweetness of it. The words in themselves are noble, but it is the experimental acquaintance with their meaning which is the real honey of life. If you can use these words and lay the emphasis upon the personal pronoun, you are one of the happiest out of Heaven!

3-6. He restores my soul: He leads me in the paths of righteousness for His names sake. Yes, though I walk through the Valley of the Shadow of Death I will fear no evil: for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies: You anoint my head with oil, my cup runs over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever. There is the Believer realizing Christ in that gracious office as the Shepherd of His people. Now let us see how our glorious Shepherd is set forth in prophecy.

Isaiah 40:9-11. O Zion that brings good tidings, get you up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, that brings good tidings, lift up your voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God! Behold the Lord God will come with a strong hand, and His arm shall rule for Him: behold His reward is with Him, and His work before Him. He shall feed His flock like a shepherd: He shall gather the lamb with His arms, and carry them in His bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young. This office of Christ makes glad the hearts of those who have to preach it! To lift up our voice and to proclaim to others the good tidings is grateful service. It is the joy of the Church that Jesus, the Lord God Almighty, is strong for the defense of His people and, at the same time, tender towards their infirmities. Let us rejoice and be glad in Him!

Now let us hear what our Shepherd says by the mouth of the Prophet Ezekiel. After He has been complaining of the hireling shepherdsthe false ones who sought the fleece and not the flock, who did not feed the sheep nor care for them, nor had any tenderness toward them, He goes on to show what He will do for His own.

Ezekiel 34:11,12. For thus says the Lord God, Behold I, even I, will both search My sheep, and seek them out. As a shepherd seeks out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so, will I seek out My sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day. What a glorious promise! Christs elect run here and there in the darkness of their ignorance, into sin of every kind but He will find every one of them! There is no jungle so thick but Christ will track His own through it. There are no bogs of sin so dangerous but Christ will traverse them and find every lamb of His flock! And if through your backslidings, O people of God, you have wandered far from Him, yet He perceives you with those eyes which sees in the dark as well us in the lightand He will follow after you and bring you back. Blessed be His name!

13, 15. And I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land, and feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers, and in all the inhabited places of the country. I will feed them in a good pasture, and upon the high mountains of Israel shall their fold be: there they shall lie in a good fold, and in a fat pasture shall they feed upon the mountains of Israel. I will feed My flock, and I will cause them to lie down, says the Lord God. A beautiful image of that peace of mind, that complete repose that perfect contentment, that sweet satisfaction, that Divine fullness which is the work of the Spirit of God in the hearts of Believers when they are gathered to Christ!

16. I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick: but I will destroy the fat and the strong; I will feed them with judgment. It is a sweet thing, then, to be one of the needy ones of the flock because you see all the promises run that way. But, if we feel ourselves to be very strong and great, we are in a dangerous state, for then there is no promise for us. The only word concerning us isI will destroy the fat and the strong.

17, 18. And as for you, O My flock, thus says the Lord God; Behold, I judge between cattle and cattle, between the rams and the he goats. Seems it a small thing unto you to have eaten up the good pasture, but you must tread down with your feet the residue of your pastures? And to have drunk of the deep waters, but you must foul the residue with your feet? Truly there are some vain-glorious Christians who not only will not receive the Gospel, themselves, but actually find fault with it, insinuate doubts into the minds of others and prevent the simple-minded people of God feeding on the pasture which the Lord provides for them! See one of the evils of being great and strong in your own esteemyou are pretty sure to despise the very pasture which was quite good enough for you when you were weaker and feebler. That very Truth of Jesus Christ which was marrow and fatness to you when you were hungry, comes to be despised as the manna was by the children of Israel when they called it light bread. There is no savor in it that you should desire it. Blessed, blessed hunger that makes the Word of God to be always sweet!

19-25. And as for My flock, they eat that which you have trodden with your feet and they drink that which you have fouled with your feet. Therefore thus says the Lord God unto them; Behold, I, even I, will judge between the fat cattle and between the lean cattle. Because you have thrust with side and with shoulder, and pushed all the diseased with your horns till you have scattered them abroad; Therefore will I save My flock, and they shall no more be a prey, and I will judge between cattle and cattle. And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even My servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd. And I the LORD will be their God, and My servant David a prince among them; I the LORD have spoken it. And I will make with them a covenant of peace, and will cause the evil beasts to cease out of the land: and they shall dwell safely in the wilderness, and sleep in the woods. What perfect assurance for Christs flock when, in the very place where the wolf once ranged, they shall be able to lie down and sleep in perfect safety! Happy people, with all their weaknesses, who have Divine Strength to be their protection! O my Soul, seek no other strength than this, but learn the Apostles logic and his true Christian philosophy so that, like he, trusting in the Mighty Shepherd, you will be able to say When I am weak, then am I strong.

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PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #1877 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

OUR OWN DEAR SHEPHERD

NO. 1877

**A SERMON INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS-DAY, JANUARY 3, 1886, DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON THURSDAY EVENING, NOVEMBER 20, 1885.

**I am the good Shepherd, and know My sheep, and am known of Mine.**

**As the Father knows Me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down My life for the sheep.   
John 10:14, 15.**

As the passage stands in the Authorized Version, it reads like a number of short sentences with scarcely any apparent connection. Even in that form it is precious, for our Lords pearls are priceless even when they are not threaded together. But when I tell you that in the Greek the word, and, is repeated several times and that the translators have had to leave out one of these, ands, to make sense of the passage on their line of translation, you will judge that they are none too accurate in this case. To use many, ands, is after the manner of John, but there is usually a true and natural connection between his sentences. The, and, with him is usually a real golden link and not a mere soundwe need a translation which makes it so. Observe, also, that in our version the word, sheep, is put in italics, to show that it is not in the original. There is no need for this alteration if the passage is more closely rendered.

Hear, then, the text in its natural formI am the good Shepherd and I know My own, and My own know Me, even as the Father knows Me, and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. This reading I have given you is that of the Revised Version. For that Revised Version I have but little care, as a general rule, holding it to be by no means an improvement upon our common Authorized Version. It is a useful thing to have it for private reference, but I trust it will never be regarded as the standard English translation of the New Testament. The Revised Version of the Old Testament is so excellent that I am half afraid it may carry the Revised New Testament upon its shoulders into general use. I sincerely hope that this may not be the case, for the result would be a decided loss. However, that is not my point.

Returning to our subject, I believe that on this occasion, the Revised Version is true to the original. We will, therefore, follow it in this instance and we shall find that it makes most delightful and instructive sense. I am the good Shepherd and I know My own, and My own know Me, even as the Father knows Me, and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. He who speaks to us in these words is the Lord Jesus Christ! To our mind every word of Holy Scripture is precious. When God speaks to us by priest or Prophet, or in any way, we are glad to hear. Though when, in the Old Testament, we meet with a passage which begins with, Thus says the Lord, we feel specially charmed to have the message directly from Gods own mouth, yet we make no distinction between this Scripture and that. We accept it all as Inspired and we are not given to dispute about different degrees and varying modes of Inspiration and all that. The matter is plain enough if learned unbelievers did not mystify it all Scripture is given by Inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness (2 Tim 3:16).

Still, there is to our mind a peculiar sweetness about words which were actually spoken by the Lord Jesus Christ, Himselfthese are as honey in the comb. You have before you, in this text, not that which comes to you by Prophet, priest, or king, but that which is spoken to you by One who is Prophet, Priest and King all in one, even your Lord Jesus Christ! He opens His mouth and speaks to you. You will open your ears and listen to Him if you are, indeed, His own.

Observe here, also, that we have not only Christ for the Speaker, but we have Christ for the Subject. He speaks and speaks about Himself. It were not seemly for you, or for me, to extol ourselves, but there is nothing more comely in the world than for Christ to commend Himself. He is other than we are, something infinitely above us and is not under rules which apply to us fallible mortals. When He speaks forth His own Glory, we feel that His speech is not vain-gloryno, rather, when He praises Himself, we thank Him for so doing and admire the lowly condescension which permits Him to desire and accept honor from such poor hearts as ours! It were pride for us to seek honor of menit is humility in Him to do so seeing He is so great an One that the esteem of beings so inferior as we are cannot be desired by Him for His own sake, but for ours! Of all our Lords words, those are the sweetest in which He speaks about Himself. Even He cannot find another theme which can excel that of Himself.

My Brothers and Sisters, who can speak of Jesus but Himself? He masters all our eloquence. His perfection exceeds our understanding! The light of His excellence is too bright for us, it blinds our eyes! Our Beloved must be His own mirror. None but Jesus can reveal Jesus! Only He can see Himself and know Himself, and understand Himself and, therefore, none but He can reveal Himself! We are most glad that in His tenderness to us He sets Himself forth by many choice metaphors and instructive emblems by which He would make us know some little of that love which passes knowledge. With His own hands, He fills a golden cup out of the river of His own infinity and hands it to us that we may drink and be refreshed. Take, then, these words as being doubly refreshing because they come directly from the Well-Beloveds own mouth and contain rich Revelations of His own all-glorious Self. I feel that I must read them againI am the good Shepherd and I know My own, and My own know Me, even as the Father knows Me, and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep.

In this text there are three matters about which I shall speak. First, I see, here, complete character. I am the good Shepherd. He is not a half shepherd, but a shepherd in the fullest possible sense. Secondly, I see complete knowledge, and I know My own and My own know Me, even as the Father knows Me, and I know the Father. Thirdly, here is complete sacrifice. How preciously that sentence winds up the whole, and I lay down My life for the sheep! He goes the full length to which sacrifice can go! He lays down His soul in the place of His sheep so the words might not be incorrectly translated. He goes the full length of self-sacrifice for His own.

I. First, then, here is COMPLETE CHARACTER. Whenever the Savior describes Himself by any emblem, that emblem is exalted and expanded and yet it is not able to bear all His meaning. The Lord Jesus fills out every type, figure, and characterand when the vessel is filled, there is an overflow. There is more in Jesus, the Good Shepherd, than you can pack away in a shepherd. He is the Good, the Great, the Chief Shepherdbut He is much more. Emblems to set Him forth may be multiplied as the drops of the morning, but the whole multitude will fail to reflect all His brightness! Creation is too small a frame in which to hang His likeness. Human thought is too contracted, human speech too feeble to set Him forth to the fullest. When all the emblems in earth and Heaven shall have described Him to their utmost, there will remain something not yet described. You may square the circle before you can set forth Christ in the language of mortal men! He is inconceivably above our conceptions, unutterably above our utterances!

But notice that He here sets Himself forth as a Shepherd. Dwell on this for a moment! A shepherd is such a man as we employ in England to look after sheep for a few months, till they are large enough to be slaughtered. A shepherd after the Oriental sort, such as Abraham, Jacob, or David, is quite another person.

The Eastern shepherd is generally the owner of the flock, or at least the son of their owner, and so their proprietor in prospect. The sheep are his own. English shepherds seldom, or never, own the sheepthey are employed to take care of themand they have no other interest in them. Our native shepherds are a very excellent set of men as a rulethose I have known have been admirable specimens of intelligent working menyet they are not at all like the Oriental shepherd, and cannot be, for he is usually the owner of the flock which he tends. He remembers how he came into possession of the flock and when and where each of the present sheep was born. He knows where he has led them and what trials he had in connection with them. And he remembers this with the emphasis that they are his own inheritance.

His wealth consists in them. He very seldom has much of a house and he does not usually own much land. He takes his sheep over a good stretch of country which is open common for all his tribebut his possessions lie in his flocks. Ask him, How much are you worth? He answers, I own so many sheep. In the Latin tongue the word for money is akin to the word, sheep, because to many of the first Romans, wool was their wealth and their fortunes lay in their flocks. The Lord Jesus is our Shepherdwe are His wealth! If you ask what is His heritage, He tells you of the riches of the Glory of His inheritance in the saints. Ask Him what are His jewels and He replies, They shall be Mine in that day. If you ask Him where His treasures are, He will tell you, The Lords portion is His people. Jacob is the lot of His inheritance. The Lord Jesus Christ has nothing that He values as He does His own people. For their sakes He gave up all that He had and died naked on the Cross. Not only can He say, I gave Ethiopia and Seba for you, but He loved His Church and gave Himself for it. He regards His Church as being His own body, the fullness of Him that fills all in all.

The shepherd, as he owns the flock, is also the caretaker. He always takes care of them. One of our Brothers now present is a fireman and, as he lives at the fire station, he is always on duty. I asked him whether he was not off duty during certain hours of every day and he said, No, I am never off duty. He is on duty when he goes to bed, he is on duty while he is eating his breakfast, he is on duty if he walks down the street! And any time the bell may ring the alarm, he must be in his place and hasten to the fire. Our Lord Jesus Christ is never off duty. He has constant care of His people day and night. He has declared itFor Zions sake will I not hold My peace and for Jerusalems sake I will not rest. He can truly say what Jacob did, In the day the drought consumed Me, and the frost by night. He says of His flock what He says of His garden, I the Lord do keep it; I will water it every moment lest any hurt it. I will keep it night and day.

I cannot tell you all the care a shepherd has over his flock because his anxieties are of such a various kind. Sheep have about as many complaints as men! You do not know much about them and I am not going to enter into details, for the all-sufficient reason that I do not know much about them, myself, but the shepherd knows, and the shepherd will tell you that he leads an anxious life. He seldom has all the flock well at one time. Some one or other is sure to be ailing and he spies it out and has eye and hand and heart ready for its succor and relief. There are many varieties of complaints and needsand all these are laid upon the shepherds heart. He is both possessor and caretaker of the flock.

Then he has to be the provider, too, for there is not a woolly head among them that knows anything about the finding and selecting of pasturage. The season may be very dry, and where there once was grass, there may be nothing but a brown powder. It may be that herbage is only to be found by the side of the rippling brooks, here and there, but the sheep do not know anything about thatthe shepherd must know everything for them. The shepherd is the sheeps providence. Both for time and for eternity, for body and for soul, our Lord Jesus supplies all our need out of His riches in Glory. He is the great Storehouse from which we derive everything! He has provided, He does provide and He will provide! And each one of us may sing, therefore, The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want.

But, dear Friends, we often dream that we are the shepherds, or that we, at any rate, have to find some of the pasture. I could not help saying, just now, to our friends at our little Prayer Meeting, There is a passage in the Psalms which makes the Lord do for us what one would have thought we could have done for ourselvesHe makes me to lie down in green pastures. Surely, if a sheep can do nothing else, it can lie down! Yet to lie down is the very hardest thing for Gods sheep to do! It is here that the full power of the rest-giving Christ has to come in to make our fretful, worrying, doubtful natures lie down and rest. Our Lord is able to give us perfect peace and He will do so if we will simply trust to His abounding care. It is the shepherds business to be the provider let us remember this and be very happy.

Moreover, he has to be the leader. He leads the sheep wherever they have to go. I have often been astonished at the shepherds in the South of France, which is so much like Palestine, to see where they will take their sheep. Once every week I saw the shepherd come down to Mentone and conduct all his flock to the beach. I could see nothing for them but big stones. Folk say that perhaps this is what makes the mutton so hard, but I have no doubt the poor creatures get a little taste of salt, or something which does them good. At any rate, they follow the shepherd and away he goes up the steep hillsides, taking long steps, till he reaches points where the grass is growing on the sides of the hills. He knows the way and the sheep have nothing to do but to follow him wherever he goes. Theirs is not to make the way; theirs is not to choose the path, but theirs is to keep close to his heels!

Do you not see our blessed Shepherd leading your own pilgrimage? Cannot you see Him guiding your way? Do you not say, Yes, He leads me, and it is my joy to follow? Lead on, O blessed Lord! Lead on and we will follow the prints of Your feet!

The shepherd in the East has also to be the defender of the flock, for wolves yet prowl in those regions. All sorts of wild beasts attack the flock and he must be to the front. Thus is it with our Shepherd. No wolf can attack us without finding our Lord in arms against him. No lion can roar upon the flock without awakening a greater than David. He that keeps Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep. He is a Shepherd, then, and He completely fills the charactermuch more completely than I can show you just now.

Notice that the text puts an adjective upon the shepherd, decorating him with a chain of gold. The Lord Jesus Christ Himself says, I am the good Shepherd. The good Shepherdthat is, He is not a thief that steals and only deals with the sheep as He bears them from the fold to the slaughter. He is not a hirelingHe does not do merely what He is paid to do, or commanded to do, but He does everything con amorewith a willing heart. He throws His soul into it. There is a goodness, a tenderness, a willingness, a powerfulness, a force, an energy in all that Jesus does that makes Him the best possible Shepherd that can be. He is no hireling! Neither is He an idler! Even shepherds who have had their own flocks have neglected them, as there are farmers who do not well cultivate their own farms, but it is never so with Christ. He is the Good Shepherdgood up to the highest point of goodness, good in all that is tendergood in all that is kind, good in all the directions in which a shepherd can be needed. He is good at fight and good at rule. He is good in watchful oversight and good in prudent leadership. He is most eminently good in every way!

And then notice He puts it, I am the good Shepherd. That is the point I want to bring out. Of other shepherds we can say, he is a shepherd, but this is the Shepherd. All others in the world are shadows of the true Shepherd and Jesus is the Substance of them all. That which we see in the world with these eyes is, after all, not the substance, but the type, the shadow. That which we do not see with our eyes, that which only our faith perceives, is, after all, the real thing. I have seen shepherds, but they were only pictures to me. The Shepherd, the real, the true, the best, the most sure example of shepherding is the Christ, Himselfand you and I are the sheep. Those sheep we see on yonder mountainside are just types of ourselveswe are the true sheep and Jesus is the true Shepherd. If an angel were to fly over the earth to find out the real sheep and the real Shepherd, he would say, The sheep of Gods pasture are men and Jehovah is their Shepherd. He is the true, the real Shepherd of the true and real sheep. All the possibilities that lie in a shepherd are found in Christ. Every good thing that you can imagine to be, or that should be in a shepherd, you find in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, I want you to notice that, according to the text, the Lord Jesus Christ greatly rejoices in this. He says, I am the good Shepherd. He does not confess that fact as if He were ashamed of it, but He repeats it in this chapter so many times that it almost reads like the refrain of a song. I am the good ShepherdHe evidently rejoices in it. He rolls it under His tongue as a sweet morsel. Evidently it is to His hearts content. He does not say, I am the Son of God, I am the Son of Man, I am the Redeemer but this He does sayand He congratulates Himself upon it, I am the good Shepherd.

This should encourage you and me to get a full hold of the word. If Jesus is so pleased to be my Shepherd, let me be equally pleased to be His sheep and let me avail myself of all the privileges that are wrapped up in His being my Shepherd and in my being His sheep! I see that it will not worry Him for me to be His sheep. I see that my needs will cause Him no perplexity. I see that He will not be going out of His way to attend to my weakness and trouble. He delights to dwell on the fact, I am the good Shepherd. He invites me, as it were, to come and bring my needs and woes to Him, look up to Him and be fed by Him. Therefore I will do it! Does it not make you feel truly happy to hear your own Lord, Himself, say and say it to you out of this precious Book, I am the good Shepherd? Do you not reply, Indeed You are a good Shepherd. You are a good Shepherd to me. My heart lays emphasis upon the word good and says of You, there is none good but One, and You are that good One. You are the good Shepherd of the sheep?

So much, then, concerning the complete character.

II. May the Holy Spirit bless the word still more, while I speak in my broken way upon the next pointTHE COMPLETE KNOWLEDGE.   
The knowledge of Christ towards His sheep and of the sheep towards Him is wonderfully complete. I must read the text againI know My own and My own know Me, even as the Father knows Me, and I know the Father.   
First, then, consider Christs knowledge of His own and the comparison by which He sets it forthAs the Father knows Me. I cannot conceive a stronger comparison! Do you know how much the Father knows the Son, who is His Glory, His Darling, His alter Ego, His other Selfyes, one God with Him? Do you know how intimate the knowledge of the Father must be of His Son who is His own Wisdom, yes, who is His Himself? The Father and the Son are one Spirit! We cannot imagine how intimate that knowledge is and, yet so intimately, so perfectly, does the great Shepherd know His sheep!   
He knows their number. He will never lose one. He will count them all, again, on that day when the sheep shall pass, again, under the hand of Him that knows them, and then He will make full account of them. Of all that You have given Me, He says, I have lost none. He knows the number of those for whom He paid the ransom price.

He knows their persons. He knows the age and character of each of His own. He assures us that the very hairs of our head are all numbered! Christ has not an unknown sheep. It is not possible that He should have overlooked or forgotten one of them. He has such an intimate knowledge of all who are redeemed with His most precious blood that He never mistakes one of them for another, nor misjudges one of them. He knows their constitutionsthose that are weak and feeble, those that are nervous and frightened, those that are strong, those that have a tendency to presumption, those that are sleepy, those that are brave, those that are sick, sorry, worried, or wounded. He knows those that are hunted by the devil, those that are caught up between the jaws of the lion and shaken till the very life is almost driven out of them. He knows their feelings, fears and frights. He knows the secret ins and outs of each of us better than any one of us knows himself!   
He knows our trialsthe particular trial under which you are now bowed down, my Sister. Our difficultiesthat special difficulty which seems to block up your way, my Brother, at this very time. All the ingredients of our life are known to Him. I know My own, as the Father knows Me. It is impossible to conceive a more complete knowledge than that which the Father has of His only-begotten Son! And it is equally impossible to conceive a more complete knowledge than that which Jesus Christ has of each of His chosen!   
He knows our sins. I often feel glad to think that He always knew our evil natures and what would come of them. When He chose us, He knew what we were and what we would be. He did not buy His sheep in the dark. He did not choose us without knowing all the devious ways of our past and future lives   
*He saw us ruined in the Fall,   
Yet loved us notwithstanding all.*   
Herein lies the splendor of His Grace. Whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate. His election implies foreknowledge of all our ill manners. They say of human love that it is blind, but Christs love has many eyes and all its eyes are openand yet He still loves us!   
I need not enlarge upon this. It ought, however, to be very full of comfort to you that you are so known of your Lord, especially as He knows you not merely with the cold, clear knowledge of the intellect, but with the knowledge of love and of affection. He knows you in His heart. You are peculiarly dear to Him. You are approved of Him. You are accepted of Him. He knows you by acquaintance with you, not by hearsay. He knows you by communion with youHe has been with you in sweet fellowship. He has read you as a man reads his book and remembers what he reads. He knows you by sympathy with you. He is a Man like yourself *He knows what sore temptations mean,   
For He has felt the same.*   
He knows your weaknesses. He knows the points wherein you suffer most, for   
*In every pang that rends the heart   
The Man of Sorrows had a part.*   
He gained this knowledge in the school of sympathetic suffering. Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered. He was in all points made like unto His brethren. And by being made like we are, He has come to know us and He knows us in a very practical and tender way. You have a watch and it will not run, or it runs very irregularly and so you give it to one who knows nothing about watches and he says, I will clean it for you. He will do it more harm than good! But here is the very person who made the watch. He says, I put every wheel into its place. I made the whole of it, from beginning to end. You think to yourself, I feel the utmost confidence in trusting that man with my watch. He can surely make it right, for he made it. It often cheers my heart to think that since the Lord made me, He can make me right and keep me so to the end. My Maker is my Redeemer! He that first made me has made me, again, and will make me perfect to His own praise and Glory! That is the first part of this complete knowledge.  
The second part of the subject is our knowledge of the Lord and the fact by which it is illustrated. And My own know Me, even as I know the Father. I think I hear some of you say, I do not see so much in that. I can see a great deal more in Christs knowing us. Beloved, I see a great deal in our knowing Christ! That He should know me is great condescension, but it must be easy for Him to know me. Being so Divine, with such piercing eyes as His, it is amazingly condescending, as I say, but it is not difficult for Him to know me. The marvel is that I should ever know Him! That such a stupid, blind, deaf, dead soul as mine should ever know Him and should know Him as He knows the Father, is 10,000 miracles in one! Oh, Sirs, this is a wonder so great that I do not think you and I yet understand it to the fullest, or else we would sit down in glad surprise and sayThis proves Him to be the Good Shepherd, indeed, not only that He knows His flock, but that He has taught them so well that they know Him! With such a flock as Christ has, that He should be able to train His sheep so that they should be able to know Himand to know Him as He knows the Fatheris miraculous!  
O Beloved, if this is true of us, that we know our Shepherd, we may clap our hands for very joy! And yet I think it is true even now. At any rate, I know so much of my Lord that nothing gives me so much joy as to hear of Him. Brothers and Sisters, there is no boasting in this personal assertion of mine! It is only the minimum truth! You can say the same, can you not? If anybody were to preach to you the finest sermon that was ever delivered, would it charm you if there were no Christ in it? No! But you will come and hear me talk about Jesus Christ in words as simple as I can findand you cry, one to another, It was good to be there. *You dear Redeemer, dying Lamb,   
We love to hear of Thee!   
No musics like Your charming name,   
Nor half so sweet can be.*   
Now mark that this is the way in which Jesus knows the Father. Jesus delights in His Father and you delight in Jesus. I know you do, and here the comparison holds good.   
Moreover, does not the dear name of Jesus stir your very soul? What is it that makes you feel as if you wish to hasten away, that you might be doing holy service for the Lord? What makes your very heart awake and feel ready to leap out of your body? What but hearing of the glories of Jesus? Play on what string you please and my ear is deaf to itbut when you once begin to tell of Calvary and sing the song of free Grace and dying love, oh, then my soul opens all her ears, drinks in the music and then her blood begins to stirand she is ready to shout for joy! Do you not even now sing   
*Oh, for this love let rocks and hills   
Their lasting silence break   
And all harmonious human tongues   
The Saviors praises speak.   
Yes, we will praise You, dearest Lord,   
Our souls are all on flame,   
Hosanna round the spacious earth   
To Your adored name?*   
Yes, we know Jesus! We feel the power of our union with Him. We know Him, Brothers and Sisters, so that we are not to be deceived by false shepherds. There is a way, nowadays, of preaching Christ against Christ. It is a new device of the devil to set up Jesus against JesusHis Kingdom against His AtonementHis precepts against His doctrines. The half Christ, in his example, is put up to frighten souls away from the whole Christ who saves the souls of men from guilt as well as from sin, from Hell as well as from folly. But they cannot deceive us in that way. No, Beloved, we know our Shepherd from all others! We know Him from a statue covered with clothes. We know the living Christ, for we have come into living contact with Him and we cannot be deceived any more than Jesus Christ, Himself, can be deceived about the Father. My own know Me, even as I know the Father. We know Him by union with Him and by communion with Him. We have seen the Lord. Truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ.   
We know Him by loveour soul cleaves to Him even as the heart of Christ cleaves to the Father. We know Him by trusting HimHe is all my salvation and all my desire. I remember once feeling many questions as to whether I was a child of God or not. I went into a little chapel and I heard a good man preach. He was a simple working man. I heard him preach and I made my handkerchief damp with my tears as I heard him talk about Christ and the precious blood. When I was preaching the same things to others, I was wondering whether this Truth of God was mine, but while I was hearing, for myself, I knew it was mine, for my very soul lived upon it! I went to that good man and thanked him for the sermon. He asked me who I was. When I told him, he turned all manner of colors. Why, he said, Sir, that was your own sermon. I said, Yes, I knew it was and it was good of the Lord to feed me with food that I had prepared for others. I perceived that I had a true taste for what I, myself, knew to be the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Oh, yes, we do love our good Shepherd! We cannot help it!   
And we know Him, also, by a deep sympathy with Him, for what Christ desires to do, we also long to do. He loves to save souls and so do we! Would we not save all the people in a whole street if we could? Yes, in a whole city and in the whole world! Nothing makes us so glad as that Jesus Christ is a Savior. There is news in the paper, says one. That news is often of small importance to our hearts. I happened to hear that a poor servant girl had heard me preach the Truth of God and found Christand I confess I feel more interest in that fact than in all the rise and fall of Whigs or Tories! What does it matter who is in Parliament, so long as souls are saved? That is the main thing. If the Kingdom of Christ grows, all the other kingdoms are of small account. That is the one Kingdom for which we live and for which we would gladly die! As there is a boundless sympathy between the Father and the Son, so is there between Jesus and ourselves.

We know Christ as He knows the Father because we are one with Him. The union between Christ and His people is as real and as mysterious as the union between the Son and the Father.   
We have a beautiful picture before us. Can you realize it for a minute? The Lord Jesus here among uspicture Him! He is the Shepherd. Then, around Him are His own people and wherever He goes, they go! He leads them into green pastures and beside still waters. And there is this peculiarity about themHe knows them as He looks upon each of themand they, each of them, know Him! There is a deeply intimate and mutual knowledge between them. As surely as He knows them, they know Him. The world knows neither the Shepherd nor the sheep, but they know each other. As surely, as truly and, as deeply as God the Father knows the Son, so does this Shepherd know His sheep! And as God the Son knows His Father, so do these sheep know their Shepherd! Thus in one band, united by mutual union, they travel through the world to Heaven. I know My own and My own know Me, even as the Father knows Me, and I know the Father. Is not that a blessed picture? God help us to figure in it!   
III. The last subject is COMPLETE SACRIFICE. The complete sacrifice is thus described, I lay down My life for the sheep.   
These words are repeated in this chapter in different forms some four times. The Savior keeps on saying, I lay down My life for the sheep. Read the 11th verseThe good Shepherd gives His life for the sheep. The 15th verseI lay down My life for the sheep. The 17th verseI lay down My life that I may take it again. The 18th verseI have power to lay it down and I have power to take it again. It looks as if this was another refrain of our Lords personal hymn. I call this passage His Pastoral Song. The good Shepherd, with His pipe, sings to Himself and to His flock, and this comes in at the end of each stanza, I lay down My life for the sheep.   
Did it not mean, first, that He was always doing so? All His life He was, as it were, laying it down for them. He was divesting Himself of the garments of life until He came to be fully disrobed on the Cross. All the life He had; all the power He had, He was always laying it out for His sheep. It means that, to begin with.   
And then it means that the Sacrifice was actively performed. It was always in the doing as long as He lived, but He did it actively. He did not merely die for the sheep, but He laid down His life, which is another thing. Many a man has died for Christit was all that he could do. But we cannot lay down our lives, because they are due already as a debt of Nature to God and we are not permitted to die at our own wills. That were suicidal and improper. With the Lord Christ it was totally different. He was, as it were, actively passive. I lay down My life for the sheep. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of My Father.   
I like to think of our Good Shepherd not merely as dying for us, but as willingly dyinglaying down His life while He had that lifeusing it for us and, when the time came, putting off that life on our behalf. This has now been actually done. When He spoke these words, it had not been done. At this time it has been done. I lay down My life for the sheep may now be read, I have laid down My life for the sheep. For you, Beloved, He has given His hands to the nails and His feet to the cruel iron! For you He has borne the fever and the bloody sweat! For you He has cried Eloi, Eloi, lame Sabachthani! For you He has given up the ghost.   
And the beauty of it is that He is not ashamed to avow the objective of it. I lay down My life for the sheep. Whatever Christ did for the world and I am not one of those who would limit the bearings of the death of Christ upon the worldyet His peculiar Glory is, I lay down My life for the sheep.   
Great Shepherd, do You mean to say that You have died for such as these? What? For these sheep? Died for them? What? Die for sheep, Shepherd? Surely You have other reasons for which to live beside sheep! Have You not other loves, other joys? We know that it would grieve You to see the sheep killed, torn by the wolf, or scattered. But You really have not gone so far in love for them that for the sake of those poor creatures You would lay down your life? Ah, yes, He says, I would, I have! Carry your wondering thoughts to Christ Jesus. What? What? What? Son of God, infinitely great and inconceivably glorious Jehovah, would You lay Your life down for men and women? They are no more in comparison with You than so many ants and wasps, pitiful and obnoxious creatures! You could make ten thousand millions of them with a word, or crush them out of existence with one blow of Your hand! They are poor things, make the most you can of them. They have hard hearts and wandering willsand the best of them are no better than they should be! Savior, did you die for such? He looks around and says, Yes, I did. I did. I laid down My life for the sheep. I am not ashamed of them and I am not ashamed to say that I died for them.   
No, Beloved, He is not ashamed of His dying love! He has told it to His Brethren up yonder and made it known to all the servants in His Fathers houseand this has become the song of that houseWorthy is the Lamb that was slain! Shall not we take it up and say, For You were slain and have redeemed us to God by Your blood? Whatever men may say about Particular Redemption, Christ is not ashamed of it! He glories that He laid down His life for the sheep. For the sheep, mark you! He says not for the world. There is a bearing of the death of Christ towards the world, but here He boasts and glories in the specialty of His Sacrifice. I lay down My life for the sheepinstead of the sheep, it might be read.   
He glories in substitution for His people! He makes it His boast when He speaks of His chosen, that He suffered in their placethat He bore, that they might never bear the wrath of God on account of sin! What He glories in, we also glory in! God forbid that I should glory save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me and I unto the world!   
O Beloved, what a blessed Christ we have who loves us so, who knows us sowhom we also know and love! May others be taught to know Him and to love Him! Yes, at this hour may they come and put their trust in Him, as the sheep trust to the shepherd! We ask it for Jesus sake. Amen.

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OTHER SHEEP AND ONE FLOCK   
NO. 1713

**DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, MARCH 25, 1883, BY C, H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear My voice and they shall be one fold and one shepherd (or more   
correctly one flock; one shepherd).   
John 10:16.**

THIS verse is guarded before and behind by two notable statements. Before it we hear the Master say, I lay down My life for the sheep, and immediately after it we meet with another grand sentence, I lay down My life, that I might take it again. The first statement, I lay down My life for the sheep is the sheet anchor of our confidence when storms assail the vessel of the Church. The Lord Jesus has, by His death, proved His love to His people and His determination to save them is made clear by His laying down His life for them. Therefore doubt and fear should be banished and the very name of despair should be unknown among the Israel of God! Now are we sure of the love of the Son of God to His chosen flock, for we have an Infallible proof of it in the laying down of His life for them.

Now, also, are we absolutely certain that Christs purpose is perpetualit cannot alter. The Lord Jesus has committed Himself to that purpose beyond recall, for the price is paid and the deed is done by which the purpose is to be effected. Beyond this we are hereby assured beyond a shadow of a doubt that the Divine purpose will be carried out, for it cannot be that Christ should die in vain. We think it a kind of blasphemy to suppose that His blood should be spilt for nothing. Whatever was proposed to be accomplished by the laying down of the life of the Son of God, we feel absolutely certain that it will be fully performed in the teeth of all adversaries, for we are not, now, speaking of mans design, but of the purpose of God to which He devoted the hearts blood of His only-begotten Son!

We both patiently hope and quietly wait to see the salvation of God and the performance of all His designs of love, for that death upon the Cross is a cause which will surely produce its effect. Christ did not die at a gamble. The supposition of a Savior disappointed in the results of His bloodshedding is not to be tolerated for a moment! In darkest times that glorious Cross flames with light! No evil event can prevent its efficacy. Still in that sign we conquer! If Jesus has laid down His life for the sheep, then all is well. Rest assured of the Fathers love to those sheep! Rest assured of the immutability of the Divine purpose concerning them and rest assured of its ultimate achievement! It must not, shall not be that Gods own Son shall lay down His life in vain! Though Heaven and earth should pass away, the precious hearts blood of the Son of God shall accomplish the end for which it was so freely poured forth. Jesus says, I lay down My life for the sheep, therefore the sheep must live who have been redeemed at such a price as this and the Shepherd in them shall see of the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied!

So far we are cheered by the vanguard which marches in advance of our text. But as if the poor, timid people of God would, nevertheless, at times fancy that the purpose of Christ would not be achieved, behold, in the rear another sentence, I lay down My life that I might take it again. He that died and so redeemed His people by price, lives that He may, Himself, personally see that they are also redeemed by power! If a man dies to achieve a purpose, you feel sure that his very soul must have been in it. But if that man should rise again from the dead and still pursue his purpose, you would see how resolutely he was set on his design. If he rose with greater power, clothed with higher rank and elevated to a more eminent positionand if he still pursued his great objective, you would, then, be more than certain of his never-ending determination to perform his design.

In the risen life of Jesus, assurance is made doubly surenow are we sure that His design must be carried out, nothing can hinder it! We dare not dream that the Son of God can be disappointed of the objective for which He died and for which He lives again! If Jesus died for a purpose, He will accomplish it. If Jesus rose for a purpose, He will accomplish it. If Jesus lives forever for a purpose, He will accomplish it. To me this conclusion seems to be past questionand if it is soit puts the destiny of the sheep beyond all hazard. Did not Paul argue much in the same way when he said, For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life?

If any of you have been cast down by reason of present difficulties, let these two grand texts sound their silver trumpets in your ears! If you have been looking forth from the windows and the outlook has seemed to be exceedingly dark, take courage, I pray you, from what your Lord has done! His death and Resurrection are prophetic of good things to come! You dare not think that Christ will miss the objective of His deathyou dare not think that He will miss the purpose of His glory-life! Why, then, are you cast down? His will shall be done on earth as it is in Heaven, as surely as He came from Heaven to earth and has returned from earth to Heaven! His purpose shall be carried out as surely as He died and lives again!

Is not this the secret reason why, when the Lord appeared to His sorrowing servant John, He said to him, I am He that lives and was dead and am alive forevermore, amen, and have the keys of death and of Hell? Is not the dying and then living Shepherd the safety and the glory of the flock? Well, then, comfort one another with these words of your Lord, I lay down My life for the sheep. I lay down My life, that I might take it again.

I. There are four things in the text, itself, which deserve your attention, for they are full of consolation to minds troubled by the evil of those perilous times. The first is thisOUR LORD JESUS CHRIST HAD A PEOPLE UNDER THE WORST CIRCUMSTANCES. When He speaks of other sheep, it is implied that He had certain sheep at the time. And when He says, other sheep have I which are not of this fold, it is manifest that even then, the Good Shepherd had a fold! The times were grievously dark and evil, but a few true hearts clustered about the Savior and, by His Divine power, were protected as in a fold.

It has been supposed that our Lord, here, alludes to the Jews as, this fold, but the Jews, as such, were never Christs fold. He could not have meant to call the Jews around Him, His fold, for a little farther on He exclaims, You believe not because you are not of My sheep, as I said unto you. His fold was that little handful of disciples whom, by His personal ministry, He had gathered, and who stood folded, as it were, about their Good Shepherd. They might be sneered at as a little company, but He says to His enemies who are standing outside the fold foaming with wrath, Other sheep I have that are not of this little fold: these you cannot see, but I have them, none the less, for that these, I must, in due time, lead, and then there shall be one flock and one Shepherd. See, then, that the Lord Jesus had a people in the worst times!

Doubtless these days are exceedingly dangerous and I have certain Brethren round me who never allow me to forget it, for they play well in the minor key and dwell most judiciously upon the necessary topic of the general declension of the Church and the growing depravity of the world! I would not stop them from their faithful warnings, although I can assure them that, with slight variations, I have heard the same tune for years! Many a time have they afflicted me, from my youth up, and it has been good for me. I remember hearing some 30 years ago that we lived in awful times and, as nearly as I can recollect, the times have been awful ever since and I suppose they always will be! The watchmen of the night see everything except the coming of the morning. Our pilots perceive dangers ahead and steer with caution. Perhaps this is as it should be. At any rate, it is better than sleeping in a fools paradise!

Be this as it may, it is clear that the days of our Lord Jesus Christ were emphatically terrible times. No age can be worse than that age which literally crucified the Son of God, crying, Away with Him! Away with Him! Whether the present days are better than those, I will not determine, but they cannot be worse. The day of our Lords first advent was the culmination and the crisis of the worlds career of sinand yet the Good Shepherd had a fold among men in the midnight of history! There was a sad lack of vital godliness in those days. A few godly ones watched for the coming of the Messiah, but they were very few, such as good old Simeon and Anna. A small remnant sighed and cried for the abounding sin of the nation, but the salt was almost gone. Israel was becoming like Sodom and Gomorrah!

The choice band of mourners in Zion had not quite died out, but their number was so few that a child might write the number down. Speaking generally, when the Savior came to His own, His own received Him not. The mass of professing people in that day was rotten throughout! The life of God was goneit could not dwell with the Pharisees nor the Sadducees, nor any of the sects of the times, for they were altogether gone out of the way. The Lord looked and there was no man to help or to uphold His righteous causethose who professed to be its champions had altogether become unprofitable. As for the religious teachers, their mouth had become an open sepulcher and the poison of asps was under their tongues. And yet the Lord had a people in Judea even then!

On earth there was still a fold for sheep whom He had chosen who knew the Shepherds voice and gathered to His call and followed Him faithfully. But it was a time when will-worship abounded. Men had given up worshipping God according to the Scriptures. They worshipped according to their own fancies. Then you might hear a trumpet at every corner of the street, for Pharisees were distributing their alms! You could see fathers and mothers neglected, families broken up because the scribes had taught the people that if they said, Corban, they were free from all obligation to help father or mother. They taught for doctrines, the commandments of menthe Commandments of God were laid aside. To wear broad-bordered garments and phylacteries was exalted into a matter of first importance, while to lie and cheat were mere trifles. To eat with unwashed hands was thought to be a crime, but to devour widows houses was a thing which, to the most self-righteous Pharisee, caused no qualm of conscience. The land was filled with will-worship and that is one great and growing hindrance nowadays! But for all that, Christ had a fold of His own and there were those who knew His voiceand these, following at His heelswere enabled to go in and out and find pasture.

It was a day when there was the most fierce opposition to the real Truths of God. Our Lord Jesus could hardly open His mouth but they took up stones to stone Him! It was said that He had a devil and was mad; that He was a gluttonous Man and a winebibber, the friend of publicans and sinners. The rage of men against Christ was, then, boiling at its greatest heat, till at last they took Him and nailed Him to the Cross because they could not endure that He should live among them. And yet He had His own in those dreadful times! Even then He had His chosen company for whom He laid down His life, of whom He said to the Father, Yours they were and You gave them to Me; and they have kept Your Word. To those He spoke, saying, You are they that have continued with Me in My temptations. And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as My Father has appointed unto Me.

Why, Beloved, I gather that though, at this time, there is a sad decline in vital godliness, and though will-worship sweeps over the land with its tumultuous waves; and though opposition to the pure Truth of Christ is more fierce than ever; nevertheless, even at this present time, there is a remnant according to the election of Grace! Even today the answer of God to the complaining Prophet is, Yet have I left Me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees of which have not bowed unto Baal. Why, my Brothers and Sisters, in confidence you possess your souls!

Now, it is to be noticed that this little company of Christs people He calls a fold. Afterwards they were to be a flock, but while His bodily Presence was with them, they were pre-eminently a fold. They were few in number, all of one race, mostly in one place and so compact that they could fitly be said to be a fold. One glance of the Shepherds bodily eyes saw them all. Happily, also, they were so thoroughly distinct from the rest of the world that they were eminently and evidently folded. Our Lord said of them, You are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. He had shut them in to Himself and shut the world out. Within this blessed seclusion they were perfectly safe, so that their Lord said to the Father, While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name: those that You gave Me, I have kept and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the Scripture might be fulfilled.

Whatever their mistakes and faults, and they were many, yet they did not conform themselves to the generation among which they dweltthey were kept apart as in a fold while Jesus was with them. In that fold they were protected from all ill weathers, from the wolf and the thief. The Lords Presence with them was like a wall of fire round about themthey had only to run to Him and He answered all their adversaries and defended them from reproach. Like another David, the Lord Jesus guarded His flock from all the ravenous lions that sought to devour them. True, even in that little fold there were goats, for He, Himself, said, I have chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil. Even then, they were not absolutely pure, but they were wonderfully soand they were marvelously separated from the world, preserved from false doctrine and kept from dividing and scattering.

Within that fold they were being strengthened for the future following of their great Shepherd. They were learning a thousand things which would be useful to them when, afterwards, He sent them forth as lambs among wolves, so that they would be wise as serpents and harmless as doves because of what they had learned of their Lord. Thus you see that in the worst times the Lord had a Church! I might almost say the best Church! May I not call it so? For that Apostolic Church, upon which the Holy Spirit descended, was not a whit behind the Church of any era that succeeded it! It was the choice flock of all the flocks of the ages, even that feeble company of which Jesus said, Fear not, little flock, for it is your Fathers good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

Yet you see one thing is not able here, that when Jesus had thus shut them all in, He would not allow them to become exclusive and glide into a state of selfish satisfaction. No, He opens wide the door of the sheepfold and cries to them, Other sheep I have. Thus He checks a tendency so common in the Church to be forgetful of those outside the fold and to make ones own personal salvation the sum and substance of religion! I do not think it wrong to sing

*We are a garden walled around,   
Chosen and made peculiar ground.   
A little spot, enclosed by Grace   
Out of the worlds wide wilderness.*

On the contrary, I judge that the verse is true and sweet, and ought to be sung. But then there are other truths besides this one. To us, also, the Shepherd opens the door of the enclosed garden and says, The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose. The fold is our abode, but it is not our sole sphere of action, for we are to go forth from it into all the world seeking our Brothers and Sisters!

Seeing that our Lord has other sheep which are not of this fold, and these are to be found by Him through His faithful people, let us awaken ourselves to the holy enterprise

*O, come, let us go and find them!   
In the paths of death they roam.   
At the close of the day   
It will be sweet to say,   
I have brought some lost one home.*

Beloved, I shall leave this point when I have said to younever despair! The Lord of Hosts is with His people! They may be few and poor, but they are Christs and that makes them precious. A common sheepfold is not a thing of glory and beautyfour rough walls compose it and it is but a hovel for sheepeven so, the Church may appear mean and base in mens eyes, but then it is the sheepfold of our Shepherd-King and the sheep belong to the Lord God Almighty! There is a glory about this which angels do not fail to see! Here is human weakness and also Divine power!

We do not, I fear, estimate the strength of the Church aright. I read of three Brothers who had to carry on a college when funds were running short. One of them complained that they had no helpers and could not hope to succeed. But another, who had more faith, said to his Brother, Do you ask what we can do? Do you say that we are so few? I do not see that we are few, for we are a thousand at the least. A thousand of us, said the other, how is that? Why, replied the first, I am a cipher, you are a cipher and our Brother is a cipherso we have three nothings to begin with. Then I am sure the Lord Jesus is ONEput Him down before the three ciphers and we have a thousand, directly. Was not this bravely spoken? What power we have when we do but set the great ONE in the front!

You are nothing, Brother. You are nothing, Sister. I am nothingwe are all nothing when we are put together without our Lord! But, oh, if He stands in front of us, then we are thousands! And again, it is true on earth as in Heaventhe chariots of the Lord are 20,000, even thousands of messengersthe Lord is among them as in the Holy Place. Why, my Friends, be not cast down at any time, but say to yourselvesWe are not even, now, come to so dark a night as once fell on this world. We are not, at this painful moment, in such a desperate condition as the Church of Christ was in His own day!

And if the Lord is spiritually in the midst of us, we need not fear though the earth is removed and the mountains are carried into the midst of the sea, for there is a city which abides forever, and there is a river, the streams of which shall, forever, make her glad! God is in the midst of her and she shall not be moved! God shall help her and that right early. Why, my fellow Believers, be strong and of good courage!

II. But now, secondly, it is clear, for the text teaches it in so many words, that OUR LORD HAS OTHER SHEEP NOT YET KNOWN TO US. He says, Other sheep I have. I want you to notice that strong expression, Other sheep I havenot, I shall have, but, I have other sheep. Many of these sheep were not even in the thoughts of the Apostles. I do not think it had crossed the mind of Peter, James, or John that their Lord had any sheep in this poor savage island, then scarcely regarded as being within the borders of the earth. I do not suppose the Apostles, at that time, even dreamed that their Lord Jesus had sheep in Rome.

No, their most liberal notion was that the Hebrew nation might be converted and the scattered of the seed of Abraham gathered together in one. Our Shepherd-King has greater thoughts than the most large-hearted of His servants. He delights to enlarge the area of our love. Other sheep have I. You do not know them, but the Shepherd does. Unknown to ministers, unknown to the warmest-hearted Christians, there are many in the world whom Jesus claims for His own through the Covenant of Grace. Who are these? Well, these other sheep were, first, His chosen, for He has a people whom He has chosen out of the world and ordained unto eternal life. You have not chosen Me, He said, but I have chosen you there is a people upon whom His sovereignty has fixed its loving choice from before the foundation of the world! And of these elect ones, He says, I have them.

His election of them is the basis of His property in them. These are, also, those whom His Father gave Him, of whom He says in another place, All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me. And again, Of those whom You have given Me I have lost none. His Fathers eternal donation of them seals His title to them! These are the people for whom He peculiarly and especially laid down His life that they might be the redeemed of the Lord. Christ loved His Church and gave Himself for it. These are they that are redeemed from among men, of whom we read, You are not your own, you are bought with a price.

The Lord Jesus laid down His life for His sheepHe tells us so, Himself, and none can question His own statement. These are those of whom Jesus says, I have them. For these He entered into suretyship engagements, even as Jacob undertook the flock of Laban and watched day and night that he should not lose them. And if one had been lost, he would have had to make it good. These sheep represent a people for whom Christ has entered into suretyship engagements with His Father that He will deliver each one of them safely at the last day of account, not one of them being absent when the sheep shall pass, again, under the hand of Him that counts them as they will at the last great day. Other sheep I have, says Christ. How wonderful that He should say, I have them, though as yet they were far off by wicked works. What was their state? They were a people without shepherd, without fold, without pasture, lost on the mountains, wandering in the woods, lying down to die, ready to be devoured by the wolfyet Jesus says, Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold.

They were sheep that had wandered exceedingly far, even into the most shameful iniquityand yet He says, I have them. Bad as this world is, today, it must have been far worse in the cruel Roman age as to open vices and unmentionable abominations. And yet these wanderers were the sheep of Christ and, in due time, they were delivered from their sins and fetched away from all the superstition, idolatry and filthiness into which they had wandered! They were Christs even while they were afar offHe had chosen them, the Father had given them to Him, He had bought themand He determined to have them. No, He says, I have themand He calls them His own even while they are transgressing and running headlong to destruction!

It seems to me that these were as well known to Christ as those that were in His fold. I think I see Him, the Divine Man, standing there confronting His adversaries. And when He has cast His glance upon His foes, I see His eyes going to and fro throughout the whole earth to gaze upon a sight far more pleasant to Him. While He speaks, His eyes flash with joyous fire as they light upon thousands out of every kindred and people and tongue! And as He quotes, to Himself, the words of the 22nd PsalmAll the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord: and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before You. For the kingdom is the Lords and He is the Governor among the nations. A seed shall serve Him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generationHe spies out the myriads that are His and He rejoices before His scornful foes as He sees His growing kingdom which they are powerless to overthrow!

Proud, self-righteous men may blindly refuse the leadership of the Lords anointed Shepherd, but He shall not be without a flock to be His honor and reward! Did not the Lord, at that time, rejoice in His inmost heart and soliloquize within Himself thusThough Israel is not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord, and My God shall be My strength? This led Him to say, Other sheep I have. In this there is great comfort for Gods people who love the souls of their fellow men. The Lord has a people in London and He knows them. I have much people in this city, was said to the Apostle when, as yet, nobody was converted there! I have them, says Christ though as yet they had not sought Him.

Our Lord Jesus has an elect redeemed people all over the world at this time, though as yet they are not called by Grace. I know not where they are, nor where they are notbut for certain He has them somewhere since it still stands trueOther sheep I have which are not of this fold. This is a part of our authority for going out to find the lost sheep, for we, Brothers and Sisters, have a right to go anywhere to enquire about our Masters sheep. I have no business to go hunting after other peoples sheep. But if they are my Masters sheep, who shall stop me over hill or dale enquiring, Have you seen my Masters sheep? If any say, You intrude in this land, let the answer be, We are after our Masters sheep which have strayed here! Excuse our pushing further than politeness might allow, but we are in haste to find a lost sheep.

This is your excuse for going into a house where you are not wanted, to try and leave your tracts and speak a word for Christ! Say, I think my Master has one of His sheep here and I have come after it. You have received a search-warrant from the King of Kings and, therefore, you have a right to enter and search after your Lords stolen property! If men belonged to the devil, we would not rob the enemy, himself, but they do not belong to him! He neither made them nor bought them and, therefore, we seize them in the Kings name whenever we can lay hands on them. I doubt not but what there are some here, this morning, who neither know nor love the Savior as yet, who, nevertheless, belong to the Redeemer and He will yet bring them to Himself and to His flock. Therefore it is that we preach with confidence!

I do not come into this pulpit hoping that, perhaps, somebody will, of His own free will, return to Christthat may be so or notbut my hope lies in another quarter. I hope that my Master will lay hold of some of them and say, You are Mine and you shall be Mine. I claim you for Myself. My hope arises from the freeness of Gracenot from the freedom of the will! A poor haul of fish will any Gospel fisherman make if he takes none but those who are eager to leap into the net! Oh, for an hour of Jesus among this crowd! Oh, for five minutes of the great Shepherds handiwork! When the good Shepherd overtakes His lost sheep, He has not much to say to it.

According to the parable, He says nothing. But He lays hold of it, lays it on His shoulders and carries it homeand that is what I want the Lord to do, this morning, with some of you whose will is all the other way, whose wishes and desires are all contrary to Him. I want Him to come with sacred violence and mighty love to restore you to your Father and your God! Not that you will be saved against your will, but your consent will be sweetly gained. Oh, that the Lord Jesus would take you in hand and never let you go again! May He sweetly say to you, Yes, I have loved you with an everlasting love, therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn you.

III. Our third head contains in it much delight. Our LORD MUST BRING OR LEAD THOSE OTHER SHEEP. Them also I must bringread it, and it will be more accuratethem also I must lead. Christ must be at the head of these other sheep and they must follow His leadthem also I must lead, and they shall hear My voice, Those who belong to Christ, secretly, must be openly led to follow Him. First, it is Christ that has to do it, even as He has done it up to now. The text says, Them also I must bring, and this language implies that those who have already come, He has brought. All that were in the fold, Christ had brought thereand all that are to be in the foldHe must lead there.

All of us who are saved have been saved by the mighty power of God in Christ Jesus. Is it not so? Is there anyone among us that came to Jesus without Jesus first coming to Him? Surely, no! Without exception, we all admit that it was His love that sought us out and brought us to be the sheep of His pasture. Now, as the Lord Jesus has done this for us, He must do it for others, for they will never come unless He fetches them. Here comes in that emphatic, imperious, must. The proverb is that, must, is for the kingand the king may say, must, to all of us. But did you ever hear of a must that bound the king, himself, and constrained him?

Kings generally do not care to have it said to them, you must, but there is a King, the likes of which King there never was nor shall be for glory and for dominionand yet He is bound by a mustthe Prince Immanuel says, Them also I must bring. Whenever Jesus says, must, something comes of it! Who can resist the Omnipotent must? Clear out, devils! Clear out, wicked men! Flee, darkness! Die, O death! If Jesus says, must, we know what is going to happendifficulties vanish, impossibilities are achieved! Glory, glory, the Lord shall get the victory! Jesus says of His chosen, His redeemed, His espoused, His covenanted ones, Them also I must bring and, therefore, it must be done!

Furthermore, He tells us how He must do it. He says, They shall hear My voice. So that our Lord is going to save people, still, by the Gospel! I do not look for any other means of converting men beyond the simple preaching of the Gospel and the opening of mens ears to hear itThey shall hear My voice. The old methods are to be followed to the end of the chapter. Our standing orders areGo you into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. We are not commissioned to do anything else but continue to preach the Gospel, the same Gospel which saved us and which was delivered to us at the beginning! We know of no alterations, enlargements, or amendments to the Gospel! We obey and follow one Voice, not many voices. One Gospel of salvation is to be proclaimed everywhere! And no other work is in our commission.

Then it is added, They shall hear My voice. It is promised that they shall first lend an attentive ear and then that they shall yield a willing heart to the voice of Divine love and follow Jesus where He leads! What then? Asks one. Suppose I speak in Christs name and they will not hear? Do not suppose what cannot be! The Scripture says of the chosen sheepthey shall hear My voice. The rest remain in their blindness, but the redeemed will hear and see! Do not again say, Suppose they will not! You must not suppose anything that is contrary to what Jesus promises when He says, They shall hear My voice. The graceless may stop up their ears if they willand perish with Christs voice as a witness against thembut His own redeemed shall hear the heavenly voice and obey it! There is no resisting this Divine necessity! Jesus saysI must bring them, and they shall hear My voice.

It was with this that Paul turned to the Gentiles and said to the Jews, Be it known, therefore, unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles and that they will hear it. He had no fear about the reception the Word of God would meet withneither ought we to entertain any, since Christ has a people who must be ledand shall hear the voice of the Bishop and Shepherd of souls! We have heard it said that, If Christ must have His people, what is the good of preaching? What would be the good of preaching if it were otherwise? Why, dear Sir, this fact is one great reason why we preach! That which you suppose to be a motive for inaction is the strongest motive for energetic action! Because the Lord has a people that must be saved, we feel an imperious necessity laid upon us to join with Him in bringing this people to Himself. They must come and we must fetch them! Christian Brothers, do you not feel that you must help in compelling them to come to the wedding feast? Is it not laid upon you that you must go after lost souls, that you must speak to them, seeing that you must have a hand in bringing these blood-bought ones to Christ by His Holy Spirit?

And again, are there not some in this place who feel a necessity laid upon them, also, that they must come? Do I not hear some of you saying, I have stood out a long while, but I must come. I have resisted Divine Grace long enough. And now Christ has laid His hands on meI must come? How I wish that a heavenly, must, a blessed necessity of Omnipotent decree may overshadow you and bear you as a sheep to the fold! Oh that you may now yield yourselves unto God because the love of Christ constrains you! Submit yourselves unto God! Acknowledge the supreme authority of His Grace which shall lead every thought into captivity, that from this day on Christ may reign in your hearts and put every enemy under His feet!

He says, Him that comes to Me I will in nowise cast out. I will trust Him, says one. I feel I must. Just so and that trust is a mark of your election of God, for, He that believes in Him has everlasting life. Whom He did predestinate, them He also called. If He is calling you, it is because He did predestinate youand you may rest quite sure of itand yield to Him with holy joy and delight! As for me, I feel so happy in preaching the Gospel because I am not fishing with a, chance, or a, perhaps, that some may come. The Lord knows them that are His and they will come! Every congregation is, in this sense, a picked assembly.

I felt, this morning, when I came here, that there were so many Friends out in the country for the holidays that we should very likely have a thin house. I rejoice that I was altogether wrong in my reckoning, but even then I thought, God has a people that He will bring whom He means to bless. Here they are! And now, while standing here, I know that Gods Word shall not return to Him void, but it shall accomplish that which He pleases, and shall prosper in the thing to which He has sent it.

IV. But now, lastly, OUR LORD GUARANTEES THE UNITY OF HIS CHURCH. Them also I must bring, and they shall hear My voice and there shall be one fold and one shepherd. We hear a great deal about the unity of the Church and notions upon this subject are rather wild. We are to have the Roman and the Greek and the Anglican Church all joined together in oneif they were so, the result would not be worth two-pence and much evil would come of it! God has, I doubt not, a chosen people among all these three great corporations, but the union of such questionable organizations would be a dire omen of mischief to the world!

The dark ages and a worse Popedom than ever would soon be upon us! The more those three quarrel with each other, the better for truth and righteousness! I should like to see the Anglican Church standing at drawn daggers with the Romanand coming into a more and more open opposition to its superstitions. I would to God that the national Church would, in all things, be delivered from the Pope of Rome and his Anti-Christian enormities! Truly, this has been carried out as a matter of factthere never was but one Shepherd of the sheep yeteven Christ Jesus! And there never was but one flock of God yet, and there never will be! There is one spiritual Church of Godthere never were two! All the visible Churches, up and down the world contain within themselves parts of the one Church of Jesus Christ, but there were never two bodies of Christ and there cannot be!

There is one Church and there is one Head of the Church! The motto of Christianity isone flock and one Shepherd. As a matter of experience this is carried out in Believers. I do not care who the man is, if he is a truly spiritually-minded man, he is one with all other spiritually-minded men. Those people in any visible Church who have no Grace are usually the greatest sticklers for every point of difference and every particle of rite and form. Nominal professors are soon at war. Quickened Believers follow after peace! Of course, when a man has nothing else but the outside, he fights for it tooth and nail. But a man who loves the Lord and lives near Him, perceives the inner life in others and has fellowship with them! That inner life is one in all the quickened family and compels them to be one in heart.

Set two Brothers at prayer, the one a Calvinist and the other an Arminian, and they pray alike! Get a real work of the Spirit in a district and see how Baptists and Paedo-Baptists pull together! Tell of your inward experience and speak of the Spirits work in the soul, and see how we are all moved thereby! Here is a Brother, a member of the Society of Friends, and he likes silent worship. And here is another who enjoys hearty singing! But when they get near to God, they do not quarrel over this, but agree to differthe one says, The Lord be with you in your holy silenceand the other prays that the Lord may accept his brothers Psalm. All who are one with Christ have a certain family feeling, a higher form of clannishness and they cannot shake it off.

I have found myself reading a gracious book which has drawn me near to God. And though I have known that it was written by a man with whose opinions I had little agreement, I have not, therefore, refused to be edified by him in points which are unquestionably revealed. No, but I have blessed the Lord that, within all his blunders, he knew so much of the precious, vital Truth of God and lived so near his Lord! What Protestant can refuse to love the holy Bernard? Was there ever a more consecrated servant of God or a dearer lover of Christ than he? Yet he was most sorrowfully in bondage to the superstitions of his age and of the Roman Church! Are you not all one with him who sang

*Jesus, the very thought of Thee   
With sweetness fills my breast   
But sweeter, far, Your face to see,   
And in Your Presence rest?*   
The external Church is necessary, but it is not the one and indivisible Church of Christ. Jesus, as the Life, binds His Church together, and that Life flows through all the regenerate, even as the blood flows through all the veins of the body. Drop the external and look by faith into the spiritual realm, and you will see one flock and one Shepherd. The practical lesson is, let us belong to that one flock! How are they known? Answerthey are a hearing flockthey hear the Lord and follow His lead. Be you one of those who listen to Christs voiceand to none besides. Keep to the one Shepherd! How do you know Him? It is Jesusin His feet and hands are nail-printsand His side bears the scar. He it is who leads the one only flock!   
Follow Jesus and you are right. Follow Him everywhere and you are happy. The best way to promote the unity of the Church is for all the sheep to follow the Shepherd. If they all follow the Shepherd, they will all keep together. Let us go forth and try and do thatand let us long for that happy day when all disputed points shall be settled by all obeying the Lord. Compromises would only mean an agreement to disobey the Lord! Let no man yield a principle under pretense of charityit is not charity to call any Truth of God a lie! We must follow Jesus fully and we shall come together. First pure, then peaceable, is the rule.   
Oh, when shall the triple banner again float over allOne Lord, one Faith, one Baptism!? Oh God, the Holy Spirit, forgive us our errors and bring us to Your Truth! Oh God, the Son, forgive us our need of holiness and renew us in Your own image! Oh God the Father, forgive us our lack of love and melt us into one family! To the one God be glory in the one Church forever and ever! Amen.

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THE FATHERS LOVE TO HIS DYING SON   
NO. 2117

**INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS-DAY, DECEMBER 8, 1889, DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, NOVEMBER 17, 1889.

**Therefore does My Father love Me, because I lay down My life, that I might take it again.   
John 10:17**

OUR Lord Jesus here speaks of Himself in His complex personality as God and Man, the Mediator between God and men. As such, He comes to us first at Bethlehem, wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger. We behold Him a babe, a child, a man, a worker, a sufferer, a witness for the Truth of God and a victim condemned to die upon the tree. We behold Him dead in the grave and risen again as the Interposer between God and man.

In that capacity we shall think of Him during this discourse. It is the voice of the Man Christ Jesus, the eternal Son of God, which says, Therefore does My Father love Me, because I lay down My life, that I might take it again. The Father feels boundless love to Him who, for us men, and for our redemption, came down from Heaven and took upon Himself our nature, and being found in fashion as a man, became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross. Therefore God also has highly exalted Him, or, to use His own words, Therefore does My Father love Me.

At this time we shall not keep strictly to the text but shall introduce other truths related to it. The run of our discourse will be somewhat as followsFirst, consider the Fathers love to Jesus because of His death and resurrection. Secondly, consider the Fathers complacency in us on that account. Then, thirdly, consider our love to Jesus on this account. And, fourthly, consider our consequent fellowship with the Father.

I. First, CONSIDER THE FATHERS LOVE TO CHRIST JESUS BECAUSE OF HIS DEATH AND RESURRECTION. This love was exceedingly sweet to Jesus. Persecuted by men and sometimes depressed in His own spirit, He comforts Himself with this, Therefore does My Father love Me, because I lay down My life, that I might take it again. To be well-pleasing to the Father was everything with our Lord Jesus Christ. In heaviest toll, in dark slander, in deepest perplexity, if His Father only said, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased, Jesus was refreshed with meat which others knew not of.

Beloved, let us be like our Lord Jesus in thislet the love of the Father to us be our comfort, our joy, our strength, our hope, our Heaven. What more can men or angels have than the love of God? Let that love be shed abroad in my heart by the Holy Spirit and even the celestial city cannot afford me a more pure and substantial delight. O my God, Your love is precious beyond all estimate! Whom have I in Heaven but You? And there is none upon earth that I desire beside You.   
But to come back to our Lord. The Father took the greatest delight in

His Son as laying down His life, first, because of the delight of Jesus in His Fathers plans. Exceedingly high are the thoughts of God in reference to His dealings with the sinful sons of men. Jehovah could, with a word, make creatures that should be perpetually innocent of sin. He could also make creatures which He foreknew would choose evil ways and depart into rebellion. But a simple act of creation would not produce the character of elect man. A weapon may be struck from the anvil at a blow. But a Damascus blade needs special annealing to produce the temper needed in a champions sword.

The chosen were to be a race who had eaten the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and so knew good and evil by actual practice especially knew the result of evil in their own personsfor they would even die spiritually. But they would be restored from death, and Hell, and sin, and would be made haters of transgression, lovers of righteousness. Though left to their own free agency, yet when the work of Divine Grace was complete in them, they would be of a character to which sin would be impossible, since they would so deeply abhor it.

These persons would be raised to the peerage of the Divine kingdom and bear the name and dignity of sons of God, being in very deed Brothers in blood to Him who is One with God. They were to be Brothers of the Son of God by birth, and yet never to be the subjects of pride. It will be infinitely safe for the Lord to entrust us with all the privileges, royalties, and liberties of His own household. For this end it was necessary that the chosen from among men should undergo a marvelous process, much more complex and intricate than that which follows the fiat of powerwe must in Jesus dieand be made alive again in Him.

Beloved, it was necessary, in order to the completion of the plan of Divine Grace, that God Himself, in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ, should take manhood into eternal union with Godhead. The Son agreed to do this and was born of the Virgin. But when He took manhood into union with Himself, He took all that belonged to manhood. Now, sin having attached itself to manhood, the Christ, in becoming Man, took our sin upon Himself, as it is written, The Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

He could not be actually guiltyGod forbid the thought! But He became legally amenable to the penalty due for our transgression. He was willing even to make this stoop of condescension. When the Divine Plan was proposed to Him, this was His answerLo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of Me, I delight to do Your will, O My God! Do you wonder that the Father loved Him, when He saw in Him such sympathetic union with Himself?

It was the Sons highest pleasure to become subservient to the Sacred Plan of glorious Grace, in which, for ages to come, Jehovah would show forth the glory of His nature, the splendor of His eternal purpose. All the plan was acceptable to Jesus. And He was eager to carry it out at His own expense. Though He knew that the work involved His death upon the shameful tree, yet He felt so one with the Father that He cried, I delight to do Your will. Yes, Your Law is within My heart.

When He actually appeared as a child, He went up to the temple and amazed His human parents with the words, Know you not that I must be about My Fathers business? Such a Son as this, so intent upon His Fathers planis it any wonder that we read, Therefore does My Father love Me?

But His Father also loved Him for the constancy and perseverance with which He pursued His lifework, making it His meat and His drink to do the will of Him that sent Him. He underwent many rehearsals of His passion before it actually came. When He said, Except a corn of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it abides alone: but if it dies, it brings forth much fruitHe was passing through a Baptism of soul-trouble. The shadow of His death fell on Him often, before He actually carried the Cross.

But His face was steadfastly set to go to Jerusalem. The plaudits of the people never made Him turn aside and aspire to be a king. Their denunciations never made Him tremble and seek shelter in obscurity. His was a spirit constant to its high intent. To the last He was firm as a rock. The manhood in Him shuddered at deathit would not have been true manhood if it had not. But, overcoming His natural horror, He took the cup and drank it to its dregs, with, Not as I will, but as You will.

He did say, If it is possible, let this cup pass from Me. And He there warranted us in saying that there was no other way of accomplishing the Divine purpose, except by His death. Redemption could not be accomplished except by the Substitute bearing the penalty and dying, the Just for the unjust, to bring us to God. The Lord Jesus, from the beginning, knew what it all meantHe often told His disciples what would surely happen to Him.

He did not go to a suffering of which He was not aware. He was not, as one said, like a man who went in among machinery to set it right and was caught in a great wheel which was too strong for Him and so was dragged to death. My Brethren, our Lord knew all about the strength of that great wheelHe foretasted all the woe which the accomplishment of His Fathers purpose would cost Him. But He went forward, resolvedly laying down His life, that He might take it again. Therefore His Father loved Him, as well He might. Victim by intent! Redeemer by resolve! Be You glorified forever!

Let me put to you a little picture. No doubt our Queen has a strong affection for her sons. She loves them as her children. But if it should so befall that one of the princes was found upon the seacoast in the hour of storm, endeavoring to save men from a wreck. And if the prince, when others stood back, bravely ventured his life to rescue the perishing, would not his royal mother love him for his humanity? If he threw himself into the surf in his eagerness to save. If, foreseeing the consequences, he persevered in giving his own life that he might bring poor perishing men to shorewould not his mother feel that she loved him anew for his heroism? I think so.

Would not any of us love with renewed affection a dear son who had displayed a sacred self-denial for the good of men? Now turn your thought, reverently, to the great Father of spirits, who loves His Son as His Son but yet loves Him especially, because, out of pure, unselfish love, He laid down His life without debate. Marvel not that He said, Therefore does My Father love Me.   
The chief source of this peculiar love was His actual death as the perfecting of His obedience. He had become a servant and He served to the end. In all His life no single disobedience ever occurredthe great Fathers will was the rule absolute. Now comes in the last clause of the obedienceHe must lay down His life, for so has God appointed. And even unto this last He fails not but willingly yields up the ghost. Jesus went to the garden and the bloody sweat. He went to the high priests hall and the false accusingto Pilates hall and the scourging. He went to Herod and the setting at nothing.

He endured the Cross with its nails, its scorn, its darkness, its fever, its death-agonyHe went to it all as a lamb goes willingly to the slaughter. On the way to death He was careful to obeyHe would not die until every Scripture had been accomplished. His last words, I thirst, were spoken that the Scriptures might be fulfilled. He carefully observed the Fathers will in all thingsin the detail as well as in the gross. And to prove that He obeyed even to the end, He said, It is finishedand He bowed His head and gave up the ghost. The Father is infinitely delighted with the perfect obedience of the Son. He is a holy God, and He sees in Jesus, holiness perfected by patience. Therefore He calls Him, My Elect, in whom My soul delights.

Remember, also, that the death of our Lord Jesus was not only the perfection of obedience but the vindication of Gods righteous Law. Some would have a god without law, that he might be love alone. This might suit anarchists and the like. Let them, like the heathen, have a god of their own making. Is it not well spoken by the Psalmist, They that make them are like unto them? A lawless man fashions for himself a lawless god. But he who knows that society cannot exist unless there is law and unless law is sanctioned with reward and punishment, delights to see that this is, also, the mind of God.

God has the deepest concern for order and Law. There was no anger in God against men, as men. For while they abode in purity, He communed with them. But the thrice-holy God must hate evil in every form and He must abhor it even in His most favored creatures. If the Lord should forgive sinners without demanding a penalty, He would weaken the foundations of moral government. In his magisterial capacity the Judge of all the earth perceived that He could by no means spare the guilty. It would not have been an act of mercy to the race of men if God had winked at human sin in any case. It would have been in conflict with the fundamental Law of the universe.

Every rank of angels and intelligent beings in all worlds would have been affectedaffected mischievouslyhad it been proved that Jehovah had in any case set aside His own perfect Law and allowed the breach of it to go unpunished. It is not a case of private offense against an individualit is rebellion against the highest authority. Sin must be punished, therefore. And Jesus came to do honor to the broken Law. He was innocent. But He voluntarily submitted Himself as the Representative for men, to suffer so that God could righteously forgive.

The Law must be magnified and made honorable, and when the Lawmaker, Himself, died under the penalty of the Law, then a sufficient vindication was given to the vital principle of moral government. The Law became more illustrious in righteousness by the death of the Lord Jesus Christ than if every guilty son of Adam had been cast into Hell because of his transgressions. Christs sufferings were unto the Law of God a full justification for the free pardon of guilty menand as the Father looks at the Son and sees Him lay down His life that He might take it again, He is well content in justice to forgive, and in righteousness to justify, the sinner. Truly said the Lord Jesus, Therefore does My Father love Me.

Beloved, my heart delights in the thought that He who is a consuming fire against all sin, yet, when He looks on Christ, sees such a vindication given to His Law, that He can justly sheathe His sword and smile on those whom once He was bound to smite.

Once more, I think we may say that the Father loves the Son in His death and resurrection, because He herein manifested His supreme love to men. We may say of our Lord Jesus, Yes, He loved the people. All His saints are in His hands. The love of Jesus to His chosen is no new thingno idea that sprang up yesterday, to perish tomorrow. Long ages ago, when the mountains were not brought forth and the ancient hills had not lifted their heads, the saints had a dwelling place in the heart of God. He saw us in the glass of His foreknowledge and loved us according to the predestination of His will.

From of old the Father loved us so as to give us His Son and the Son loved us so as to give His life a ransom for us. And because of this love to one chosen object there was a fresh display of love to each other. I said, in the opening of my discourse, that the Father always loved the Son as God, but in our text we have a love of Him as Man and God in one wondrous Personality, in which are blended the two natures of holy God and perfect Man. The Mediator loved us so that He died for us, a sacrifice unto God, presented by infinite love in our place. And He says, Therefore does My Father love Me, because I lay down My life.

Only this word morethe resurrection is mentioned as ensuring the result, and as therefore being another opportunity for love to break forth. Jesus says, I lay down My life, that I might take it again. If that prince, of whom I spoke just now, had leaped from the side of a vessel to save a drowning man, it would have been a grand action. But if he sank never to rise again, his memory would have been enshrined in the grief of the Queens heart. But he would not have been able to say, Therefore does my mother love me. Jesus sinks into the dark wave but He rises again. I see Him make the great plunge into the abyss. But He cries, You will not leave My soul in Hell; neither will You suffer Your Holy One to see corruption.

He lifts His head above the black billows. He strikes out for the shore. He lands in safety with those whom He has rescued. How the Lord must delight in the risen Jesus and in all that follows upon His victory over the grave! Now is death defeated by the death of the Well-Beloved. Now is a new life ensured for dead sinners. Now is the clearance of all the once condemned published both to Hell and Heaven. Say, who is He that has passed the iron gate, descended into the abodes of death and then returned triumphant to the upper air? Who is this, you angel-watchers, at the gates of Glory? Who is this kingly Conqueror? Lift up your heads, O you gates. And be you lift up, you everlasting doors. And the King of

Glory shall come in.

The Lord of Hosts, the Lord mighty in battle, has laid down His life and taken it again. He has done it as readily and effectually as once He laid down His garments and shortly girt them about Him again, after He had washed the feet of His disciples. Having redeemed and cleansed us by His blood, He puts on again the human body, which for a while, He had cast aside. Jesus is glorified in all whom He has saved by His death and rising.

But His greatest glory is that the Father loves Him. Sweet are the songs of the saved on earth and blessed are the anthems of the redeemed in Heaven. But to Jesus, the best reward which is possible lies in this wordTherefore does My Father love Me. Before me, in this Divine love, I see a great deep, which I may not attempt to exploreI have but brushed the surface as with a swallows wing.

II. Secondly, CONSIDER THE FATHERS COMPLACENCY IN US ON ACCOUNT OF HIS DELIGHT IN HIS SON. Beloved, the Father loves His Son so much that His love overflows its banks and covers all of us whom the Lord Jesus has taken to be His own. The Fathers love is like a great beacon kindled in honor of the Well-Beloved but shedding its radiance far and wide to enlighten those who sit in darkness and in the valley of the shadow of death. Let us contemplate this fact so fraught with blessing to all Believers.

First, as our Lord Jesus is a Man, the Father places His work to mans account. The Lord had made man in His own image. He had created him a remarkable being of united matter and spirit. But man made a revolt from Him, so that, it repented the Lord that He had made man on the earth. When the Lord looks upon our race at this moment, He cannot take satisfaction in creatures who have made themselves so vile. Our nature is prone to evil, and it cannot but be abhorrent unto the thrice-holy Jehovah.

Yet is man not blotted out from the list of beings, for there is one Man, true Man, born of a woman, made under the Lawa partaker of flesh and blood, who is in Himself so well-pleasing to the Lordthat He makes up for all the displeasure felt towards the rest of our race. This Man was so obedient, so self-sacrificing, so pure, so devout, so gentle, so everything that is admirable, that when the Father considers Him, the virtues of that one Mans life and death endear to Him the race. For His sake He forgets the sins of men and is well-pleased to accept all who are united to Him.

By the obedience of One shall many be made righteous. The savor of this one Mans sacrifice has sweetened all the offerings of His fellows. It was a Man who, for the sake of the Divine Glory, sweat, as it were, great drops of blood and died upon the Cross. And therefore is the Lord wellpleased, even with guilty men for whom Jesus stood as the second Adam, and for whom He has won acceptance before the Throne.

Next, remember that the Lord Jesus has so glorified the Father, that His great achievements are made to redound to our benefit. All the works of Gods hands praise Him. All the deeds of His Providence extol him. But redemption brings Him His highest honors. In the Person of the Redeemer, Jehovah is best made known

*God, in the Person of His Son,*

*Has all His mightiest works outdone.*   
When the Father hears dishonor put upon the Divine name by blasphemers, or false teachers. When He sees the drunkenness and lust, the pride and cruelty of men, He is grieved at His heartbut on the other hand, all the dishonor is covered and put away by the glory of the Character and work of the Man, Christ Jesus.

I cannot utter my own thoughts on this pointmuch less can I think adequately upon such a theme. It is as if the millions of the redeemed were so many evil lamps all pouring forth darkness, and filling the universe with blackness. And then, on the other side, this one blessed lamp of God stood alone, pouring forth light. And the sacred light was so powerful that it banished all the darkness of the myriad night-makers and created eternal and unclouded day.

I will change the example and say that all of us were as the Dead Sea, full of foul waters, reeking with deadly odorsand the life of Jesus, poured out for ushas turned that lake of death into a pure and sparkling sea of life. The purity of Jesus suffices to purify all the multitudes of the human race who put their trust in Him. God loves His Son because He gets a glory from Him which cancels the dishonor worked by all the sins of men.

Note, again, that as God has great complacency in His Son, it runs over to us, because we are one with Jesus. I say not this of you all. For some of you have nothing to do with Christ at this time. But of as many as believe in Jesus, I may say, We are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones. The Fathers love to His Son extends to all the members of His Sons mystical body. What? Though we should be only comparable to the soles of our Lords feet, and are still in the mire, yet, if we are in the body, we share with the Head in all its glories.

You know the old proverb, Love me, love my dog. And certainly the Lord Jesus Christ might well say, Love Me, love the least of My people. The Father, like David, loves every lame Mephibosheth of the household, for the sake of His Jonathan. Brethren, as many of us as are joined unto the Lord by a living faithwe are one with Jesuswe are by eternal union one. When He died, we died. When He rose, we rose. We were condemned and justified in Him. And now that the Father loves Him, we also are beloved in Him. What a blessed thing it is that the Father loves One who has such an intimate relation to us as to be our Representative and Head!

Meditate upon this overflow of the Fathers love to the elect whom He has given to His Son. He so loved the Chief Beloved, that, for His sake, we are accepted. We are perfected and at last will be glorified. This is true of myriads of menmyriads! You speak of great congregationsbut all that ever assemble here are a mere handful. Look at the countless congregation redeemed by our Lords deatha multitude, which no man can number, of all nations and kindreds and people and tongues.

Remember the multitudes who have died in infancy, redeemed by precious blood from all the consequences of the Fall. Consider the multitudes of converts in the latter days, when the glory of the Lord shall be revealed. For as by one mans disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of One, shall many be made righteous. How many, human arithmetic fails to tell.

Now, call to mind the number and the variety of sins which have been committed by the redeemed company. All those sins are washed away by the blood of Christ. The love of God in Christ Jesus sees no iniquity in Jacob, for the atonement has put away all manner of offenses. The love of the Father to Jesus has made us comely in His comeliness, despite the multitude of deformities which were found in us. O sea of love, in which so vast a host of sins was swallowed up! How greatly does the Father love the Son when, for His dear sake, He covers all the myriad causes of displeasure, and makes us precious in His sight!

Then remember that while Jesus has redeemed so many and cleansed them from so many sins, He has done more. For by the Fathers love to Him they are made partakers of very many most costly blessings. Could you calculate the wealth of benefits wherewith the Lord daily loads His redeemed? Covenant mercies, who shall weigh them? Yet they all come through the Fathers love of Jesus.

Above all, reflect that we have eternal life through our Lords death. God so loves Jesus that, because of His temporary death, He has given endless life to all the redeemed. Jesus died once, and therefore we live forever. Because the Fathers love to Him can never die and He ever lives, we shall live also. His passing sorrow brings us eternal glory. Because of Christs death, millions and millions of years from now, we shall still be the children of God and shall be with Jesus where He is, beholding the glory which the Father has given Him. Admire the measureless merit of the Lord Jesus!

Meditate with reverence upon the overflowing torrents of the Fathers love to His Son! Because of His death He is unspeakably beloved and we are beloved in him. Here it were well to pause. No tongue can ever express this matchless story. We are accepted in the Beloved. How greatly beloved must He have been to cover such base things as we are with Divine acceptance! Think it over! Think it over! In Heaven you will need no fuller or loftier subject of meditation than the love of the Father to the OnlyBegotten, enwrapping in its folds the whole family of love. Therefore does My Father love Me.

Oh, how He must love Jesus, since for His sake He loves multitudes of sinners and loves them all the way from the door of Hell to the gate of Heaven! By the bliss eternal, by the rivers of pleasure that are at Gods right hand, by the glory without bounds, we may form some idea of the love of the Father to Him who laid down His life that He might take it again.

III. In the third place, CONSIDER OUR LOVE TO THE LORD JESUS ON THIS ACCOUNT. Beloved, His death is the great fact for which we love our Lord Jesus. The individual love of each Believer wells up when he can say, He loved me and gave Himself for me. This, also, is the crowning evidence of Gods love to Believers in general, for God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish.

His laying down His life is the central display of His love and the chief cause of our affection. We love Him for the holiness of His Character, for the tenderness of His heart, for the excellence of His teaching. And, indeed, we love Him for everything about His blessed Person and work. But, if the secret must be told, our hearts were chiefly won when our Beloved put on the crimson vesture and stood before us decked with wounds and pale in death. Then did we sing of HimWhite and ruddy is my Beloved.

Oh, the beauties of our King when He stands beneath the purple canopy of sacrifice! Then is our heart won and held in joyful captivity when we can say, You were slain and have redeemed us to God by Your blood. That text often thrills my heart wherein we read, Who His own Self bore our sins in His own body on the tree. Calvary reveals the great fountain of our love. The Cross is the pole whereon is uplifted the banner of love, both His and ours. We love Him because He first loved us and Golgotha is the window through which His love looks.

The connection of our text enhances our Lords love. It stands connected with the Good Shepherd. It is He that lays down His life. He gives it for the sheep. Will a man die for sheep? Yes, that may be. But could the Son of God die for such base creatures as we are? We were, of ourselves, by no means so great a treasure to Christ as a sheep is to a man. And yet He thought far more of us than shepherds do of their flocks. We were, by nature, only as so many foxes, or serpents, or creeping things. But yet the Lord Christ, having set His love upon us, would not rest till He had laid down His life for us. Alas, we were as ungrateful as we were unworthy.

We even opposed the efforts of our Savior. We acted more like goats than sheep, for we butted with our horns against our Shepherd. We were stray sheep and did not return at His callwe did not follow Him but we went farther and farther away. We were lame as to returning. But when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. We are sheep, too, that still go astray very grievously. Woe is me, that this should be true of me! After having been brought back on His shoulders, after having been pastured by His care, yet still I go astray! We are sheep that were lost.

We are sheep that would lose themselves again, if we couldsheep that make a very poor return to Him that shepherds us. Is this your kindness to your Friend? is a question which might often awake sad memories in our hearts. Beloved, let us love our Lord more! Surely, we cannot help it, as we perceive our own vileness and the greatness of His love whereby He laid down His life for us.

And remember that the Lord laid down His life of His own free will and under no constraint whatever. If you or I were to die for other people, we should be only doing a little sooner what we shall be obliged to do one dayfor death is the debt of nature which, sooner or later, all must pay. If a man yields his life for another, he only anticipates by a short season the time when he must lose it. But Jesus needed not to die at all, so far as He, Himself, was concerned. Messiah was cut off, but not for Himself.

What love is this! He wills to die. He says of His life, No man takes it from Me but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of My Father. Herein is love indeed, free love, deliberate and resolute. I see the bullocks going to the altar of the templepoor, dumb, driven cattle, they know not that they are to be a sacrificethey cannot throw into their deaths the merit of devout intent.   
Behold our Lord going to the slaughter as a sheep in regard to patience, but not like a sheep for knowledge and purposeHe knew what that slaughter meant and why He must endure it. Lama Sabachthani! was in its meaning known to Him before He uttered the cry. He foresaw the death on the CrossHe was made a curse for us, knowing what the curse meant and calmly resolving to bear it. For this deliberation of love He has our inexpressible gratitude and love. Do we not each one love Him? We should love Him, for Jesus laid down His life for each one of His people.

This love in general is a delightful theme. But how tender and touching it becomes when each one sees his own participation in it and cries, He loved me and gave Himself for me! Love delights in personal pronouns, My Beloved is mine and I am His. Love is most of all excited and called forth by a personal sense of gracious gifts received. It is a heart-moving song when we can sing, Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this Grace given. Remember, that to save one single soul, our Lord would have had to die and yet to save all men in the world He could have done no more.

And if there had been as many worlds of sinners as there are grains of sand upon the seashore, His one death would have been a sufficient vindication of the Law on account of them all. We can imagine no limit to the value of Christs atoning sacrifice. Its object could not have been attained by anything less than the laying down of His life. He died for His flock and for each one of His sheep in particularso that we may each one say today, He loved me and gave Himself for me. And each one knows that for himself, with special intent, the Lord Jesus bore the agony and bloody sweat, the Cross and passion. Therefore we must, each one of us, love Him to our hearts utmost capacity.

Indulge yourself with a sight of His love as it hangs bleeding on the tree. It may be, poor Soul, this morning you are bowed down with trouble because of sin and yet you are a child of Godsee, then, how Jesus loves! Do what you did at first, when, in your souls dark hour, you did look to Jesus. Look to His Cross. Look wholly to the slain Jesus. His blood has made peace

*And brought us release,   
And now the old bondage   
Forever must cease.   
Who trust in His might   
He leads into light   
Nor can any enemy   
Break on His right.*

Blessed, forever blessed, be Your dear name, O Jesus! There is none like it in Heaven, nor in the Heaven of heavens. How shall we praise Him? Our tears of gratitude come to our rescue. If we cannot speak His praises, we will weep them.

IV. I shall conclude by saying, CONSIDER WHAT A FELLOWSHIP IS OPENED UP BETWEEN THE SAVED ONES AND THE FATHER. The Father loves the Son and we love Him, also, after our measure. Brethren, we are agreed with the great God with whom once we were at enmity. Since we have seen our Lord lay down His life for us, we love Him. How can we do otherwise? For the same reason the Father loves Himthe very strongest love is confirmed when a common object of affection becomes a rivet between the two parties. Two hearts may be one in married love, but their union is intensified when a babys cry is heard in the house. Seldom are they parted by divorce who have blended their love in watching over a company of little children.

Beloved, when the Father looks on Jesus, He sees One who is altogether lovely to Him, and when we look on Jesus in our poor, half-blind manner, we also are charmed by His beauties. No enmity can remain between a soul and God when love to Jesus becomes the master passion of life. By His Cross, our Lord has slain the enmity. His death has cast a bond around the divided ones and has reconciled us to God. The thriceglorious Jehovah agrees with the blood-washed Sinner in glorifying His Son.

In the blood of Jesus we are made clean, and therefore we love Him the Father sees Jesus pouring out His hearts blood to make us clean and He loves Him on that accountthus the two who were apart are agreed in one. From now on we desire to honor Christ and we are grieved if He is not magnified. Whenever you hear a sermon which praises the Lord Jesus, does not your heart dance like David before the ark? But if your Lord is dishonored, do you not feel indignant? Could you not bear anything sooner than hear your Lord defamed?

In the congregation, when His atonement has been decried, have you not found yourself on the move? And if you did not move, but kept your seat, did you not bite your lip? You love Him and you cannot permit Him to be thrust into second place. If it were in your power, you would set Him upon a glorious high throne and make every knee bow before Him. That is what the Father is doing and will yet dothus the Father and you are one towards Jesus.

You have also an intense desire to become like your Lord, have you not? Ever since He bought you with His blood and you knew it, you have longed to be conformed to His image. This, also, is the Fathers design, for He desires His Well-Beloved to be the first-born among many Brethren. He loves our Lord Jesus so much that He has predestinated us to be conformed to His image. There cannot be another Divine Son, but the Father would have many human sons who shall be like the first-born.

If you have ever stood in the middle of a hall of mirrors, you have seen yourself repeated on all sides. Even so shall Heaven be full of lovely reflections of Him who is altogether lovely. For every blood-washed one shall wear the likeness of the Lord from Heaven. The Father can never have too much of His dear Son. He would have Him live in ten thousand times ten thousand beloved onesand as this, also, would be your highest joy, you have in this desire a wonderful bond of union between you and the Father.

I think I hear you say, Now I perceive that the Father Himself, loved men, for He gave the Son He loved so well to die for them and loved Him for dying on their behalf. This is an instructive discovery. When Abraham called Isaac to go up to Mount Moriah to be offered up as a sacrifice, Isaac could have resisted his fathers will. But he did not. They went both of them together to the place of the offering. Abraham loved Isaac when he bound himyes, he loved him all the more for consenting to be bound. Not only did Abraham, the father, offer his son, but Isaac, the son, voluntarily surrendered himself. And his father deeply loved him for that self-surrender.

Jesus, the greater Isaac, did actually give up His life in our place, to achieve His Fathers purpose, vindicate His Fathers Law, and save the people whom His Father had given Him. Therefore does the Father love Him and we love Himand we love the Father who freely delivered Him up for us all. Thus   
love completes its circle and God and man are made one by Christs work, even as they are one in His Person.

If anyone here has, by believing contemplation, found his way through the process described in my sermon, he is no longer an enemy to God, nor even a stranger to the Most High. For the death of Jesus has drawn him near. If you have followed me in this track, not merely with an attentive ear but with a willing heart, you are reconciled to God by the death of His Son. You love Jesus because He died and God loves Him for the same reason. You two have linked hands over the great Sacrifice.

What a joy is this! I feel as if I could find no better conclusion than the glowing verse of William Williams

*To You, my God, my Savior,   
Praise be forever new.   
Let people come to praise You   
In numbers like the dew.   
Oh, that in every meadow   
The grass were harps of gold,   
To sing to Him for coming   
To ransom hosts untold!*

LETTER FROM MR. SPURGEON.   
BELOVED FRIENDSKind Providence has brought me safely here. And I am resting and endeavoring to gather new stores. Very greatly am I cheered by news from the Tabernacle, of the very remarkable blessing resting upon the special services under Messrs. Fullerton and Smith. The Lord be praised for using these beloved workers! May the members of the Church see to it that the good seed is watered!

Having enjoyed the friendship of many of my readers for more than thirty years, I feel bound to send them my affectionate greetings and to thank them for their long-continued attention to my ministry. I would beg an interest in their daily prayers, for myself and for the work. May the Lord our God arise speedily, for the vindication of His own Truth! Yours in Christ Jesus,   
*C. H. SPURGEON.*   
Mentone, November 28, l889.

Adapted from The C.H. Spurgeon Collection, Version 1.0, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307 Sermon #995 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

THE SHEEP AND THEIR SHEPHERD   
NO. 995

**A SERMON   
DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,** AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. John 10:27.**

CHRISTIANS are here compared to sheep. Not a very flattering comparison you may say. But then we do not wish to be flattered, nor would our Lord deem it good to flatter us. While far from flattering, it is, however, eminently consoling, for of all creatures there are not any more compassed about with infirmity than sheep. In this frailty of their nature they are a fit emblem of ourselvesat least, of so many of us as have believed in Jesus and become His disciples. Let others boast how strong they are. Yet if there are strong ones anywhere, certainly we are weak. We have proved our weakness, and day by day we lament it. We do confess our weaknessyet may we not repine at it, for, as Paul said, so we find, when we are weak then are we strong.

Sheep have many needs, yet they are very helpless, and quite unable to provide for themselves. But for the shepherds care they would soon perish. This, too, is our case. Our spiritual needs are numerous and pressing, yet we cannot supply any of them. We are travelers through a wilderness that yields us neither food nor water. Unless our bread drops down from Heaven, and our water flows out of the living Rock, we must die. Our weakness and our need we keenly feelstill we have no cause to murmur since the Lord knows our poor estateand succors us with the most tender care.

Sheep, too, are silly creatures, and in this respect, likewise, we are very sheepish. We meekly admit it to Him who is ready to guide us. We say, as David said, O God, You know my foolishness. And He says to us as He said to David, I will instruct you and teach you in the way which you shall go. If Christ were not our Wisdom, we should soon fall a prey to the Destroyer. Every grain of true wisdom that we possess we have derived from Him. Of ourselves we are dull and giddyfolly is bound up in our heart. The more conscious you are, dear Brethren, of your own deficiencies, your lack of stamina, discretion, sagacity, and all the instincts of self-preservationthe more delighted you will be to see that the Lord accepts you under these conditionsand calls you the people of His pasture and the sheep of His hand.

He discerns you as you are. He claims you as His own. He foresees all the ills to which you are exposed, yet tends you as His flock. He sets store by every lamb of the fold, and so feeds you according to the integrity of His heart and guides you by the skillfulness of His hands. I will feed My flock, and I will cause them to lie down, says the Lord God. Oh, what sweet music there is to us in the name which is given to our Lord Jesus

Christ of the Good Shepherd! It not only describes the office He holds, but it sets forth the sympathy He feels, the aptness He shows, and the responsibility He bears to promote our well-being.

What if the sheep are weak? The shepherd is strong to guard his flock from the prowling wolf or the roaring lion. If the sheep suffer privation because the soil is barren, yet is the shepherd able to lead them into pasturage suitable for them. If they are foolish, yet he goes before them, cheers them with his voice, and rules them with the rod of his command. There cannot be a flock without a shepherdneither is there a shepherd, truly, without a flock. The two must go together. They are the fullness of each other.

As the Church is the fullness of Him that fills All in All, so we rejoice to remember that of His fullness have all we received, and Grace for Grace. That I am like a sheep is a sorry reflection. But that I have a Shepherd charms away the sorrow and creates a new joy. It even becomes a gladsome thing to be weak, that I may rely on His strength. To be full of needs, that I may draw from His fullness. To be shallow and often at my wits end, that I may be always regulated by His wisdom.

Even so does my shame redound to His praise. Not to you, you great and mighty, who lift your heads high, and claim for yourselves honornot for you is peace, not to you is rest. But unto you, you lowly ones, who delight in the valley of humiliation, and feel yourselves to be taken down in your own esteemto you it is that the Shepherd becomes dear. And to you will He give to lie down in green pastures beside the still waters. In a very simple way, we shall speak about the Proprietor of the sheep. My sheep, says Christ. Then we shall have a little to say about the marks of the sheep. After that I propose to talk awhile about the privileges of the sheep. I know My sheepthey are privileged to be known of Christ. My sheep hear My voice.

I. Who is the Proprietor of the sheep? They are all Christs. My sheep hear My voice. How came the saints to be Christs? They are His, first of all, because He chose them. Before the worlds were made, out of all the rest of mankind He selected them. He knew the race would fall and become unworthy of the faculties with which He endowed them and the inheritance He had assigned them. To Him belonged the sovereign prerogative that He might have mercy on whom He would have mercy. And He, out of His own absolute will, and according to the counsel of His own good pleasure, made choice severally and individually of certain personsand He said, These are Mine.

Their names were written in His bookthey became His portion and His heritage. Having chosen them of old so many ages ago, rest assured He will not lose them now. Men prize that which they have long had. If there is a thing that was mine but yesterday, and it is lost today, I might not fret about it. But if I have long possessed it, and called it my patrimony, I would not willingly part with it. Sheep of Christ, you shall be His forever, because you have been His from ever.

They are Christs sheep, because His Father gave them to Him. They were the gift of the Father to Christ. He often speaks of them in this way, As many as You have given Me. You have given them to Me, says He, over and over again. Of old, the Father gave His people to Christ. Separating them from among men, He presented them to Him as a gift, committed them into His hands as a trust, and ordained them for Him as the lot of His inheritance. Thus they become a token of the Fathers love to His Only-Begotten Son, a proof of the confidence He reposed in Him and a pledge of the honor that shall be done unto Him.

Now, I suppose we, most of us, know how to value a gift for the donors sake. If presented to us by one whom we love, we set great store by it. If it has been designed to be a love token, it awakens in our minds many sweet memories. Though the intrinsic worth may be of small account, the associations make it exceedingly precious. We might be content to lose something of far greater value in itself rather than that which is the gift of a friend, the offering of his love. I like the delicate sentiment of the poet, as it is expressed in that pretty verse

*I never cast a flower away,   
The gift of one who cared for me.   
A little flowera faded flower,   
But it was done reluctantly.*   
Yet, oh, how weak the words of human passion! But, oh, how strong the expressions of Divine ardor, when Jesus speaks to the Father of, the men whom You gave Me out of the world! Yours they were, He says, and You gave them to Me. And those that You gave Me I have kept. You sheep of Christ, rest safely. Let not your soul be disturbed with fear. The Father gave you to His Son, and He will not lightly lose what God Himself has given Him. The infernal lions shall not rend the meanest lamb that is a love token from the Father to His best Beloved. While Christ stands defending His own, He will protect them from the lion and the bear that would take the lambs of His flock. He will not suffer the least of them to perish. My sheep, says Christ.   
They are His, furthermore, because in addition to His choice and to the gift, He has bought them with a price. They had sold themselves for nothing. But He has redeemed them, not with corruptible things as with silver and gold, but with His precious blood. A man always esteems that to be exceedingly valuable which he procured with riskwith risk of life and limb. David felt he could not drink the water that the brave warriors who broke through the host of the Philistines brought to him from the well at Bethlehem because it seemed to him as though it were the blood of the men that went in jeopardy of their lives.   
And so he poured it out before the Lord. It was too precious a draught for him, when mens lives had been hazarded for it. But the Good Shepherd not only hazarded His life, but even laid it down for His sheep. Jacob exceedingly valued one part of his possessions, and he gave it to Joseph he gave him one portion above his Brethren. Now, you may be sure he would give Joseph that which he thought most precious. But why did he give him that particular portion? Because, he says, I took it out of the hand of the Amorite with my sword and with my bow.

Now, our blessed Shepherd esteems His sheep because they cost Him His blood. They cost Him His bloodI may say He took them out of the hand of the Amorite with His sword and with His bow in bloody conflict where He was Victor, but yet was slain. There is not one sheep of all His flock but what He can see the mark of His blood on him. In the face of every saint the Savior sees, as in a glass, the memorial of His bloody sweat in Gethsemane, and His agonies at Golgotha. You are not your own, for you are bought with a price.   
That stands as a call to duty, but it is at the same time a consolation, for if He has bought me, He will have me. Bought with such a price, He will not like to lose me, nor suffer any foe to take me out of His hands. Think not that Christ will suffer those to perish for whom He died. To me the very suggestion seems to draw near to the verge of blasphemy. If He has bought me with His blood, I cannot conceive He cares nothing for me, will take no further concern about me, or will suffer my soul to be cast into the pit. If He has suffered in my place, where is justice gone that the Substitute should bear my guilt, and I should bear it, too?   
And where is mercy fled, that God should execute twice the punishment for one offense! No, Beloved, those whom He has bought with blood are His, and He will keep them. My sheep, says Christ. They are His, or in due time they shall become so through His capturing them by sacred power. As well by power are we redeemed as by price, for the blood-bought sheep had gone astray even as others. All we, like sheep, have gone astray. We have turned everyone to his own way.   
But, my Brethren, the Good Shepherd has brought many of us back with infinite condescensionwith boundless mercy He followed us when we went astray. Oh, what blind slaves we were when we sported with death! We did not know then what His love had ordained for usit never entered our poor, silly heads that there was a crown for us. We did not know that the Fathers love had settled itself on us, or ever the day-star knew its place. We know it now, and it is He that has taught us. For He followed us over mountains of vanity, through bogs and miry places of foul transgression. He tracked our devious footsteps on and on, through youth and manhood, till at last, with mighty Grace, He grasped us in His arms and laid us on His shoulderand is this day carrying us home to the great fold aboverejoicing as He bears all our weight and finds us in all we need.   
Oh, that blessed work of effectual Grace! He has made us His own. He has defeated the enemythe prey has been taken from the mightyand the lawful captive has been delivered. He has broken the gates of brass, and cut the bars of iron asunder, to set His people free. O that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men! My SHEEP, says Christ, as He stands in the midst of His disciples. My Shepherd, let us one and all reply! All the sheep of Christ who have been redeemed by His power become His by their own willing and cheerful surrender of themselves to Him.   
We would not belong to another if we might. Nor would we wish to belong to ourselves if we could. Nor, I trust, do we want any part of ourselves to be our own property. Judge whether this is true of you or not. In that day when I surrendered my soul to my Savior, I gave Him my body, my soul, my spirit. I gave Him all I had, and all I shall have for time and for eternity. I gave Him all my talents, my powers, my faculties, my eyes, my ears, my limbs, my emotions, my judgment, my whole manhood, and all that could come of itwhatever fresh capacity or new capability I may be endowed with.   
Were I at this good hour to change the note of gladness for one of sadness, it should be to wail out my penitent confession of the times and circumstances in which I have failed to observe the strict and unwavering allegiance I owe to my Lord. So far from regretting, I would gladly renew my vows and make them over again. In this I think every Christian would join   
*It is done! the great transactions done   
I am my Lords, and He is mine   
He drew me, and I followed on,   
Charmed to confess the voice Divine.   
Now rest, my long-divided heart;   
Fixed on this blissful center, rest   
With ashes who would grudge to part,   
When called on angels bread to feast?   
High Heaven, that heard the solemn vow,   
That vow renewed shall daily hear   
Till in lifes latest hour I bow,   
And bless in death a bond so dear.*   
And yet, Brethren, though our hearts may now be all in a glow, lest they should presently grow cold, or the bleak atmosphere of this evil world should chill our devotion, let us never cease to think of the Good Shepherd in that great, good act which most of all showed His love when He laid down His life for the sheep.   
You have heard the story told by Francis de Sales. He saw a girl carrying a pail of water on her head, in the midst of which she had placed a piece of wood. On asking her why she did this, she told him it was to prevent the motion of the water, for fear it might be spilt. And so, said he, let us place the Cross of Christ in the midst of our hearts to check the movement of our affectionsthat they may not be spilt in restless cares or grievous troubles. My sheep, says Christ, and thus He describes His people. They are Christs. His own, a peculiar property. May I hope that this Truth of God will be from now on treasured up in your soul! It is a common Truth, certainlybut when it is laid home by the Holy Spirit it shines, it beamsnot merely as a lamp in a dark chamber, but as the day-star rising in your hearts! Remember this is no more our shame that we are sheep, but it is our honor that we are Christs sheep. To belong to a King carries some measure of distinction. We are the sheep of the imperial pastures. This is our safetyHe will not suffer the enemy to destroy His sheep. This is our sanctitywe are separated, the sheep of the pasture of the Lords Christ. This is sanctification in one aspect of itfor it is the making of us holy, by setting us apart to be the Lords own portion forever. And this is the key to our dutywe are His sheepthen let us live to Him, and consecrate ourselves to Him who loved us and gave Himself for us. Christ is the Proprietor of the sheep. And they are the property of   
the good Shepherd.   
II. Now, let us commune together awhile upon the marks of the sheep.   
When there are so many flocks of sheep, it is necessary to mark them.  
Our Savior marks us. It has been very properly observed that there are   
two marks on Christs sheep. One is on their ear, the other is on their   
foot. These are two marks of Christs sheep not to be found on any other.   
But they are to be found on all His ownthe mark on the earMy sheep   
hear My voice. The mark on the footI know them, and they follow Me. Think of this mark on their ear. My sheep hear My voice. They hear   
spiritually. A great many people in Christs day heard His voice who did   
not hear it in the way and with the perception that is here intended. They   
would not hear. That is to say, they would not hearken or give heed, neither would they obey His call or come unto Him that they might have life.   
These were not always the worst sort of peoplethere were some of the  
best that would not hear Christ, of whom He said, according to the original, as translated by some, You search the Scriptures. For in them you   
think you have eternal life: and they are they which testify of Me. And you   
will not come to Me, that you might have life.   
They would get as far as curiosity or criticism might allure them. But  
they would not go any fartherthey would not believe in Jesus. Now, the   
spiritual ear listens to God. The opening of it is the work of the Holy Spirit,   
and this is a mark of Christs chosen blood-bought peoplethat they hear   
not only the hollow sound, but the hidden sense. Not the bare letter, but   
the spiritual lesson. And that, too, not merely with the outward organ, but   
with the inward heart. The chief point is that they hear His voice. Oh, if all that heard my voice heard Christs voice, how would I wander  
down every street in this city to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ! But,  
alas, the voice of the minister is utterly ineffectual to save a soul, unless   
the voice of Christ reaches the conscience and rouses its dormant powers.  
My sheep hear My voice. The voice of JesusHis counsel, His commandsclothed with the authority of His own sacred sovereign utterances. When the Gospel comes to you as Christs Gospel, with demonstration of the Spirit, the invitation is addressed to you by Him. You can look  
upon it in no other lightso, by Gods Grace you must accept and receive   
it.   
When His princely power comes with itbeing mighty to save He puts  
saving power into the Word. Then you hear Christs voice as a fiat that   
must be obeyed! As a summons that must be attended to! As a call to  
which there must be a quick response! O Beloved, do not ever rest satisfied with hearing the voice of the preacher. We are only Christs speaking  
trumpetsthere is nothing in usit is only HIS speaking through us that  
can do any good. O children of God, some of you do not always listen to   
Christs voice in the preaching of His Word.   
While we comment on the Word, you make your comments on us. Our  
style, or our tone, or even our gesture is enough to absorbI might rather   
say, to distractyour thoughts. Why look you so earnestly on us? I beseech you, give less heed to the livery of the servant and give more care to the message of the Master. Listen warily, if you please. But judge wisely if you can. See how much pure grain, and how much of Christ there is in the sermon. Use your sieveput away all the chafftake only the good wheat. Hear Christs voice!   
Well were it if we could obscure ourselves that we might manifest Him. I could wish so to preach that you could not see even my little finger might I but so preach that you could get a full view of Jesus only. O that you could hear His voice drowning ours! This is the mark, the peculiar mark of those who are Christs peculiar peoplethey hear His voice. Sometimes, truly it sounds in the ministry. Sometimes it thrills forth from that Book of books, which is often grossly neglected. Sometimes it comes in the night watches. His voice may speak to us in the street. Silent as to vocal utterance, but like familiar tones that sometimes greet us in our dreams, the voice of Christ is distinctly audible to the soul. It will come to you in sweet or in bitter Providences. Yes, there is such a thing as hearing Christs voice in the rustling of every leaf upon the tree, in the moaning of every wind, in the rippling of every wave. And there are those that have learned to lean on Christs bosom till they have looked for all the world as though they were a shell that lay in the ocean of Christs love, listening forever to the sonorous cadence of that deep, unfathomed, all-mysterious main.

The billows of His love never cease to swell. The billowy anthem still peals on with solemn grandeur in the ear of the Christian. O may we hear Christs voice, each one of us for ourselves! I find that language fails me, and metaphors are weak to describe its potent spell. One point is worth noticing, however. I think our Lord meant here that His sheep, when they hear His voice, know it so well that they can tell it at once from the voice of strangers. The true child of God knows the Gospel from the Law. It is not by learning catechisms, reading theological books, or listening to endless controversies that he finds this out.   
There is an instinct of his regenerate nature far more trustworthy than any lessons he has been taught. The voice of Jesus! Why there is no music like it! If you have once heard it, you cannot mistake it for another, or another for it. Some are babes in Graceothers are of full age, and by reason of use have their senses exercised. But one sense is quickly brought outthe sense of hearing. It is so easy to tell the joy-bells of the Gospel from the death-knell of the Law. For the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life. Do, or die, says Moses. Believe, and live, says Christyou must know which is which.   
Yes. And I think they are equally shrewd and quick to discriminate between the flesh and the Spirit. Let some of the very feeblest of Gods people sit down under a fluent ministry, with all the beauties of rhetoric, and let the minister preach up the dignity of human nature and the sufficiency of mans reason to find out the way of righteousness, and you will hear them sayIt is very clever. But there is no food for me in it. Bring, however, the best and most instructed, and most learned Christian man, and set him down under a ministry that is very faulty as to the gift of utterance, and incorrect even in grammar.   
But if it is full of Jesus Christ, I know what he will sayAh, never mind the man, and never mind the platter on which he brought the meat. It was food to my soul that I fed upon with a hearty relish. It was marrow and fatness, for I could hear Christs voice in it. I am not going to follow out these tests. But certain it is that the sheep know Christs voice and can easily distinguish it. I saw hundreds of lambs the other day together, and there were also their mothers. And I am sure if I had had the task of allotting the proper lamb to each, or to any of them, it would have kept me till now to have done it.   
But somehow the lambs knew the mothers, and the mothers knew the lambs. And they were all happy enough in each others company. Every saint here, mixed up as he may be at times with parties and professors of all sorts, knows Christ, and Christ knows him, and he is therefore bound to his owner. That is the mark on the ear. You have seen sometimes in the country two flocks together on the road, and you sayI wonder how the shepherds will manage to keep them distinct? They will get mixed up. They do not. They go this way and that way. And after a little commingling they separate, for they know their masters voice, and a stranger will they not follow.   
You will go tomorrow, many of you, out into the world, some to the Exchange, others to the market, and others again into the factoryyou are all mixed. Yes. But the seeming confusion of your company is temporary, not real and permanent. You will come right again, and you will go to your own home and your own fellowship. And at the last, when we shall have ended our pilgrimage, the one shall wend his way to Heaven, and the other to the abyss of woe. There will be no mistake. You will hear the Masters call and obey. There is a mark on the ear which identifies every saint. Christs sheep hear His voice obediently.   
This is an important proof of discipleship. Indeed, it may serve as a reproof to many. Oh, I would that you were more careful about this! He that hears My commandments, and keeps them, said Jesus, he it is that loves Me. He that loves Me not keeps not My sayings. How comes it to pass, then, that there are certain commands of Christ which some Christians will suffer to lie in abeyance? They will say, The Lord commands this, but it is not essential. Oh, unloving spirit that can think anything unessential that your Bridegroom bids you do! They that love think little things of great moment, especially when they are looked upon as tokens of the strength or the tenderness of ones regard.   
It may not be essential, in order to prove the relation in which a wife stands to her husband, that she should study his tastes, consult his wishes, or attend to his comfort. But will she the less strive to please, because love, not fear, constrains her? I think not. And can it be that any of you, my Brethren, would harbor such a thought as your negligence implies? Do you really suppose that after the choice of Christ has been fixed on you, and the love of Christ has been plighted to you, you may now be as remiss or careless as you like?   
No, rather might we not expect that a sacred passion, an ardent zeal, a touch of inspiration would stir you up, put you on the alert, make you wake at the faintest sound of His voice, or keep you listening to do is will? Be it ours, then, to act out with fidelity that verse we have often sung with enthusiasm   
*In all my Lords appointed ways   
My journey Ill pursue.*   
However little the precept may appear in the eyes of others. However insignificant as compared with our salvation, yetdoes the Lord command it? Then His sheep hear His voice and they follow Him.   
Christ has marked His sheep on their feet as well as their ears. They follow Himthey are gently led, not harshly driven. They follow Him as the Captain of their salvation. They trust in the power of His arm to clear the way for them. All their trust on Him is abiding. They lean all their hope on Him. They follow Him as their Teacher. They call no man Rabbi under Heaven, but Christ alone. He is the infallible source of their creeds. Neither will they allow their minds to be ruled by conclaves, councils, nor decrees. Has Christ said it? It is enough. If not, it is no more for me than the whistling of the wind.   
They follow Christ as their Teacher. And the sheep of Christ follow Him as their Example. They desire to be in this world as He was. It is one of their marks, that to a greater or lesser degree they have a Christ-like spirit. And if they could, they would be altogether like their Lord. They follow Him, too, as their Commander, and Lawgiver, and Prince. Whatever He says unto you, do it, was His mothers wise speech. And it is the childrens wise ruleWhatever He says unto you, do it.   
Oh, blessed shall they be above many of whom it shall be said, These are they that have not defiled their garments. These are they which follow the Lamb wherever He goes. Some of His followers are not very scrupulous. They love Him. It is not for us to judge them. Rather we place ourselves among them and share in the censure. But happiest of all the happy are they who see the footprintthe print of that foot that once was pierced with the nailand put their foot down where He placed it, and then again, in the selfsame mark, follow where He trod, till they climb at last to the Throne.   
Keep close to Christ! Take care of His little precepts unto the end. Remember, Whoever shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of Heaven. Do not peril being least in the heavenly kingdom though it is better to be that than to be greatest in the kingdom of darkness. O seek to be very near Him, to be a choice sheep in His chosen flock, and to have the mark distinctly upon your foot! I will not stay to apply these truths, but leave each one of you to make such self-searching enquiries as the text suggests. Have I the ear mark? Have I the foot mark? My sheep hear My voice, and they follow Me. I hope that I am among the number. III. The last point, with which we now proceed to close, isTHE PRIVILEGE OF CHRISTS SHEEP. It does not look very large, but if we open it we shall see an amazing degree of blessedness in it. I know them. I know them. What does it mean? I have not time now to tell you all it means. I know them. What is the reverse of this but one of the most dreadful things that is reserved for the Day of Judgment? There will be some who will say, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, and in Your name cast out devils?   
And He shall say, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I never knew you. Depart from Me, you cursed. Now measure the height of that privilege by the depth of this misery. I never knew you. What a volume of scorn it implies! What a stigma of infamy it conveys! Change the picture. The Redeemer says, I know them. I know them. How His eyes flash with kindness! How their cheeks burn with gratitude, as He says, I know them! Why, if a man had a friend and acquaintance that he used to know, and some years after he found him a disreputable, abandoned, wicked, guilty criminal, I feel pretty sure he would not say much about having known such a fellow, though he might be driven to confess that he had some years ago a passing acquaintance with him.   
But our Lord Jesus Christ, though He knows what poor unworthy ones we are, yet when we shall be brought up before the Lord, before the Great White Throne, He will confess He knew us! He does know uswe are old acquaintances of Hisand He has known us from before the foundation of the world! For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many Brethren. Moreover whom He did predestinate, them He also called.   
There are riches of Grace in this. But we will consider it in another way. Our Savior knows us, our Shepherd knows us. Beloved, He knows your person and all about you. You, with that sick body, that aching headHe knows you and He knows your soul with all its sensitiveness. That timidity, that anxiety, that constitutional depressionHe knows it all! A physician may come to see you and be unable to detect what the disease is that pains or prostrates you, but Christ knows you through and through. All the parts of your nature He understands. I know them, says He. He can, therefore, prescribe for you.

He knows your sins. Do not let that dismay you, because He has blotted them all out. And He only knows them to forgive them, to cover them with His righteousness. He knows your corruptions. He will help you to overcome them. He will deal with you in Providence and in Grace so that they shall be rooted up. He knows your temptations. Perhaps you are living away from your parents and Christian friends, and you have had an extraordinary temptation, and you wish you could go home and tell your mother. Oh, He knows it, He knows it! He can help you better than your mother can!   
You sayI wish the minister knew the temptation I have passed through. Do not tell itGod knows it. As Daniel did not want Nebuchadnezzar to tell him the nature of his dream, but gave him the dream and the interpretation at the same time, so God can send you comfort. There will be a word as plainly suited to your case as though it were all printed and the preacher had known it all. It must be so. Depend upon it, the Lord knows your temptation, and watches your trials.   
Or is it a sick child, or is it a bad matter of business that has lately occurred? Or is it a slander that has wounded your heart? There is not a pang you feel but God as surely sees it as the weaver sees the shuttle which he throws with his own hand. He knows your trial and He knows the meaning of your groansHe can read the secret desire of your heart, you need not write it nor speak itHe has understood it all. You were sayingO that my child were converted! O that I grew in Grace! He knows itHe knows it every whit. There is not a word on your tongue, nor a wish in your heart, but He knows it altogether.   
O dear Heart, He knows your sincerity! Perhaps you want to join the Church, and your proposal has been declined because you could not give satisfactory testimony. If you are sincere, He knows it. He knows, moreover, what your anxiety is. You cannot tell another what it is that is bitter to youthe heart knows its own bitternessHe knows it. As His secret is with you, so your secret is with Him. He knows youHe knows what you have been trying to do. That secret giftthat offering dropped so quietly where none could see itHe knows it. And He knows that you love Him. Yes, you are saying in your soul, if ever I loved You, my Jesus, it is now. No, you cannot tell Him, nor tell others. But He knows it all. So, now, in closing, let us say that in the text there is mutual knowledge. I know them, but they also know Me, because they hear My voice, and recognize it. Here is mutual confession. Christ speaks, else there would be no voicethey hear, else were the voice not useful. I know them. That is, His thoughts go towards them. They follow Me. That is, their thoughts go towards Him.   
He leads the way, else they could not follow. They follow, however, when He leads the way. Being the counterpart of each other, what the one does the other returns through Grace. And what Grace puts into the sheep the Shepherd recognizes, and makes a return to them. Christ and His Church become an echo of each otherHis the voice, theirs is but a faint echo of it. Still it is a true echo, and you shall know who are Christs by this. Do they echo what Christ says? Oh, how I wish we were all sheep! How my soul longs that we may, many of us who are not of His fold, be brought in. The Lord bring you in, my dear Hearers. The Lord give you His Grace, and make you His own. The Lord comfort you, and make you to follow Him. And if you are His, show it.   
These dear Brothers and Sisters here at this time desire to confess Christ in your presence. If they are doing right, and you are not doing as they do, then you are doing wrong. If it is the duty of one, it is the duty of all. And if one Christian may neglect making a profession, all may do so, and then there will be no visible Church whatever, and the visible ordinances must die out. If you know Him, own Him, for He has said Whoever, therefore, shall confess Me before men, him will I confess also before My Father which is in Heaven. But whoever shall deny Me before men, him will I also deny before My Father which is in Heaven. God bless you, for Christs sake. Amen.

*Letter from Mr. Spurgeon, read at the Tabernacle on Lords Day, June 18, 1871*

MY BELOVED FRIENDSAs soon as the Church had resolved to meet for special prayer for me, I began rapidly to recover. It pleased God to turn the wind at the beginning of this week, and the change in the temperature has worked wonders. We may truthfully say of the Wednesday meeting for prayer, that the Lord fulfilled His WordBefore they call, I will answer. And while they are yet speaking, I will hear.

For all this great goodness I pray you to unite with me in sincere and intense gratitude to the Lord our God. I feel bound publicly to express my happiness of heart. This week has furnished me with the liveliest proofs of your true love. I have been deeply touched with the various ways in which the affection of so many of you have sought to find expression. I value this not only for my own sake, though it is very sweet to be the object of such hearty love, but because I see in it the evidence that our union has been cemented by years, and the earnest of future years of united effort, if God spares us. The absence of unity is weaknessits indisputable presence is strength.

On the closing day of my thirty-seventh year, I find myself the pastor of a beloved Flock who have borne the test of twelve Sundays of their ministers absence, and the severer test of more than seventeen years of the same ministry, and are now exhibiting more love to him than ever. I bless God, but I also thank you, and assure you that I never felt happier in the midst of my people than I do now in the prospect of returning to you. I am still weak, but the improvement in strength has been this week very surprising.

I hardly dare speak of the future. But I earnestly hope we shall look each other in the face on the first Sunday of July. The collection today is to enable the London Baptist Association to build a new chapel in the Wandsworth Road. We are to carry out the project so that it will not become us to be slack in our collection. London grows so rapidly that much must be done to keep pace with its spiritual needs. Our Association does something, but ten times more would be little enough.

You will, I am sure, give as God has prospered you. The College, of course, will be less helped. But I must beg to thank you for the continued series of noble contributions which have made each week remarkable. Peace be with you and the Lords own anointing. May those who speak to you today be filled with the Spirit. May the soft south wind of the Spirits love be among you, and may you pour forth praise as flowers breathe perfume.

Yours very truly,   
*C. H. SPURGEON.*   
Adapted from The C.H. Spurgeon Collection, Version 1.0, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307  
Sermon #2120 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

THE SECURITY OF BELIEVERSOR, SHEEP WHO SHALL NEVER PERISH   
NO. 2120

INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS-DAY, DECEMBER 29, 1889,

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON THURSDAY EVENING, SEPTEMBER 5, 1889.

**My sheep hear My voice and I know them and they follow Me: and I give unto them eternal life. And they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand. My Father, which gave them Me is greater than all. And no man is able to pluck them out of My Fathers hand. I and my Father are one.   
John 10:27-30**

OUR Savior did not hesitate to preach the deeper doctrines of the Gospel to the most miscellaneous assembly. When He began to preach where He was brought up, they all gathered with admiration about Him, until He preached the doctrine of election. And then, straightway, they were so angry that they would have destroyed Him. They could not bear to hear of the widows of Israel passed by and the woman of Sarepta chosennor of a heathen leper healed, while the many lepers of their own race were left to die.

Election seems to heat the blood and fire the wrath of many. Not that they care to be chosen of God themselves. But, like the dog in the manger, they would keep other people out of the privilege. Not even to prevent these displays of bad temper did our Lord keep back the discriminating Truths of the Word. Here, when addressing the Jews, he did not hesitate to speak, even to a rude rabble, concerning that glorious doctrine.

He says, You believe not, because you are not of My sheep, as I said unto you. He does not lower the standard of the doctrine. But He holds His ground and carries the war into the enemys camp. The notion that certain truths are not fit to be preached to a general assembly but are to be kept for the special gathering of the saints, is, I believe, horribly mischievous. Christ has not commanded us to keep a part of our teaching reserved from the common folk and set aside for the priests alone.

He is for openly proclaiming all the Truths of God. What I tell you in darkness, that speak you in light: and what you hear in the ear, that preach you upon the housetops. There is no Truth of God that we need be ashamed of and there is no Truth of God that will do any harm. We grant you that every truth can be twistedbut even this would be a less evil than the concealment of it. Whatever the doctrine may be, ungodly men can pervert it according to their own lustsand if we have to stop preaching a doctrine because of the possibility of perverting it, we shall never preach anything at all, for every truth may be perverted and made to be the mother of infinite mischief.

Our Savior did not teach His disciples to keep certain things for the instructed few who were able to receive them. But He bade us publish all the great Truths of God, since they are necessary for conviction, for conversion, for edification, for sanctification, and for the perfecting of the people of God. Even to His brutish opponents He exhibited but little reserve. He flashed in the faces of His adversaries this grand but humbling Truth, You believe not, because you are not of My sheep. Your unbelief is just an evidence that you were not chosen, that you have not been called by the Spirit of God and that you are still in your sins.

The Jews had said to him, If you are the Christ, tell us plainly. They professed that they wanted to know more certainly concerning Him. This was a vain pretense, for He had told them all they needed to know and they had not believed Him. Therefore He answered them to a large degree by making them know more about themselves. Sometimes the point in which a man is deficient is not as to the Gospel, but as to his own need of it. He may know all of Christ that is needful for his salvation but he may not know enough about himself and his own lost condition.

And therefore he is not in the way in which Christ becomes precious to him, because he is ignorant of his deep and terrible need. So the Savior began to talk to them, not so much about Himself as about His people and what they were to be. My sheep hear My voice and I know them and they follow Me.

I pray God, the Holy Spirit, to bless the Word to many, that they may learn more about the work of Christ in their hearts and more about their need of itand thus may be led to seek Jesus and find Him tonight as their Savior and their Shepherd.

There are two things in my text which will suffice for our meditation. First, here is a description given of the Lords people. My sheep hear My voice, and I know them and they follow Me. And then, secondly, there is a privilege secured to them, namely, their everlasting, unquestionable safety. I give unto them eternal life. And they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand. My Father, which gave them Me, is greater than all. And no man is able to pluck them out of My Fathers hand. I and My Father are One.

I. First, and all that I can say will be but little, considering the largeness of the subject, let us notice THE DESCRIPTION HERE GIVEN OF THE PEOPLE OF GOD.

They are first described by a specialty of possessionMy sheep. All men are not sheep, for some are foxes, or ravenous wolves, and others are compared to dogs and lions. All persons who might be called sheep are not Christs sheep. All do not belong to His flock. All are not gathered into His fold. There is a distinguishing mark of possession. There may be many sheep, but the Savior speaks of, My sheep, those whom He chose of old, those who were given Him of the Father, those who have been bought with His blood, redeemed from among men, and in due time have been ransomed by His powerfor He has bought them back from the hand of the enemy and therefore claims them to be His own. The Lords portion is His people.

Other lords have their portion and Christ takes His portion. His people are the lot of His inheritance. He speaks of My sheep as a peculiar heritage, whom, as a Shepherd, He claims for His own. Of these He is the sole Owner. He is not merely their Keeper but their Possessor. We read of the hireling shepherd, whose own the sheep are not. But in the case of our Good Shepherd, He puts forth His own sheep.

There is a special character about them. They are My sheep. They are dependent, timid, trembling, obedient, teachable. They are made sheep by His own Spirit. They have received a nature which is not that of the doggish world, nor that of the swinish multitude, nor that of the wolfish persecutor. But they are men indwelt of the Spirit of God, who are, therefore, clean, gentle, loving, gracious. He calls them My sheep, for they have a special relation to Himselfthey are like Jesus. Being His sheep, He has become their Guardian as well as their Proprietor and they look up to Him as such. They are sheep to Him and He is a shepherd to them.

We may judge ourselves tonight by considering whether towards Christ we are His sheep. Do we acknowledge ourselves as belonging to Him, spirit, soul, and body? Do we regard ourselves as being, in relation to Him, no wiser, no stronger, than sheep to a shepherd? I know some who are certainly no sheep of Christs flock, for they will be led by nobody in Heaven, or on earth. They must have their own sweet way. They are critics of the Bible, not disciples of it. They might be very good dogs but they are very strange sheep. They would make very respectable wolves, for they are great in destructive criticism. But they certainly are not sheep.

And their temper and spirit are such that they would disdain the character, if they understood it. What? To go where I am led? To lie down where I am bid to lie down? Not to choose my own way? To see nothing and know nothingto have my eyes in His head and my wisdom in His mind? To be shepherded by another mind than my own? Is it so? Am I to be nothing but a sheep to the Lord Jesus? Yes, it is even so. And therefore the modern wise man is indignant and proudly repudiates the character of a sheep.

As for us, we accept all that the name implies. O Brethren, we can play the man before other people, but when we come before our Lord, as the sheep is a mere animal in comparison with its shepherd, we feel ourselves to be less than that. How often have we cried with David, So foolish was I and ignorant: I was as a beast before You! O my Lord, in Your presence I sink as low as low can be and You become very high, yes, All in All to methe Shepherd of my weak, vacillating, trembling spirit! There are special characteristics, then, about these people in the description. I have only time to hint at some of them.

A chief mark of Christs people is attention. My sheep hear. They can hear, because they have had spiritual ears given them. Once the Shepherd might have spoken all day long and they would not have heard Him. But it is not so now. Even from the Cross our Lords plaintive cries were all unheard by them. But now He has given them spiritual capacity and perception and they can hear and they do hear what His dying love would make them know and understand. Their Lord has spoken to them. They have heard His voice and have known it to be His. They still hear it and they distinguish between His voice and other voices. A stranger will they not follow: for they know not the voice of strangers.

They now so hear that voice as to hear it in a true way. And joyfully to own it by obeying it. Do you not say, sometimes, to a child that is disobedient, Did you not hear me speak, Child? So Christ may say to many who hear with the outward ear but who will not yield obedience, that they have not heard Him. For indeed they have not hearkened with the inner ear. Their ear does not reach down to their heart. And thus, for spiritual purposes, it is no ear at all. It is an awful thing when the ear is a closed-up passage, shut against the voice of the Savior.

You can tell the sheep of Christ by their being marked in the ear. My sheep hear My voice. They may not hear a good deal that other people hear. They may even be glad to be deaf to it. There are many calls exceedingly musical to carnal ears, which have no charms for them. They try to be deaf to some voices from which they could gather nothing but temptation. But they hear Christs voice. They are all there when He speakstheir soul sits at the door to hear His softest whisper. They try to hearthey charge themselves to take heed that they lose no sound from Heaven. They do hear. But they long to hear yet more completely and to be more obedient to that voice which rings through the chambers of their soul.

Oh, what a hearing we have sometimes given to Christ! I have heard Him with my body, my soul, my spiritat least, I have thought so. But whether in the body, or out of the body, I could not tell. If in the body, every pore has been an ear for my Lords sweet voice. As though my blood were tingling from the crown of my head to the sole of my foot, so has my spirit been wholly and entirely affected by the charming tones of the voice of the Well-Beloved, Oh, that He would speak tonight! Can you not hear Him? Beloved, is He not now calling us? Do you not rejoice to hear Him?

*No musics like His charming voice,*

*Nor half so sweet can be.*   
So, you see, a noteworthy mark of the elect ones lies in their attention to Jesus, their Shepherd. He calls in vain to others. But His sheep hear His voice.

Another mark of the Lords people is intimacy. My sheep hear My voice, and I know them. I know them. Yes, the Lord discerns them. He singles them out, for the Lord knows them that are His. Sometimes we do not know them. But He says, I know them. In cloudy times they do not know themselves. But He says, I know them. When a child of God does not know whether he is a child of God or not, his Father knows His own children and the Great Shepherd knows His own sheep.

His is a discernment which never fails. The hypocrite cannot get into the true fold of Christ. He may get into the visible fold. But not into the real spiritual fold of Christ. For Christ does not know Him and bids Him depart. This is the very seal upon the foundationThe Lord knows them that are His. His eyes discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that fears God and him that fears Him notHis is a knowledge of quick and certain discernment.

But this might make us tremble if we did not know that the expression, I know them, means a knowledge of approbation. I know them, says the Shepherd. I take a delight in them. I know their secret sighs and mourning. I hear their private prayers. I know their praises in the silence of their hearts. I know their consecration and their aspirations after perfect service. I know their longings and their love. I know how they delight in Me.

I know how they trust My promises. I know how they look to My atoning blood. I know how in their inmost souls they rejoice in My name. I know them and approve their secret thoughts. O sweet words, understood in that sense! And this is one part of the character of the Lords peoplethat He did foreknow them in His Sovereign Graceand now He personally knows them by taking a delight in them.

This Divine complacency leads to a very intense observation of them. He knows the way that I take. The Lord knows the way of the righteous. He has an eye upon them and marks their paths. His ears are open to their cry and He hears their petitions. Though there is all the world for His omniscience to consider, yet He looks upon each one of His sheep as much as if there were only that one person in the universe. Oh, to think of this! I know them, sounds like music in this sense. He that knows the stars and knows the infinite multitude of living creatures in the universe, has a special and peculiar knowledge of His own chosen.

I know them, says He. And He intends, by that, an intense observation. Now, Beloved, just try a little here, to see whether you come into this numberI know them. Does the Lord know you as His own? Has He had personal communion with you and you with Him? Or will He have to say to you at the last, I never knew you? Why, some of you have made Him know you! You have gone to Him in such trials and in such troubles and you have cried to Him in such bitterness and anguish, that, if He asks your name, you can say

*Once a sinner near despair   
Sought Your Mercy Seat by prayer;   
Mercy heard and set him free;   
Lord, that mercy came to me!*

When You did help me in great need, when You did pass by my great sin, then did You know me, O my Lord! Do You ask me who I am? Ah, my Lord! You know my name. Just as some men know right well the importunate beggar who is often at their door, so does the Lord, for certain, know some of you, for you go every day begging at His gate, and you receive constant alms at His hand. Besides that, you go every day thanking Him for the mercies you receive. He knows your namethe name of one who is drowned in debt to His infinite bounty. He can never forget your groans and cries.

And day by day your praises are a memorial to Him. By His love and pity and compassion, He is sure to remember you. Sooner can a woman forget her sucking child than your God forget you. Well, here are things well worth the notingattention and intimacy. Are these yours?

But here is one moreactual obedience. How does He put it? I know them and they follow Me. All the Lords sheep are marked in the foot, as well as in the ear. The foot and ear marks must be in every sheep of the Lords flock. They follow Me. That is to say, they openly avow Him as their Shepherd. Other shepherds come and other sheep go after them. But these sheep know the Lord Jesus and they follow Him. He, alone, is their Leader. They are not ashamed to admit it. They take up their cross and follow the Cross-bearer and they bear His name.

More than that, they practically carry out their open avowal and they follow Him in daily life, copying His example. They not only say, He is my Leader, but they follow Him. Christs sheep try to follow in the track that the Shepherd marks for them. Christs people are never so happy as when they can put down their feet where Christ put His feet down. The very marks that He has left by His bleeding footsteps we would desire to follow all day and every day. Beloved, look carefully to this! Do what Jesus did, according to your measure and power. This is what the people of God try to do. If you do not endeavor to be like Christ, you are not His sheep. For of His sheep it is true, I know them and they follow Me.

And this is personally operative upon them. I could not tell you exactly in English words, but the Greek word gives here a kind of personality to the whole company. My sheep hear My voice, that is, the whole of the flock of God. I know them, that is, again, the whole flock of them, altogether. But, they follow Me, is in the plural number. It is as though it said, They, each one, follow Me. We, who are the Lords chosen, hear as a mass and the Lord knows the whole Church, for, as a whole, it is redeemed by Christ.

But we individually followeach one for himself, through Divine Grace. We each one follow Him. They follow Me. I like that singular personal pronoun. It is not written, They follow My Commandments, though they do. It is not said, They follow the route that I have mapped for them, though they do that, too. But, they follow Me, distinctly. In their individual personality they follow their Lord in His individual personality. They have recognized Him above His words, above His ways and even above His salvation. They follow Me, says He.

This is a grand mark of a Christiannot merely a life of morality, a life of integrity, a life of holinessbut a life of all these in connection with Christ. They follow Him, not holiness, nor morality, nor integrity, apart from Christthey follow their Lord. A good life is good in any man. We cannot speak evil of virtue, even when we find it in the ordinary moralist. But this is not the complete mark of Christs sheep. The virtues of Christs sheep are in connection with Himself. The Christian is holy and all that, but that is because he follows his perfect Master and keeps close to Him. This is one of the peculiar and unfailing marks of the child of God.

I have run through, very briefly, the descriptions, and I now leave you to meditate upon it when you are alone. This descriptions of the sheep of Christ are worthy of reading, marking and inwardly digesting.

II. But my main object tonight is to show you THE GREAT PRIVILEGE HERE CONFERRED ON THE PEOPLE OF GOD. Christ has secured to them the priceless gift of eternal security in Him. No sheep of Christ shall ever be lost. None that He has purchased with His blood and made to be His own, shall ever wander away so as to perish at last. This is the doctrine of the verses now before us. At any rate, if I wanted to express that doctrine, I could not find words in which I could set it forth more definitely, or more completely, than is done by the words before me.

The security of the people of God lies, first of all, in the character of the life which they have received. Listen to thisAnd I give unto them ETERNAL LIFE. All the spiritual life which all the sheep in the flock now possess has been given to them by their Shepherd. Never was there another flock of which this could be said. No shepherd but this one can give life to his sheep. But He gave them all the true life that they have.

No, stopHe not only gave them life but He sustains that life by a constant gift. Observe, it is not written, I gave unto them eternal life, but I give unto them eternal life. They are always living by virtue of the life which He is always giving. They are constantly receiving life from Him, according to that assurance, Because I live, you shall live also. What He always gives they must always receive and therefore it cannot cease.

Notice the nature of that life. I give unto My sheep eternal life. Now, you all know what eternal meansor say, rather, none of you can form an idea of eternity which can grasp all its length of endurance. Only thisyou know it has no end and cannot, therefore, close. If anybody said that he had eternal life and lost it, he would be flatly contradicting himself. It could not be eternal, or else he must still have it. If it is eternal, it is eternal and there is no end to it. And that is an end of further argument about it.

If the life that Christ gives us, when we are born again, can die, it is not eternal life, or else words have ceased to have any meaning at all. In its nature, as being the work of the Holy Spirit, and an emanation from God, the life bestowed in regeneration is an undying one. Has not the Holy Spirit described us as being born again, not of corruptible seed but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which lives and abides forever? The life of God imparted by the Holy Spirit must live forever. As the gift is continuous, is always being given, and as it is in itself eternal life, it must always exist.

But, principally, I dwell upon the glorious character of the Giver. I give unto My sheep eternal life. The life that Christ gives is not that poor, paltry life which lasts the professor for about three weeks and then dwindles down and dies out. Or, say, three months and then the revival is over and the convert is spun out and done for and has to begin again. Such is the religious life which is excited by men. But it is not so with the life which comes from God.

I said that the false convert begins again, though how he begins again, I know not, because I read in Scripture of people being born again. But I have never read of their being born again, and again, and again, and again. I am told that some of our religionists have had their people converted and born again more times than they can count. And I heard that a woman had been born again twelve times down at a certain meeting. But he who stated the fact said shrewdly that he feared it was not done well the last time.

No, I do not think it will ever be done well in that way. He that is born again, according to Scripture, has received ETERNAL LIFE. And this is the only life worth receiving. I would not preach my very soul away in order to proclaim such a two penny, trumpery, temporary salvation as that. But to preach the Lord Jesus as giving eternal life is worth living for and dying for. I tell you, Sirs, it is this that brought me to Christ. While I was yet young and thinking over matters, I saw young lads that were brought up with me, excellent in character, who left their homes to be apprenticed and after a while the temptations of the world overcame them, and they went astray and had no religion at all.

But when I read that Christ gave His sheep eternal life, I looked at it as a kind of moral life insurance for my soul and I came to Christ and trusted Him to keep me to the end. I shall suffer a grievous disappointment if I ever find out that the life of God in me is not eternal and that the new birth does not assure final perseverance.

I did not go up to the booking office and take a ticket for a quarter of the distance to Heaven. But I took my ticket all the way through. I trust, no, I know, that according to my faith, so will it be unto me. I am very glad to have my through ticket with me and I believe that unless the train of Almighty Grace smashes upwhich it never willI shall get through to the Celestial terminus as surely as ever Divine power can draw me therefor so it is writtenI give unto My sheep eternal life.

Now, depend upon it, it is what you hold out to people that has much to do with how they behave themselves afterwards. Tell them that if they believe in Christ, they are going to get, not eternal lifebut life for a little whilelife for as long as they take good care of it, and I fear it will prove to be so. It may do them good to get the poor little change you offer thembut as surely as they are converted to a temporary life, they will die out before long.

You told them that they would. You did not propose any more to them. But when you propose to them thisHere is everlasting life to be had by believing in Christ. It is not temporary but eternal lifewhy, then they grip it as such. They believe in Christ for that and according to their faith it is unto them. And the Lord and Giver of life is glorified in giving to them this great and splendid gift, the gift of all gifts. I give unto My sheep eternal life.

I do not know in what other way to preach from this text than the one in which I am preaching from it. Somebody says, Oh, that is Calvinism! I do not care what it is. It is Scriptural. I have this inspired Book before me, and I cannot see any meaning in the words before me, if they do not mean that those who have received life from the Lord Jesus have an endless inheritance. I cannot make them mean anything else. I give unto My sheep eternal life, must mean that Believers are eternally secure.

It is dangerous doctrine, cries one. I have not found it dangerous and I have tried it these many years. I conceive that it would be far more dangerous to tell people that they could be truly converted and yet the work of Divine Grace would end in six months and then they could come back again and begin again and do so as many times as they liked. The Word of God tells them that if they shall fall away, it is impossible to renew them again unto repentance. Men may fall and be restored. But if they fall away utterly, there remains no other work which can be done for them. If this everlasting life could die, the Holy Spirit would have done His best and nothing more would remain to be done.

If it were so that this salt which is good should lose its savor, where could it be salted? See what a gulf opens before you. And do not look for a work which will not endure every possible strain. Oh, that you may get this eternal life!

So we take a step farther. The children of God are safe, again, not only because of the life they receive but because of the inner dangers which are averted. Take the next sentenceAnd they shall never perish. They have a tendency to spiritual sickness, but their Shepherd will doctor them so that they shall never perish. They are sheep and have a tendency to wander. But their Shepherd shall keep them so that they shall never perish. Time tries them and they grow old and the novelty of religion wears off. But they shall never perish. Think what you will of them, they shall never perish, for so the promise stands.

The first statement, I give unto them eternal life, is as broad as can be, but this is broader stillthey shall never perish. The rule has absolutely no exception. The whole of them shall be preserved. Let them live to be as old as Methuselah, they shall never perish, whatever temptation may assail them. They may be tried and troubled and broken down, so that they may be hardly able to live. But they shall never perish. Never is a long day. But it is not longer than Divine Grace will last. Blessed be God, this grand promise stands fastThey shall never perish.

Now we must go a step farther. We have no time to urge these arguments at any great length. They are safe, next, by outer injuries being prevented. Neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand. Many will pluck at them but none shall pluck them away. The devil will give many a horrible pluck and pull, to get them away. But out of the great Shepherds hand he shall never take them. Their old companions and the memories of their old sins will come and pluck at them very hard and very cunningly. But the Savior says, None shall pluck them out of My hand.

So, first, here is their securitythey are in His hands. That is, in His possession and He grasps them, as a man holds a thing in his hand and says, It is mine. Neither shall any take them away from being under His protection. Never shall they be plucked away from Christ. When He says this, He pledges His honor to preserve them, for if it could be that one were plucked out of His hand, then would the devils in Hell rejoice and say, He could not keep them. He said that He would, but He could not. We have managed to pluck this one, or that one, out of the pierced hand of their Redeemer. But such a horrible exultation shall never be heard throughout the ages of eternity.

They shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of My hand. Someone wickedly said, They may get out of His hand themselves. But how can this be true, when the first sentence is, They shall never perish? Treat Scripture honestly and candidly and you will admit that the promise, they shall never perish, shuts out the idea of perishing by going out of the Lords hand by their own act and deed. They shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of My hand. Who is to loosen the clasp of that hand which was pierced with the nail for me? My Lord Jesus bought me too dearly ever to let me go. He loves me so well that His whole omnipotence will work with that hand, and unless there is something greater than Godhead, I cannot be plucked away from that dear, fast-holding grip.

Now, to make quite sure about it and to pile on the comfort, the Savior goes on to add the care and power of God Himself. Our Lord says, My Father, which gave them Me. The saints of God are safe, because the Father gave them to His Son. He did not give Him a transitory inheritance. He did not bestow on Him a something which He might, after all, lose. Will the Lord Christ lose what His Father gave Him? You know how people say, Oh, I hope that, if a burglar takes anything from my house, he will not take that cup, which is an heirloom. My father gave it to me.

If a man had to defend his property, he would be sure to take care of that which was a very special gift, given in his honor, as a memorial of a great work. So is it with our Lord JesusHe values that which His Father gave Him. I delight in the thought. I picture my blessed Lord looking at each one of His believing people and saying, My Father gave you to Me. That poor woman, that struggling young man, that decrepit old lady, that man who is half-starved, but who loves his LordJesus says of each one, My Father gave this soul to Me. He cannot lose what His Father gave Him.

He would die again sooner than He would lose them. His death has made their salvation safe beyond all jeopardy. He laid down His life for His sheep. The lion came and leaped into the fold. But the Shepherd met the lionyes, He received him on His naked breast and held him there. It was a terrible tug. The Shepherd sweat great drops of blood as He held the monster. But He rent him and He hurled him to the earth and said, It is finished. And it was finished. He has so saved all His flock until now that we are sure that He will never lose one of those whom His Father committed to His trust. My Father gave them Me.

Then He goes on to say that His people are kept by the Fathers power. For He says, My Father, which gave them Me, is greater than all. And no man is able to pluck them out of My Fathers hand. Beloved, although God gave us to Christ, He did not cease to care for us Himself! Our sweet text last Sunday night I must bring to your memory. I could not fully preach from it, but the text was enough without a sermonAll Mine are Yours and Yours are Mine. And I am glorified in them.

We tried to show you how we were none the less the Fathers because we were the Sons and none the less the Sons because we belonged to the Father. So here Jesus in effect says. My Father gave you to Me. Yet He takes care of you none the less, but all the more. Because He is determined that what He gave to Me shall be Mine, the Lord will put forth His wisdom and power to preserve you.

Let me, by a symbol, illustrate the latter words of the text. There lie the children of God in the hand of Christ. Do you see that fast closed hand? They are safe enough there. Jesus says, No man shall be able to pluck them out of My hand. But see the Father? He puts His hand over the hand of Jesus! There, nowyou are inside two hands, And no man is able to pluck them out of My Fathers hand.

Oh, the serene security of those who hear the voice of Christ and whom He calls His sheep! A double-handed force keeps them safe against all ill. Pluck away, Satan! You will never pluck them away from the hand of Jesus and the hand of His Father! Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? It is   
impossible to be done.

And then the Savior finishes all by saying that, while He has spoken of the Father and Himself as two and two as they are as Personsyet in their Divine Essence they are but One. He says, I and My Father are One. And especially One in love to His people. The Father Himself loves you, even as He loves His Son. And, while you read the love of Christ in His death, you must read the Fathers love quite as much in that great sacrifice. It is true of our Lord Jesus thatHe loved the Church and gave Himself for it. But it is equally true of the FatherGod so loved the world, that He gave His Only-Begotten Son.

They are one in an infinite love to all those who, called according to the Divine purpose, are following Christ and hearing His voice. I fall back with great joy upon this blessed convictionthat He will not suffer those to perish who have received eternal life at His hands. Of course, if you have only taken temporary lifeif you only believe in thatyou will get no more than you believe. Your gift will be measured by your faith. But if you say, I gave myself up to Christ that He might be Alpha and Omega to me. And I wholly trust myself to Him without reserve, throughout all my life, to save me, He will do it.

I am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day. He which has begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. The path of the just is as the shining light, that shines more and more unto the perfect day.

You are safe in Christs hands. Know it, and feel the joy of it. Oh, says one, but if I thought so, I should run into sin! I am sorry for you things act very strangely upon you. Nothing binds me to my Lord like a strong belief in His changeless love. Oh but it would be far safer to tell your hearers that they may be overcome by sin and perish! I will not tell them what I do not believe. I will not dishonor my Lord by a falsehood. Shall I come home to your house and tell your children that, if they do wrong, you will cut their heads off? Or that, if they disobey you, they will cease to be your children?

If I were to propound that doctrine, your children would grow angry at such a slander upon their father. They would say, No, we know better than that! Far rather would I say to them, My dear children, your father loves you. He will love you without end, therefore do not grieve him. Under such doctrine true children will say, We love our ever-loving Father. We will not disobey Him. We will endeavor to walk in His ways.

*It is love that makes our willing feet*

*In swift obedience move.*   
Our loving Lord will not cast away those to whom He is bound by marriage bonds.

Well, but suppose we sin. He will chasten us and restore us. If I believed that doctrine, I should live as I like, says one. Then you are not one of His sheep, for His sheep love holiness and will not love iniquity. The change worked by the new birth is such that a man will not return to his old ways of sin and folly. This is the doctrine. And how can you make it to be an indulgence to sin? True saints never turn the Grace of God into licentiousness but the very mention of eternal love leads them to careful obedience.

One more thing I must say. Some ministers preach a Gospel with a very wide door to it, but there is nothing to be had when you get within. I am sometimes told that I make my door a little too narrow. It is not true, for I preach the Gospel to every creature under Heaven, with all my might. But if the door is narrow, there is something worth having when you enter by it. Even if the way is narrow, if you once get in, you have got in and you have found eternal life and you shall never perish, neither shall any pluck you out of Christs hands.

Sinner, come and have an eternal blessing! It is worth having. Come and have it! If you believe, you shall assuredly be saved. He that believes and is baptized shall be savedsaved from sin so as never to go back and live in it again! So saved as to be made holy! Saved as to be preserved in holiness. Holiness shall be the set of the main current of your life, until, made perfectly holy, you shall dwell with God   
above.

Into His hands let us commit our spirits tonight and we may rest assured that they shall be safe eternally. Amen.   
LETTER FROM MR. SPURGEON

DEAR READERSOn this, the final sermon of the year, permit your friend and servant to wish you all, in the highest sense, a happy New Year. There is not space to do more than say from my retreatI pray you are mindful of me in your prayers.  
Yours, at the end of thirty-five volumes, most gratefully,   
*C. H. SPURGEON*  
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END OF VOLUME 35 Sermon #1056 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

PERSEVERANCE WITHOUT PRESUMPTION   
NO. 1056

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON THURSDAY EVENING, MARCH 7, 1872, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand.   
John 10:28.**

THOSE of you who were present last Thursday evening will remember that I spoke, then, upon the necessity of holding fast the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end, [A PERSUASIVE TO STEADFASTNESS, NO. 1042] and I showed you that it is only by continuing in the faith with which we began that we are proven to be partakers of the Lord Jesus Christ. Now, let us speak as plainly as we may, we are always liable to be misunderstood. The most eager hearer may easily confuse his thoughts with our words, and so attribute notions to us that spring up spontaneously in his own mind.

Thus I met this week with an earnest anxious enquirer who thought I had meant that though a man should be a Believer in Jesus Christ, yet after all he might perish. I dare say some expressions I used led him to think so. Had he been long a hearer here, he could not have imagined that I could give utterance to such a statement! For all of you who hear me continually know that if there is one doctrine I have preached more than any other, it is the doctrine of the Perseverance of the Saints even to the end. What I intended to say, and I do not wonder that he did not quite understand me, was thisthe Believer must always be a Believerhaving began in that confidence, he must continue in that confidence.

The alternative would be that he draws back unto perdition, in which case he would perish as an unbelieverand then the inference would be that the faith he seemed to have was a fiction, that the confidence he seemed to enjoy was a bubblethat he really never did believe to the saving of his soul. This is a fair argument based on the operation of the Spirit of God. It is in no sense a condition dependent on the good behavior of men. The one way by which a soul is saved is by that souls abiding in Christif it did not abide in Christ, it would be cast forth as a branch and be withered.

But, then, we know that they who are grafted into Christ will abide in Christ! We reason in the manner of the Apostle Paul who, when he had spoken of the danger that some were in that, having begun well, they should end badlyafter being enlightened and tasting the good Word of God and the powers of the world to come, they should turn asidehe adds, But Beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak.

The question, however, having been mooted, it occurs to me that it may not be unprofitable if I state brieflynot by way of controversy, but simply for the sake of instructionthe doctrine of the security of the Believer in Christ, the certainty of the Believers perseverance even to the end, and of his entrance into eternal rest. This text at once suggests itself to meI give unto My sheep eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of My hand. The three clauses of this sentence represent to us three gracious securities. Here is a Divine giftI give unto them eternal life. Here is a Divine promise, far-reaching and wide they shall never perish. And here is a Divine holdfastneither shall any pluck them out of My hand.

I. First, then, observe THE DIVINE GIFTI give unto them eternal life. Eternal life comes to every man who has it as a matter of gift. He did not possess it when he first entered into the world. He was born of the first Adam and born to die. He did not educe it or evolve it from himself by some mysterious processes. It is not a home growth, a product of the soil of humanityit is a gift. Nor is eternal life bestowed as a reward for service done. It could not befor it is a prerequisite to the doing of service!

The term gift shuts out all idea of debt. If it is a gift, or of Divine Grace, then it is no more of debt or of reward. Wherever eternal life is implanted in any persons soul it is the free gift of the Lord Jesus Christ not deserved but bestowed on the unworthy. Therefore we see no reason why it should be revoked from the person who has received it. For, suppose there are certain disqualifications in the man who has participated in the gift, yet they cannot otherwise operate to his prejudice in enjoying the gift than they would have operated to his ever receiving it if they had been taken into account at all.

The thing does not come to him because of any worthiness in him, but comes as a gratuity. There is no reason why it should not continue, since it has come into existence, or why the present tense, as we have it here, should not always be a present fact. I giveI continue to giveto them eternal life, that cannot be affected by an unworthiness subsequently discovered because God knows the end from the beginning. When He bestowed eternal life upon the man who has it, He knew right well every imperfection and failing that would occur in that man. These demerits, had they been reasons at all, would have been a cause for the not giving, rather than for giving and then taking away again.

It is inconsistent with the gifts of God for them ever to be disannulled. We have it laid down as a rule of the kingdom of which there is no violation, that, the gifts and calling of God are without repentance. He does not rescind in caprice that which He has conferred of His own good will. It is not according to the royal Nature of the Lord our God to bestow a gift of Grace upon a soul and then afterwards to withdraw itto lift up a man from his natural degradation and set him among princes by endowing him with eternal life, and then to cast him down from his high estate by depriving him of all the infinite benefits He has conferred.

The very language I am using is contradictory enough of itself to refute the suggestion. To give eternal life is to give a life beyond the contingencies of this present mortal existence. Forever is stamped on the charter. To take it away is not consistent with the royal bounty of the King of kings, even if it were possible that such a thing could be. I give unto them eternal life. If He gives, then, He gives with the sovereignty and generosity of a king. He gives permanently, on an enduring tenure. He gives so that He will not revoke the grant. He gives and it is theirsit shall be theirs by Divine charter forever and ever.

We may infer the certain safety of the Believer, not only from the fact that this life is an absolute gift and will not, therefore, be withdrawn, but from the nature of the gift, it being eternal life. I give unto My sheep eternal life. Yes, but, says somebody, they lose it. Then they cannot have had eternal life. It is a mistake in terms to say that a man has eternal life and yet perishes. Can death befall the immortal, or change affect the immutable, or decay corrode the imperishable? How can life be eternal if it comes to an end? How can it be possible that one shall have eternal life and yet die with sudden shock, or drop as feeble Nature fails of all her functions?

No! Eternity is not to be measured by weeks or months or years! When Christ says

eternal, He means eternal, and if I have received the gift of eternal life, it is not possible for me to sin so as to lose that spiritual life by any means whatever. It is eternal life. We may reasonably expect the Believer to hold on to the end, because the life which God has implanted within him is of that Nature that it must continue to exist, must conquer all difficulties, must ripen, must perfect, must cast out sin from him and must bring him to eternal Glory! When Christ spoke by the well to the Samaritan woman, he said, Whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

This cannot mean a transient draught that would slake the thirst for an hour or twoit must imply such a partaking as changes a mans actual constitution and his destinyand become in him a never-failing wellspring. The life which God implants in Believers by regeneration is not like the life which we now possess by generation. This mortal life does pass away. It is connected with flesh and all flesh is like grassit withers. That which is born of the flesh is flesh. Not so the new life that is born of the Spirit and it is Spirit, and Spirit is not capable of destructionit shall continue and last on, world without end. The eternal life within every man who has it was begotten in him not of the will of man, nor of flesh, nor of blood, but of God Himself.

Thanks be unto the Father, for it is of Him that we are begotten again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Tracing this implanted life to its germ, we are said to be born-again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible by the Word of God which lives and abides forever. It is a holy seed. It cannot sin, for it is born of God. We are made partakers of the Divine Nature, and the new life within us is a Divine life. It is the life of God within the soul of man! We become the twice-born, with a life that can no more die than the life of God Himself, for it is, in fact, a spark from that great central Sunit is a new well in the soul which draws its supplies from the deep that lies underfrom the inexhaustible fountain of the fullness of God! This, then, is a second reason for believing in the security and final perseverance of the Believer. He has a gift from Christ, and Christ will not withdraw His gifthe has a life which is in itself immortal and eternal.

But further, this life within the Believer which is a gift from Christ is always in connection with Christ. We live because we are one with Christas the branch sucks its sap from the vineso do we continue to derive our lifes blood, our lifes supplies from Christ Himself. The union between the Believer and Christ is vital and to the fullest degree assuring. For what does our Lord say of it?Because I live, you shall live also. It is not a partnership which may be dissolved or a connection which may be severedit is a necessity that no accident can interfere with! It is a fixed law of beingbecause I live, you shall live also.

That the union between Christ and His people is indissoluble appears obvious from the figures which are used to illustrate it. To such an overwhelming extent do they denote that there can be no separation, that we may well say, Who shall separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord? Are we not married to Christ? What metaphor could be more expressive? To estimate its value you must take the Divine account of the relationship. Although weddings are secularized by our Acts of Parliament, and nuptial ties are looked upon as civil contracts, God has pronounced man and wife to be one flesh! Yes, in the sight of Heaven, he that is joined to a harlot is one body with her.

In ordinary marriage, divorce is possible, and, alas, too commonbut when you come to Scripture, you find it written that He hates putting away. He has said, I will betroth you unto Me forever, I have betrothed you unto Myself in righteousness and in faithfulness, and you shall know the Lord. The marriage between our souls and Christ can never be dissolved! It were blasphemy to suppose that Christ shall appeal for a divorce, or that there should be a proclamation made that He has put away that spouse whom He chose of old, for whom He has prepared the great wedding feast and for whose eternal bliss He has gone to Glory to prepare a place! No, we cannot imagine such espousals leading to a separation!

Again, are we not members of His body? Shall Christ be dismembered? Shall He, every now and then, lose one limb or another? Can you suppose that Christ is maimed? I scarcely like to think, much less to express the thought, of here or there an eye, or a foot, or an ear needed to complete the perfection of His mystic Person. No! It shall not be! Members of the body of Christ shall be so vitally quickened by the heart, and by Himself, the Head, that they shall continue to live because He lives! When a man stands in water, the flood might naturally have power to drown him, but as long as his head remains above water, the stream cannot possibly drown his feet or his hands! And because Christ, the Head, cannot die, cannot be destroyed, all the floods that shall come upon the members of His body shall notcannotdestroy them!

Moreover, the life of the Believer is constantly sustained by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. It is a matter of fact under the Gospel dispensation that not only is the Holy Spirit with Believers but He is in Believers. He dwells in them! He makes them His temple! The life, as we have shown you, is sui generis, of its own kind, immortal. It is immortal because united with an undying Christbut it is also immortal because supported by a Divine Spirit who cannot be overcome. The Holy Spirit has power to meet all the mischief of false and evil spirits that aim at our destruction, and, from day to day adds fresh fuel to the eternal flame of the Believers life within. Were it not for the Holy Spirits abiding with us, we might be the subjects of some doubt, but as long as He continues to abide with us forever, we will not fear.

The first consolation that we thus draw from the text is that we are the recipients of a Divine giftI give unto My sheep eternal life.   
II. Now, secondly, we have added to this, A DIVINE PROMISEThey shall never perish. I am very thankful for this Word because there have been some who have tried to do away with the force of the entire passageneither shall any pluck them out of My hand. No, they have said, but they may slip between His fingers, and though they cannot be plucked out, yet they may go out on their own accord. But here is a short sentence that puts all such thoughts out of the questionthey shall never perishin His hands or out of His hands, under any supposition whateverthey shall never perish!   
Observe that there is no restriction hereit includes all time. They shall never perish. Are they young Believers? Are their passions strong? Are their judgments weak? Have they little knowledge, small experience, and tender faith? May they not die while yet they are lambs and perish while they are so feeble? They shall never perish. But, in middle life, when men too often lose the freshness of early Grace, when the love of their espousals may, perhaps, have lost its power, may they not get worldly? May they not, somehow or other, then be led aside? They shall never perish. They shall never perish.   
Perish they would, could worldliness destroy them! Perish they would could evil utterly and entirely get the mastery of Gracebut it shall not. They shall never perish! But, may they not grow older, and yet not wiser? May they not be surprised by temptation, as so many have been in times when they have become carnally secure, because they thought their experience had made them strong? They shall never perishneither if they are beginners, nor if they have all but finished their course. They shall never perish. It shuts out all timeall reference to timeby taking the whole range of possible periods into the one word, never. They shall never perish.   
No less does the sweep of the sentence include all contingencies. They shall never perish. What? Not if they are severely tempted? They shall never perish. Not if they backslide? They shall be restored again. They shall never perish. But, if they continue in backsliding and die so? Ah, that they shall not doThey shall never perish. You must not suppose that which never can occur. They shall never perish. They shall never get into such a condition that they shall be utterly without Divine Grace they shall never be in such a state of heart that sin shall have dominion over themutter and entire dominion.   
It may come in. It may seem for a time to get the mastery, but sin shall never have dominion over them that they shall perish before the Lord. They shall never perish. It takes in all the flock. They shall never perishthat is, not one of His sheep. This is not the distinctive privilege of a few, but the common mercy of them all! None of themnot one of themshall ever perish. If you, Believer in Christ, are the most obscure of all the family, you shall never perish. If you have, indeed, received the inner life and true Grace is in your soul, though no one knows your name and no one lends you a helping handthough, as a solitary pilgrim you should walk the heavenly road all alone, weak and feeble, and trembling all the wayyet you shall never perish! The promise is not to some, but to all the believing sheep of Christ. They shall never perish.   
And, Beloved, it may greatly strengthen our faith and sweetly revive our spirits if we consider how this doctrine harmonizes with other doctrines which are most surely believed among us. Christs sheep were of old chosen of God unto salvation. But if they perished, the election of God would be frustrated! From the foundation of the world He appointed them that they should bring forth fruit unto holiness, even unto the end, and, if they do not, how can His will be done on earth as it is in Heaven? They were a people set apart unto Himself that they might honor Him by good works. If they failed of this. If they fell from their blest estate. If they did utterly perish, the Fathers counsel would be foiledand that cannot be!

The purpose of God secures their final perseverance. They shall never perish. We may rest assured that they shall be preserved because of the effectual redemption which Christ has worked out for them. We believe, Beloved, in this place, (though the doctrine is very much disparaged nowadays), in an actual and literal substitutionary Sacrifice. We believe that Jesus died for His people, and   
*Bore, that they might never bear   
The Fathers righteous ire.*   
Now, if He paid their debts, they have no debts to discharge! If He has borne their punishment, they have no penalty to suffer. If He stood in their place, Justice as well as GraceJustice and Grace together demand that they should be saved. Jesus Christ has offered for them an Atonementand, who is he that condemns? It is Christ that died, yes, rather that has risen again.   
If when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. If He died to bear our guilt, much more, the Atonement being completed, shall we enter into the fullness of rest! If He would not lose us, viewing us as unredeemed, but came and paid the price, much less will He lose us now that He has redeemed us unto God, by His blood, out of every nation and people and kindred and tongue. He laid down His life for His sheep. He loved the Church and gave Himself for it, that He might present it unto Himself a glorious Churchand He will effect the purpose for which He has already ventured so much. He will surely claim and as surely receive at the hand of Justice the salvation of those for whom He was a vicarious Victim.   
Furthermore, dear Friends, he that believes in Christ is justified from all things from which he could not be justified by the Law of Moses. Is it according to the manner of man, first to justify, and afterwards to condemn? Certainly not! But if it were, it is not according to the supreme equity of the Most High God! Has He pronounced a man just? That man is just. When He has declared the mans transgressions forgiven, shall they be again reckoned to him?again laid to his door? Is it not said that He has put away our sins like a cloud, and will He gather the cloud of yesterday again?   
Has He not said He has cast our sins into the depths of the sea? Shall that which Jehovah Himself has consigned to the oblivious ocean be washed up again as though He had only committed it to the shallows? As far as the East is from the West, so far has He removed our transgressions from us! Our East and West are wide enough apartbut what must Gods East and West be when He looks through infinite space? He has removed those sins so far from us that the swiftest-footed devil could not bring them back again though he had a whole eternity to perform the feat. He has put them away forever!   
Yes, hear what is said of the MessiahHe has finished transgression, made an end of sin, and brought in everlasting righteousness. If it is finished, it is finished, and if He has made an end of it, where is it? Where is it? If it is searched for it shall not be foundyes, it shall not be, says the Lord. O Beloved, how, then, shall the man that believes in Christ be condemnedcondemned for sin that has been pardoned? How shall he be cast into Hell? For what? For offenses that have been borne by the Savior? How shall he be condemned whom God has justified? Give no countenance to the thought! Let no fear nor fancy induce you to lend an ear to the suggestion! The sentence of remission once passed upon a man stands irrevocable. It is God that justifies; who is he that condemns?   
In the Believer, moreover, there is a work of God begun which He has engaged to complete. It has never been said of God that He began to build and was not able to finish. We are persuaded that He which has begun a good work in you will carry it on and perfect it to the Day of Christ. It has not been according to Jehovahs habit to leave unfinished His workswhy should He leave them unfinished? Is there a need of power? Inconceivable! Is there a need of will? We cannot imagine itfor if His will has changed there must be some reason for the change. And if it is so, is God wiser than He was? Has he altered His plan because He has discovered some error in it? If not, if Infinite Wisdom led Him to put His hand to it, Infinite Wisdom will keep His hand to the work   
*The work which Wisdom undertakes,   
Eternal Mercy neer forsakes.*   
O Beloved, the very beginning of the work from God foretells that the work will be fully carried out!   
The doctrine of Adoption supplies us with yet another argument for our safety. Every man who is saved, justified, forgiven, is also adopted into the family of God. And do you think that God shifts and changes His children who are called by His own name? Do you imagine such a thing credible? Does it sound like a fact? Are you your Fathers child today, and somebody elses child tomorrow? Is not the absurdity too obvious to need refutation? NoI know not where could have come so whimsical a thought as that we should be children of God today, and by-and-by children of the devilchanging, thus, the blessed paternity which God Himself claims as to all His people.   
But, we may play the prodigal, says one. Yes, I answer, and we may be brought back again after we have gone astray as the prodigal was. Besides, the prodigal was still a soneven when at the swine trough, and when he had wasted all his substance in riotous livinghe was still beloved of the father. And because he was a son he came back again with weeping and bitterness of spirit, and found peace and pardon. Had he been no son, he might, like others, have spent his living with harlots and there had been no saying, I will arise and go unto my father. But Grace operated on his hearthe was quickened mysteriously, and he saidI must leave this life of poverty and sin and go back to my fathers house.   
And, if Gods child shall go astray, as it is possible, (only God grant you and I never may), yet there is a voice that says, Return, return you backsliding Israel! I am married unto you, says the Lord. Adoption is surely a grand proof that the Lords people shall be kept and preserved that there shall be an unbroken family of God in Heaven. He shall not have to lament that His own dear sons and daughters, begotten by His Grace, have utterly perished. Jesus shall say, Here am I and the children You have given Me.   
III. And, now, the last point is THE DIVINE HOLDFASTNone shall pluck them out of My hand. Then all the saints are in Jesus hands! They are not only in His heart, but in His handsjust as the high priests wore the names of the 12 tribes on the breastplates, and wore them on the shoulders, too. The power, as well as the affection of Christ shall preserve the people of God. They are in His hands. All Your saints are in Your hands. What a blessed place for us to be inin the hands of Christ always there!   
But does not our Lord intimate as if to forewarn us that a great many attempts would be made to pluck us out of those hands? Satan would do itour own base lusts would do itthe ungodly would do it. The very air is full of tempters who would, if they could, pluck us away from Christ. We have, therefore, cause for great watchfulness, deep humility, but also for much thankfulness that we are placed where the tempters cannot reach us, for the promise assures us that none is able to pluck us out of Christs hand! There is not power enough in legions of fallen spirits, if they were marshaled in battle array against one poor weak Christian, to snatch him away from Christ!   
Yes, should they besiege him without intermission like a vast herd of lions seeking to devour one lamb, the defense were so much stronger than the invasion that they could not pluck even that one out of Christs hands! The Destroyer has never yet celebrated a triumph over the Redeemer! He is not able to hold up a single jewel of the Redeemers crown and say, Aha! Aha! I stole it from Your diadem! You could not keep it! He has no single sheep there to which he can point and say, Ah, Shepherd of the sheep, You could not keep them all! The strong were safe enough they helped themselves, but this poor weakling could not help itselfand You could not help it. Lo! I have borne it away from You! Your flock, which is Your pride, is not complete! You Yourself, as Shepherd, have a spot upon Your name, for You have lost at least this one that Your Father gave You and whom You have purchased with Your blood!   
It cannot be! It shall not be! The powers of darkness have conspired for this and struggled for this, but they have not yet prevailed, nor shall they! None shall pluck them out of My hand. Oh, rest in the hands of Christ, rest quietlynow that you are there you are secure, neither shall any pluck you away. As if He would make assurance doubly sure, and give us a very strong consolation, He added, My Father which gave them Me is greater than all, and none shall pluck them out of My Fathers hand. You can interpret the figure. There was Christs hand and His people in it, and He shall shut it fast to hold them. But that hand was pierced once, and so to make it doubly sure, the Father clasps it with His hand, and so within a double encircling the elect of God are held and embraced!   
There is the pierced hand of Jesus and there is the Fathers almighty handso there are two hands to protect and defend them. Well may they, now, cheerfully defy all powerterrestrial or infernalto ever destroy them. They must, they shall forever rest in perfect security beneath the guardian care of the Man Mediator, Christ the Lord, and God the everlasting and ever blessed Father, who also takes them into His sacred keeping! Do I hear anyone object, saying, Well, but if this is true, then may not a man live as he likes? Sir, how can you ask that question? What do you mean by it? Do you mean, May a man live in sin? I have been trying to show that if a man is one of Christs sheep, he cannot perish, by which I mean, he cannot

live in sinfor that is to perish!   
When I maintain that he cannot live in sin as he did, and cease to be a gracious mando you ask me whether he will not, therefore, sin willfully because he is saved from his sins? You must surely misunderstand me! But, may not a man fall? Now I have these checks taken from me, I may grow wanton. What checks? What checks? If I lay it down that a man who is enlisted as a soldier is always a soldier, how can you tell me I have taken away some checks? I see not how that can be! I have rather implied a great many strong incentives to virtue than offered a single pretext for vice. Certainly he is not to lay down his commission because he is enlisted for life in the service of his Lord!   
If he ever did lay it down, he never could take it up again. Could these fail away, it were impossible, again, to renew them to repentance. If Gods work did fail, if Christs atoning blood did fall short of its aim, there would remain no hope for them. The ground on which the dew that moistens the flowers descendswhen it yields nothing but thorns and briarsis given up as worthless. Were a man in some fit of enthusiasm to profess that he believed the Gospel, and then take a fit of liberty and plunge into dissipation, you would all know what to think of his sincerity. When the guilt of sin is removed, the love of sin is purged out of the heartand when the Spirit of holiness is given, the love of holiness is infused into the heart. The man who truly believes begins a life of holiness, and from that life of holiness he will never utterly depart.   
I grant you he may be overtaken in a fault. He may be surprised with a temptation. He may stumble through weakness, or through lack of watchfulnessbut he will be led back again into repentancehe shall not be allowed to perish. The life that is in him is immortala holy incorruptible seedand it will continue to develop in spite of sultry heat or biting frost, blight or mildew, till it blooms in the perfection of life above. Says one, Ah, Sir, I hold no argument about your doctrine. My fear is for myselfI do not think I should live as I now do if I were not afraid of falling away. Is not that a suitable fear for the child of the bondwomanUnless I do so-and-so I shall be sent into the wilderness with my mother Hagar. Very likely you will!   
But I know this, I am the child of the free woman, that is Sarah, and I know my Father will never send His child into the wilderness. What then? Shall His attachment provoke my alienation? Shall I act shamefully because He appoints me to honor? No, no, but because He loves me so, I will love Him in return! I pray Him to forgive my offenses, but I will seek to do all that is possible to show that I realize the greatness of His love, and desire to make some poor return for it as best I can. Well, but, says somebody, are we not admonished with warnings against falling away? Certainly, and they are the most terrible that language can describe. Undoubtedly the Scripture paints the pilgrims path as full of peril. It is not by creature strength that we can hold our own!  
Could the precious blood lose its virtuedid the blessed Spirit withdraw His influencewere the timely succor withheld, we have no resources! For all manner of sin there is a remedybelieve in Christ as a Saviorbut for apostasy there is no cure. If you trample on the one Sacrifice, no second sacrifice will ever be offered. There is but one new birth. Regeneration is once and once only. But why these warnings, you say, if it cannot happen? Remember God does not deal with His people as if they were blocks of wood or iron cast and run into a mold. We are beings with a will and a judgment, and God deals with us in that way.   
Now, if I have poison in my house and it should be necessary for some reason or other that poison should be there, I do not intend that my children should ever have that poison or take it. Suppose me to be Omnipotent and that I have power to prevent their taking it, yet I do not lock it up and put it where they could not possibly get it? I put it where they can get it if they like, and it will kill them if they do get itbut I tell them they must not take it. I describe to them the results that will follow, and I have such a loving power over my childrens hearts(suppose it to be so)that they do not disobey me so as to take this poison. Though it is there and devils come into the house and tempt them to take it, yet they will not take it but put it from them. I should thus be making an exhibition to those who looked on, of the love to me that was in my childrens hearts, and also of my power over my childrens hearts, though I did not violate their wills and did not make it impossible for them to destroy themselves.   
Now, it is so here. Sin is permitted to be in the worldI do not know whyand God does not render it impossible for a man to go and commit any sin. The man mighthe wouldunless Gods Grace prevented. But Gods Grace is not mechanical in its action. It is not like a fetter, or a chain. It is not, (as I have heard some say), dragging people to Heaven by their ears. No, it is a mighty forcean Omnipotent powerbut quite consistent with free agency. It never operates contrary to the laws of mind, and God is glorified in thisthat though His children are thus tempted, they do not run into fatal soul-destroying sin! They do not go into such apostasy from Him as would be final and prove altogether destructive.   
They are kept by His gracious powerkept as mendrawn, but with cords of lovebound, but with the bands of a man. Do you object that good men fall? Good men do not fall so as to perish. Good men do fall, for they are men! The old nature is in them. But, the truly gracious man with all his sins, repents, still believes, and with broken bones goes back to his Lord and proves himself to be still a child. The sheep may fall into a ditchit will not roll in the mire as a hog would if it fell there. A sheep, even when it falls into a ditch, proves that it is a sheep, still. There is a difference in the nature of it.   
When I have seen a child of God fall into sin, I have known that if he were a child of God he would hate himself for it, he would grieve over it, and could not be at peace and ease in it. Do you tell me of a Christian who lived in sin and seemed very happy? Be sure that he was not a Christian but a pretender! He who can continue in sin and delight in it is no child of God! He that can go day after day into vice or can tolerate in himself any known sin has a spot which is not the spot of Gods children. He has a mark upon him which never was and never shall be upon a truly quickened child of God! Be you holy, for I am holy, is the voice which sounds in the saints ear, and if he does not always obey it as he should, this is the complaining of his souland it makes him go weeping and lamenting before his God. But still, in the main, it ever shall be the righteous shall hold on his way, and he that has clean hands shall wax stronger and stronger.   
I have one word for any here who are unconverted but would desire salvation. Do you know, dear Friends, that one of the great leading thoughts of my young life, the master thought that brought me to the Savior, was belief in the doctrine of final perseverance? Perhaps you wonder how that could be, but so it was. I saw while yet I was a lad many promising boys and lads who made total shipwreck early in their lives by falling into gross vices. I felt in my soul a loathing of the sins which I heard they had committed. I had been kept from them by Divine counsels, by gracious interpositions, by parental teaching and by pious example. Still I feared lest the sins into which these young men had fallen might master me. Such knowledge as I had of the depravity of my own heart led me to distrust myself.   
I was convinced that unless I was converted, born-again, and received the new life, I had no safeguard. Whatever good resolutions I might make, the probabilities were they would be good for nothing when temptation assailed me. I might be like those of whom it has been said, They see the devils hook and yet cannot help nibbling at his bait. But, that I should morally disgrace myself as some had done whom I had known and heard of, was a hazard from the very thought of which I shrunk with horror. When I heard and read with wondering eyes that whoever believed in Christ Jesus should be saved, the Truth of God came to my heart with a welcome I cannot describe to you. The doctrine that He would keep the feet of His saints had a charm, indeed, for me!   
I thought, Then if I go to Jesus and get from Him a new heart and a right spirit, I shall be secured against these temptations into which others have fallen. I shall be preserved by Him. I do not say that drove me to Christa sense of sin did thatbut it attracted me to Him. It was one of the beauties of His face that ravished methat He was a faithful Keeper of all souls that were committed to Himthat He was able and willing to take the young man and make him cleanse his way and keep him even to the end! O young people, there is no life assurance like a believing in Jesus Christ!   
*Grace shall preserve your following years, And make your virtues strong.*   
I do not preach to you, tonight, a sandy foundation that will give way under your feet, but a Rock to which you may continually retreatin which you may always dwell secure. I do not present to you a salvation that may fail you under some stress of temptation, but a salvation that is strong, having in it the sure mercies of David. He that believes and is baptized shall be savedsaved from sinning, from the guilt as well as the punishment of sin, and brought to Heaven holy and meet for the inheritance of the saints. God grant you to Believers in Christ. Amen, and amen!

Adapted from The C.H. Spurgeon Collection, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307. Sermon #726 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

LIFE ETERNAL

NO. 726

DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand. John 10:28.**

SOME will say that this is a mixed congregation and that such a doctrine as this should not be advanced in the presence of ungodly men and women. This shows how little such objectors read their Bible, for this very text was spoken by the Savior, not to His loving disciples but to His enemies! Read the thirty-first verse of the chapter, and you will see the temper of the congregation to whom Jesus Christ preached upon this subjectThen the Jews took up stones again to stone Him. So it was an indignant multitude of bigots that had this hurled into their face by the Savior, that although they might reject Him, and because of their willful obstinacy might miss the blessings of Divine Grace, yet those blessings were rich and rare.

He would have them to know that what they lost was inexpressibly precious, and that His message was not to be despised without great damage to their souls. Thus, if there is a mixed multitude hereand I fear the allegation is true, that there are many here who cannot comprehend the preciousness of the things of Godyet, for the same reason which prompted the Savior to preach this doctrine to the wicked in His day, we will do the same now, that they may know what it is they lose by losing Christ! We want them to know what those comfortable things are which they despise, and what are the inestimable treasures which those must miss who seek after the treasures of this world, and let their God, their Savior, go!

We have no time to loiter, and let us, therefore, as the bee sucks honey from the flower, seek after the sweet essence of the text, I give unto them eternal life. The connection tells us that the pronoun them refers to Christs sheep, to certain persons whom He had chosen to be His sheep, and whom He had also called to be such. Lest we should be in the dark as to whom they are, our Savior has kindly put us in possession of the marks by which His sheep may be discovered. We cannot read the secret roll of election, nor can we search the heart, but we can mark the outward conduct of men. The verse before the text tells us by what signs we are to know Gods peopleMy sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.

The marks are the hearing of Christ, and then the following of Christ, first, by faith in Him, and then by an active obedience to His precepts. Faith, which works by love is the mark of Christs sheep, and it is of true Believers that He speaks when He says, I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of My hand. Would to God that all of us wore the uniform of the elect, namely, active, sanctifying faith! Oh that we all listened to the Great Shepherds voice! That we all received the Truths of God which He delivers! And then, resolved by His Grace, that we all followed Him wherever He goes, as the sheep follow the shepherd!

Having thus explained to whom the text belongs, we will now handle it in a threefold manner. The text implies, first, somewhat concerning the past of these people. The text plainly states, in the second place, a great deal about the present state of these people. And, thirdly, the text not obscurely hints at something about their future.

I. In the first place, the studious reader will observe that the text implies SOMEWHAT CONCERNING THE PAST HISTORY OF THE PEOPLE OF GOD. It is said, I give unto them eternal life. There is an implication, therefore, that they had lost eternal life. Every one of Gods people fell in Adam, and all have fallen also by actual sin. Consequently we came under condemnation, and Christ Jesus has done for us what Her Majesty the Queen has sometimes done for a condemned criminalHe has bought us a free pardon. He has given us life.

When our own desert was eternal destruction from the Presence of the Lord, Jesus Christ stepped in and He said, You are forgiven. The sentence shall not take place upon you. Your offense is blotted out. You are clear. No, I think the text implies that there was something more than condemnationthere was execution! We were not only condemned to die, we were already spiritually dead. Jesus did not merely spare the life which ought to have been taken, and in that sense gave it to us, but He imparted to us a life which we had not before enjoyed!

It is implied in the text that we were spiritually dead. We are not left here to our own surmising, nor even to our own experience, for the Apostle Paul has said, You has He quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins. What? Paul, were we dead? Are you not mistaken? Perhaps we were only a little sick. We are ready to admit, O Apostle, that we were sick and near to death, but surely we had a little vital energy, a little power to assist ourselves! No, says the Apostle, you were dead. Dead in trespasses and sins.

The work of salvation is tantamount, not only to the healing of the sick, but to the actual resurrection of a dead man from his grave. All the saints who are now alive unto God were once as dead as others, quite as corrupt and offensive as others, and as much an ill savor in the nostrils of Divine Justice by reason of their sins as even the most corrupt of their fellows. We had altogether gone out of the way. We had altogether become abominable, for there is none that does good, no not one. When we were all shut up under sin, Jesus Christ came into the region of death and brought life and immortality to us!

Life was forfeited by all the saints. Spiritual life they had noneJesus the Quickener has made them alive unto God. Is it not also very clearly implied that, so far from having any life, these people could not otherwise have obtained life except by its being given to them? It is a rule well known to all Biblical students that you never meet in Gods Word with an unnecessary miracle. A miracle is never worked where the ordinary course of nature would suffice. Now, my Brothers and Sisters, the greatest of all miracles is the salvation of a soul! If that soul could save itself God would not save it, but would let it do what it could do! And if the spiritually dead could quicken themselves, rest assured, from the analogy of all the Divine transactions, that Jesus Christ would not have come to give them life!

I believe that it would be utterly impossible for any one of us to enter Heaven, let us do what we might, unless Jesus Christ had come from Heaven to show us the wayto remove the bolts and bars for usand to enable us to tread in the path which leads to Glory and immortality. Lost! Lost! Lost! The race of man was utterly lostnot partly lost, not thrown into a condition in which it might be ruined unless it worked hard to save itselfbut so lost that but for the interposition of a Divine arm, but for the appearance of God in human flesh, but for the stupendous transaction upon Calvary, and the work of God the Holy Spirit in the heartnot one dead soul ever could come to life!

Eternal life would not be the peculiar work of the Lord Jesus if man had a finger in it, but mans power is excluded and Divine Grace reigns. It is clearly to be seen in the text, by a little thought, that eternal life was not the merit of any one of Gods people, for it is said that it is given to us. Now a gift is the very opposite of payment. What a man receives as a gift he certainly does not deserve. If it is given to us, then it is no more a debt. But if it is a debt then it can no more be a gift. None of us merits eternal life, or ever can merit it. Mere mortal life is a gift of Divine mercy. We do not deserve it.

And as for the eternal life spoken of in the text, it is a gift too high for the fingers of human merit to hope to reach! If a man should work ever so hard after it, yet upon the footing of the Law it would be impossible for him to obtain it. Man merits nothing but death, and life must be the free gift of God. The wages of sin is death. That is to say it is earned and procured as matter of debt. But the gift of God, the Free-Grace gift of God, is eternal life.

Now this is a very humiliating doctrine, I know, but it is true, and I want you all to feel it. Children of God, I know you do. You see the hole of the pit from where you were drawn? Do you see it? Or have you grown proud of late? Those fine feelings and prayers of yourshave you stuck them like feathers in your cap? I pray you remember what you were! You ,proud? Do not forget the dunghill where you once grew! Remember the filth out of which God took you, and instead of being scarlet with the garments of pride, your cheeks may well be scarlet with a blush! Oh, may God forbid, once and for all, that we should glory, for what have we to glory in? What have we that we have not received?

It is clear, too, from the text, that those who are now righteous would have perished but for Christ. Christ says, they shall never perish. Promises are never given as superfluities. There is a necessity, therefore, for this promise. There was a danger, a solemn danger, that every one of those men who are now saved would have perished eternally. Sin made them heirs of wrath even as others, so Scripture tells us. And justice must have overwhelmed them with the rest if distinguishing Grace had not prevented! Even now it is solemnly true that there is no reason why a truly righteous soul should not perishexcept that Christ prevents it.

You are alive, but you would not be spiritually alive an hour unless the Holy Spirit continued to pour His vital energy into your soul. You shall be preserved, but, mark you, it is stated as a promise, and therefore it is not at all a matter of natural necessity. Apart from Divine Grace you are in fearful danger of apostasy, and probably you have fears about it even now, like the Apostle who feared lest after having preached to others, he himself should be a cast away. A very proper feara fear which will often come upon sincere souls who feel a holy jealousy of themselves. But we need have no fear when we come to the promise of God, for if we are really in Christ we have a guarantee of security, since Christs own words are, They shall never perish.

The promise was certainly given because it was needed. There is a danger of perishing. There are ten thousand risks of perishing. Only Omnipotence itself keeps off the fiery darts of Satan. The blessed Physician gives the antidote, or the poison would soon destroy us. He who swears to bring us safely home protects us from a thousand foes who otherwise would work our ill. They shall never perish. It is also implied that naturally the people of God have ten thousand enemies who would pluck them out of Christs hand. They were once in the hand of the enemy. They were once willing bond-slaves of Satan. All this they know, and all this they are willing to acknowledge.

I would to God that some here would feel the truth of that which I have been saying. You self-righteous ones will say, I am all right. I do my best, I go to a place of worship. Now, Soul, that is right enough in itself, but if you boast of it, it is an evidence that you know neither God nor yourself! When I have heard of some who have boasted that they felt no inbred sin, I have wished that they would read the story of the Pharisee and the Publican. At the Fulton Street Prayer Meeting, a Brother asked for the prayers of Believers because he felt so much the corruption of his own heart, the temptations of Satan, and especially the natural vileness of his own nature.

A Brother stood up on the opposite side of the hall and said he thanked God that was not his experience! He did not feel any corruption and his heart was not depraved. The other one made no reply, but a friend present read these words: Two men went up into the temple to pray. The one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank You that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto Heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for everyone that exalts himself shall be abased; and he that humbles himself shall be exalted.

A sense of sin is a blessed sign either of pardon received, or of pardon to come. He that says he has no sin makes God a liar, and the truth is not in him! He who will not confess his sin shall never be absolved! But he who, with a broken and a trembling heart, goes to the foot of the Cross shall find forgiveness there. This much, then, upon the past estate of the heirs of Heaven.

II. And now, to plunge at once into the subject. THE TEXT SHEDS A FLOOD OF LIGHT UPON THE PRESENT STATE OF EVERY BELIEVER. We shall have to give you hints rather than a long exposition, so kindly take the first sentence, which speaks of a gift received. I give unto them eternal life. This gift is, first of all, life. You will make strange confusion of Gods Word if you confound life with existence, for they are very different things. All men will exist forever, but many will dwell in everlasting death! They will know nothing whatever of life.

Life is a distinct thing altogether from existence, and implies in Gods Word something of activity and of happiness! In the text before us it includes many things. Note the difference between the stone and the plant. The plant has vegetable life. You know the difference between the animal and the plant. While the plant has vegetable life, yet it is altogether dead in the sense in which we speak of living creatures. It has not the sensations which belong to animal life. Then, again, if we turn to another and higher grade, namely, mental life, an animal is dead so far as that is concerned. It cannot enter at all into the mysterious calculations of the mathematician, nor revel in the sublime glories of poetry. The animal has nothing to do with the life of the intellectual mindas to mental life it is dead.

Now, there is a grade of life which is higher than the mental lifea higher life quite unknown to the philosophernot put down in Plato, nor spoken of by Aristotlebut understood by the very least of the children of God! It is a phase of life called, spiritual life. It is a new form of life altogether which does not belong to man naturally, but is given to him by Jesus Christ. The first man, Adam, was made a living soul and all his descendants are made like unto him. The second Adam is made a quickening spirit, and until we are made like the second Adam we know nothing of spiritual life.

This body of ours is by nature adapted for a soulish life. The Apostle tells us, in that wonderful chapter in Corinthians, that the body is sown what? A natural body. The Greek is, A soulish bodybut it is raisedwhat? A spiritual body. There is a soulish body, and there is a spiritual body. There is a body adapted to the lower life which belongs to all men, a mere mental existence. And there is to be a body which will belong to all those who have received spiritual lifewho shall dwell in that body as the house of their perfected spirit in Heaven.

The life which Jesus Christ gives His people is spiritual life, therefore it is mysterious. You hear the sound thereof but you cannot tell from where it comes, nor where it goes. So is everyone that is born of the Spirit. You who have mental life cannot explain to the horse or the dog what it is. Neither can we who have spiritual life explain to those who have it not what it is. You can tell them what it does and what its effects are, but what the spark of heavenly flame may be, you, yourselves, do not know though you are conscious that it is there! It is spiritual life which Jesus Christ gives His people, but it is moreit is Divine life!

This life is like the life of God, and therefore it is elevating. We are made, says the Apostle, partakers of the Divine nature. Begotten again by God the Father, not, says the Apostle, with corruptible seed, but with incorruptible. We do not become Divine, but we receive a nature which enables us to sympathize with Deity, to delight in the topics which engage the Eternal Mind, and to live upon the same principles as the Most Holy God. We love, for God is love. We begin to he holy, for God is thrice holy. We pant after perfection, for He is perfect. We delight in doing good, for God is good. We get into a new atmosphere. We pass out of the old range of the mere mental faculties. Our spiritual faculties make us akin to God.

Let Us, said He, make man in Our own image, after Our own likeness. That image Adam lost. That image Christ restores and gives to us that life which Adam lost in the day when he sinned, when God said to him, In the day that you eat thereof you shall surely die. In that sense he did diethe sentence was not postponedhe died spiritually as soon as he touched the fruit. And this long-lost life Jesus Christ restores to every soul who believes in Him! This life, you will gather from my remarks, is heavenly life. It is the same life that expands and develops itself in Heaven. The Christian does not die. What does the Savior say? He that believes in Me shall never die.

Does not the mental life die? Yes. Does not the mere bodily life die? Yes, but not the spiritual life! It is the same life here which it will be there only now it is undeveloped and corruption impedes its action. Brothers and Sisters, nothing of us shall go to Heaven as flesh and blood, but only as it is subdued, elevated, changed, and perfected by the influence of the spirit-life! Know you not that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God? Neither does corruption inherit incorruption.

Then what is the I, the myself that shall enter Heaven? Why, if you are in Christ a new creature, then that new creature and nothing but that new creature! The very life which you have lived here in the Tabernacle. The very life that has budded and blossomed in the garden of communion with God. That life which has led you to visit the sick, and clothe the naked, and feed the hungry. That life which has made tears of repentance stream down your cheeks. That life which has caused you to believe in Jesusthis is the life which will go to Heaven! And if you have not this, then you do not possess the life of Heaven and dead souls cannot enter there! Only living men can enter into the land of the living. As we have borne the image of the earthy, so also shall we bear the image of the heavenly. Even now the heavenly life heaves and throbs within us!

I think it may also be inferred from all this that the life which Christ gives His people is an energetic life. If the spiritual life is poured into a man it raises him above his former state and lifts him out of the range of merely carnal comprehension. He himself is discerned of no man. For you are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. You cannot expect the world to understand this new life! It is a hidden thing. It will be a mystery to yourselves, a wonder to your own hearts. But oh, how active it will be! It will fight with your sins and will not be satisfied until it has slain them! If you tell me you never have a conflict within, I tell you I cannot understand how you can have the Divine life, for it is sure to come into conflict at once with the old nature, and there will be perpetual strife.

The man becomes a new man at home. His wife and family observe it. He is a different man in business. He is a changed man altogether whether you view him in connection with his fellow men or with his God. He is a new creature! He feels that the new and wondrous life which has been planted in him has made him of a different race from the common herd, and he walks among the sons of men feeling that he is an alien and a stranger. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear we shall be like He, for we shall see Him as He is. I wish there were more time to describe the inward life, but this must suffice to indicate the blessing which Jesus gives to the Believer by the work of the Holy Spirit.

There is a word in the text, which qualifies it: I give unto them eternal life. Eternal means without end. If Christ puts the life of God into a man, that life cannot be taken away. It cannot die, that were impossible! When I have heard one say that you may be a child of God today but that next week may find you a child of the devil, I have supposed that the word eternal, according to him, could only have meant five or six days. But according to the dictionary I use, according to the mind of the Spirit, eternal means without end. If, then, a man says, I had spiritual life once, but I do not possess it now, it is clear that either he is mistaken altogether or he never had it at all!

If Jesus had said, I give unto them life which shall last for seven years, but which may perhaps be quenched and put out under temptation, I could understand a man saying that he had fallen from Grace. But if it is eternal life, then it must be eternal. There is no end to it, it must go on. The mere existence of the soul, we believe, will be never-ending. But it will be no gift to the ungodly that it will be so! It is not for Christ to give us mere immortality of existence, for that will be a fearful curse to some men! Lost souls would be glad enough if they could be rid of their immortal existence, but Christ gives an eternal, a holy life, a happy life, which is infinitely more than existence. Existence may be a curse, but life is a blessing.

This life begins here: I give unto them. Not, I shall give, but, I give. Not, I will give it to them when they die, but, I give it them here, I give unto them eternal life. Now, my Hearer, you have either got eternal life tonight, or you are still in death. If you have not received it you are dead in trespasses and sins, and your doom will be a terrible one! But if God has given you eternal life, fear not the surrounding hosts of Hell nor the temptations of the world, for the eternal God is your refuge, and underneath you are the everlasting arms! This life is given as a free gift to every one of the Lords people, and is bestowed by the Lord and by none else.

2. Let us turn now to the second part of the blessing. Here is preservation secured. They shall never perish. Certain gentlemen who cannot endure the doctrine of final perseverance manage to slip away from the next sentence, Neither shall any pluck them out of My hand, and suggest, but they may get out themselves. No, no, no! Because the text says, They shall never perish. Our present sentence, which we have now in hand, puts aside all suppositions of every kind about the destruction of one of Christs sheep. They shall never perish.

Take each word. They shall never perish. Some of their notions may. Some of their comforts may. Some of their experiences may. But THEY never shall! That which is the essence of the man, his true soul, his inward renewed nature, shall never be destroyed. See, then, Christian, you may be deprived of a thousand things without any violation of the promise. The promise is not that the ship shall not go to the bottom, but that the passengers shall get to the shore. The promise is not that the house shall not be burnedthe pledge is that you who are in the house shall escape. They shall never perish.

Take another word: They shall never perish. They shall go very near it, perhaps. They shall lose their joys and their comforts, but they shall never perish. The life in them shall never be starved out, nor beaten out, nor driven out. If you once get leaven into a piece of bread you cannot get it out. You may boil it, you may fry it, you may bake it, you may do what you like with it, but the leaven is in it and you cannot get it out. Get the soul saturated with the Grace of God, and you can never eradicate it. The man himself shall never perish! He may think he shall. The devil may tell him he shall. His comforts may be withdrawn. He may go to his deathbed full of doubts and fears about himself, but he shall never perish!

Now this is either true or it is not. You who think it is not true tell the Lord so. But I believe that it is a most sure and infallible fact, for Jehovah says it. I do not know how it is that they do not perish. It is a wondrous thing. But then it is all a marvel throughout from first to last. Now take the word never. We have shown how long the preservation endures They shall never perish. Well, but if they should live to be very aged, and should then fall into sin? They shall never perish. Oh, but perhaps they may be assaulted in quarters where they least expect it, or they may be beleaguered by temptation. They shall never perish.

Well, but a man may be a child of God and yet go to Hell. How so, if he can never perish? That never includes time and eternity! It includes living and dying! It includes the mountain and the valley, the tempest and the calm

*They shall never perish.   
In every state secure,   
Kept by the eternal Hand.*

Beneath the wings of the Almighty God, night with its pestilence cannot smite them, and day with its cares cannot destroy them! Youth with its passions shall be safely passed. Middle age with all its whirl of business shall be navigated in safety. Old age with its infirmities shall become the land of Beulah. Deaths gloomy vale shall be lit up with the coming splendor. The actual moment of departure, the last and solemn article, shall be the passing over of a river dry-shod. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow you: when you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon you, says the Lord. They shall never perish.

There is a way of explaining away everything, I suppose, but I really do not know how the opponents of the perseverance of Gods saints will get over this text. They may do with it as they will, but I shall still believe what I find here, that I shall never perish if I am one of Christs people. If I perish, then Christ will not have kept His promise but I know He must abide faithful to His Word. He is not a man that He should lie, nor the son of man that He should repent. Every soul that rests on the atoning sacrifice is safe, and safe foreverthey shall never perish.

3. Then comes the third sentence, in which we have a position guaranteedin Christs hand. We have not time to expound it. It is to be in a place of honorwe are the ring He wears on His finger. It is a place of love: I have engraved you upon the palms of My hands; your walls are continually before Me. It is a place of powerHis right hand encloses all His people. It is a place of propertyChrist holds His people. All the saints are in Your hand. It is a place of discretionwe are yielded up to Christand Christ wields a discretionary government over us.

It is a place of guidance, a place of protectionas sheep are said to be in the hand of the shepherd, so are we in the hand of Christ. As arrows in the hand of a mighty man, to be used by him. As jewels in the hands of the bride to be her ornament, so are we in the hand of Christ. Now, what says the text? It reminds us that there are some who want to pluck us out of His hand! There are those who, with false doctrine, would deceive, if it were possible, the very elect! There are roaring persecutors who would frighten Gods saints, and so make them turn back in the day of battle. There are scheming temptersthe panderers to Hell, the jackals of the lion of the pitwho would gladly drag us to destruction.

Then there are our own hearts that would pluck us out of His hand. You know in the text before us we need not read the word man, for it is not in the original. The translators have put the word man in italics to show that it is not in the Greek, and so we may read itNeither shall any pluck them out of My hand. Not only any man, but any devil either. Nothing that is present shall do it, nothing to comeno principality, no power, nothing whatever that is conceivable. None shall pluck them out of My hand.

It does not merely include men, who are sometimes our worst foes, for the worst that we have are they of our own household, but it also includes fallen spirits. But none shall be able to pluck us out of His hand. By no possibility shall any be able, by any of their schemes, to remove us from being His favorites, His property, His dear sons, His protected children. Oh, what a blessed promise!

Now, do you know, while I have been preaching to you about this, I have been thinking a little about my own history before I knew the Lord. One of the things that made me want to be a Christian was this. I had seen some young lads that I was at school with. They were excellent lads, and some of them had been held up as patterns of imitation to me and to others. I saw them, though only a very few years older than myself, turn out as vain and ungodly as could be, and yet I knew them to have been excellently well disposed as boys, no, to have been very patterns! And this kind of thought used to cross my young brain, Is there not some means of being preserved from making a shipwreck of my life?

When I came to read the Bible, it seemed to me to be full of this doctrine: If you trust Christ, He will save you from all evil. He will keep you in a life of integrity and holiness while here, and He will bring you safe to Heaven at the last. I felt that I could not trust man, for I had seen some of the very best wandering far from the Truth of God. If I trusted Christ, it was not a chance as to whether I should get to Heaven, but a certainty. And I learned that if I rested all my weight upon Him He would keep me, for I found it written, The righteous shall hold on His way, and he that has clean hands shall wax stronger and stronger.

I found the Apostle saying, I am persuaded that He that has begun a good work in you will carry it on, and such-like expressions. Why, I reasoned, I have found an insurance office, and a good one, too! I will insure my life in it! I will go to Jesus as I am, for He bids me. I will trust myself with Him. If I had listened to the Arminian theory I should never have been converted, for it never had any charms for me. A Savior who casts away His people, a God who leaves His children to perish were not worthy of my worship! And a salvation which does not save outright is neither worth preaching nor listening to.

When I stand here and say to this assembled mass, Trust my Master, believe Him, and it is no matter of question as to whether you shall be saved, for He has said that, he that believes and is baptized shall be saved. When I say that, I feel that I have something to say which is worth listening to! My dear Hearer, with a new heart and a right spirit you will be a new man! As you now are, if you were to be pardoned tonight you would be condemned tomorrow, for the tendencies of your nature would lead you astray. But if God shall put a new nature into you, your old nature shall not be able to control it.

The new immortal principle shall get the mastery! You shall be kept from sinning! You shall be preserved in holiness, and though you will have to mourn over your imperfection, yet you will feel that you have Gods own life in you! Though you will realize that you are not perfect, yet you will wish you were, and this wishing to be so will be a sign of Divine Grace in your soul! And these wishes and desires will go on waxing stronger and stronger, till, having mastered sin by the power of the Spirit, the day shall come when this body shall be dropped off, and the new life, disencumbered of the vile rags which it was compelled to wear while it was here, shall leap in its disembodied existence into perfection and then shall wait for the trumpets sound! And the body itself, purified and made fit for the new and higher life, shall be again inhabited, and so both the body and the soul, delivered from all sin, shall be an everlasting testimony to the promise of Christfor those who rest in Him shall have eternal lifeand they shall never perish! Neither shall any pluck them out of His hand!

III. I have anticipated the last point as to THE OUTLOOK OF MY TEXT INTO THE FUTURE. If God has given you eternal life, that comprehends all the future. Your spiritual existence will flourish when empires and kingdoms decay. Your life will live on when the heart of this great world shall grow cold, when the pulse of the great sea shall cease to beat, when the eye of the bright sun shall grow dim with age! You possess eternal life!

When, like a moments foam which melts into the wave that bears it, the whole universe shall have gone and left not a wreck behind, it shall be well with you, for you have eternal life! You have an existence that will run parallel with the existence of the Deity. Eternal life! Oh, what an avenue of glory is opened by those wordsEternal Life! Because I live, said Christ, you shall live also. As long as there is a Christ there shall be a happy soul, and you shall be that happy soul! As long as there is a God there shall be a beatified existence, and you shall enjoy that existence, for Jesus gives you eternal life.

Spin on, old world, until your axle is worn out. Fly on, Old Father Time, until your hour-glass is broken and you shall cease to be! Come, mighty angel! Plant your feet upon the sea and upon the land and swear by Him that lives that time shall be no more, for even then every Christian shall still live, because Christ gives unto them eternal life! Does not the next sentence also look into the future?They shall never perish? They shall never cease to exist in perpetual blessedness! They shall never cease to be like God in their naturesnever! Think about your having been in Heaven a thousand yearscan you imagine it? A thousand years blessed communion with the Lord Jesus!

A thousand years in His bosom! A thousand years with the sight of Him to ravish your spirit! Well, but you will have just as long to be there as if you had never begun, for you shall never, never perish! When the millennium shall come, or when the judgment shall sitand when all the great transactions of prophecy shall be fulfilled, these need not distress you, for if you trust Christ you shall neveroh, turn that word overyou shall never, never, never, never, NEVER perish! What an eternity of glory! What unspeakable delight is wrapped up in this promiseThey shall never perish!

Then, surely, this is another glance into the futureAnd none shall pluck them out of My hand. We shall be in His hand forever! We shall be in His heart forever! We shall be in His very Self foreverone with Him and none shall pluck us out of His hand! Happy, happy is the man who can lay claim to such a promise as this! Oh, there are some of you to whom I wish this promise belonged! It is very rich, and very full of comfort. I wish it belonged to you. Do you say, I, too, wish it belonged to me? Oh, Friend, I am glad to hear you say that!

Do you know, Soul, that there is but one key to open this precious treasure, and that key is the Cross of the Lord Jesus? What saves you? Can you trust Him? When one told me the other day she could not trust Christ, I looked her in the face and said, What has He done that you should not trust Him? Can you trust me? Yes, she said, I can trust my fellow creatures, but I cannot trust God. Oh, I thought, what terrible blasphemy! It was honestly spoken, and it was spoken by one who did not perceive the greatness of the offense in it, but I do not know that there is any worse thing that can be said than thatI cannot trust God!

Well, Sir, you have made Him a liar, then! That is the practical result of it. For if you believe a man to be honest you can always trust him. Can I trust my fellow man and not trust God? Oh, the horror of that thought! There is such an amount of blasphemy in it that I must not quote it again! Not trust Christ? Well, says one, but may we not have a merely natural trust and so be deceived? I do not know of any trust in Christ except a spiritual one, nor do I believe in any. If you trust Christ you have not done that of yourself. There was never a soul that trusted Christ unless he was enabled to do it by God the Holy Spirit!   
And if you wholly and simply trust Christ you need not ask any questions about natural trusting or spiritual trusting. If you trust the Lord Jesus wholly you are right. Rest on Him, then. Rest on Him only, wholly, and solelyand if you perish then I do not understand the Gospel, and I cannot comprehend what the Bible means. I will tell you one thing, and then close. If you trust Christ and you perish, then I must perish most certainly, and so must all my Brothers and Sisters here who have believed in Jesus.

It is all over with us if it is all over with you! When there is a storm, one passenger cannot very well go to the bottom if he is in the ship unless the whole of the ships company go, too. We must go together. We have got into the lifeboat, and if the lifeboat goes down with you, it must go down with all the saints, and all the Apostles, and all the martyrs, too. They went to Heaven resting upon Christ, and if you rest on Christ you will get there also. Oh, Sinner, may you be led today to rest on Jesus and on Jesus only, and then take the text. Do not be afraid of itI give unto My sheep eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of My hand.

Adapted from The C.H. Spurgeon Collection, Version 1.0, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307 Sermon #1924 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

A CHEERING INCIDENT AT BETHABARA

NO. 1924

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, OCTOBER 10, 1886, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**Therefore they sought again to take Him, but He escaped out of their hands, and went away, again, beyond Jordan into the place where John at first baptized, and there He abode. And many came to Him, and said, John did no miracle:   
but all things that John spoke of this Man   
were true. And many believed on Him there.   
John 10:39-42.**

BECAUSE our Saviors reasoning was unanswerable, therefore the Jews sought again to take Him. When men are convinced against their wills; when the heart struggles against the head; it usually happens that they turn persecutors. If they cannot answer holy arguments with fair reasoning, they can give hard answers with stones. If you cannot destroy the reasoning, you may, perhaps, destroy the reasonerand this naturally suggests itself to the heart which is rendered cruel by obstinate unbeliefhe who hates Truth of God soon hates its advocate. You must not consider yourself to have been unsuccessful in your proofs when your opponent waxes angry at them. Perhaps it is your success which has startled his conscience and rendered it necessary for him to become malicious to retain his obstinacy. Yet it is a very wretched business when a man knows that he is wrong and, therefore, attacks the person who has convinced him.

Do I address any person here who, in the secret of his heart, is well aware that the Christian faith is true and, therefore, derides it in order to be able to resist its influence? Do I speak to any man here who has felt the ground clean gone from under him and, therefore, has flown in the face of the teaching which has unsettled him? Will he not, as a sensible man, quit his unjustifiable position and candidly yield to the force of Truth? It is a degrading thing to be willfully shutting ones eyes to the light and cursing the sun for shining! Oh, that such a person would have Grace! Let me even sayoh, that he would have sense enough to see that this cannot be a safe and right method of procedure! Oh that he would yield himself to those blessed influences which, I trust, will, this morning, operate upon his mind!

When our Savior found that there was nothing to be done with the bigoted Jews, but that all He said and did only provoked more furious opposition, He escaped out of their hands and went away. He knew when to speak and when to refrain. Divinely guided, He neither fled as a coward, nor rashly pushed on where nothing could be gained. Determined opposition in one quarter is sometimes an intimation to the preacher that he had better labor elsewhere. When the channel is blocked up by rocks, we had better steer in another direction. If we have found no son of peace to welcome us as the messengers of God, it may be time to shake off the dust of our feet against the violent rejecters of the Truth and open our commission in another quarter. If we fail in the first place, we may, in the second, find that the Lord has much people in the city. The Savior left the infuriated Jews of Jerusalem and went to a place of retirement, thus illustrating His own words, When they persecute you in this city, flee you unto another.

But though our Lord left the obstinate, He never ceased to do good. He did not say, It is of no further use to preach and plead; I am, therefore, driven away to Bethabara, by the lonely Jordan, and I will warn the people no more. No, rather, as many resorted to Him there, He went on with His teaching and, in that place many believed on Him! If, my dear Brother, speaking in Christs name, you find that you have no place in such-andsuch a town, it may be the Spirits will that you should remove to a people who will receive you. Possibly in a place which promises less, you may gain more. Bethabara may yield converts when Jerusalem only yields persecutors. God has ways of changing the position of His servants for His own Glory and for the building up of His Church. As one has well said, The flight of Christ from men in one place may cause the flight of souls to Him in another. Though Jesus withdrew from the stones which filled the hands of angry Jews, he went to that place where John had said, God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.

I think that this somewhat obscure incident of our Lords abiding in Bethabara, though seldom preached upon, may be made exceedingly profitable to us. Much prayer has been offered that many may believe on the Lord Jesus this morning in this House of Prayer and it seems suitable, therefore, to discourse upon the words, Many believed on Him there.

I. The first remark I shall make is that when men believe in Jesus Christ, IT IS VERY PLEASANT TO KNOW THE PLACE where they believedtherefore is it recorded by Inspiration that, many believed on Him there. I do not say it is essential for a man to know the place where he believed in Jesusit is not at all essential! It is not necessary for a persons life for him to know where he was born, yet I am glad that I know my birthplace and I am happy to remember the humble spot. If anybody were to say to you, Do you know where you were born? and you were forced to answer, No, would you expect him to say, Then you are not alive? If he did say so, it would be a very bad argument, as you would be able to prove at once by letting him see that you were far from non-existence and so, if you cannot state where you were converted, nor when you were converted, do not fret about it.

A far more necessary enquiry is Are you converted? Do you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ? Are you, indeed, born from above by the Spirit of God? If so, it is by no means essential that you should know the place, or the means, or the hour. Still, it is very interesting to be able to point out the place of our new birth. I am thankful to be able to do so and many others of us are glad that they have an equally vivid memory of the spot whereon they stood when they passed from death unto life. Yes, you can say, I believed on Him there. Happy place! Holy place! Some of us know the spot to a yard where we looked unto Christ and felt our burden of sin loosed from our weary shoulders. Standing in one of the halls of the Orphanage is the very pulpit from which I savingly heard the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Though I have no reverence for relics of any sort, yet a flood of grateful memories flows before me as I look upon the platform whereon stood the unknown brother who pointed me to Jesus.

Who he was I shall never know till the Day of Judgementbut the text, Look unto Me and be you saved, all the ends of the earth, was the voice of God to my soul! It is an interesting thing to know where you were converted. May the Tabernacle prove to be the birthplace of a multitude of you, that we may continue to say, Many believed on Him there.

What was there particular about the retired place in which our Lord, on this occasion, gathered so many disciples? What was there about the place beyond Jordan where John first baptized?

It was a place where Divine ordinances had been observed The place where John at first baptized; and many believed on Him there. Where the Lord is obeyed, we may hope to see him revealed. We are not among those who condemn others for their mistakes about outward ordinances, but yet we do not look upon erroneous practices without sincere regret and apprehension. If the ordinance of Baptism is altered, applied to the wrong subjects, practiced in an unscriptural manner and used for unwarranted purposes, it is a serious error and will be sure, one day or other, to lead to other errors of still greater importance! Disobedience on this point may even now be grieving the Spirit of God and restraining His sacred operations. We must be careful to keep the ordinances as they were delivered unto us. We may not tamper with royal statutes. It is forbidden, even, to batter a penny which bears the kings face upon itand it is far worse to alter an ordinance which is stamped with Divine authority!

Whatever He says unto you, do it, was the word of the blessed Virgin concerning her Son, and it was a good word, worthy to be spoken in the ear of the entire Christian Church. If a Church labors to keep the ordinances as they were delivered and endeavors to follow in the tracks of Christs teaching and example, it may hope to receive the Divine blessing. At any rate, one reason for the withdrawal of the Spirit of God is gone and one reason why the Lord Jesus should bless the work is present. Oh that in this place, where we have baptized many into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, we might meet with an abundant blessing! In keeping His Commandments there is great reward. Outward ordinances cannot secure a blessing, but the spirit of obedience which leads to a careful observance of them according to the Divine Command is a blessed fruit of the Spirit! Where John baptized and Jesus submitted thus to fulfill all righteousness, we find a spot which is suited for a Divine revival.

Secondly, remember, this Bethabara was the place where faithful preaching concerning Jesus had been heard. For this John, who baptized, also preached the Gospel of repentance. He laid great stress upon that part of the Gospel which prepares men for the coming Kingdom of God. Where repentance has been thoroughly preached, I believe that many will come to believe in Jesus Christ. Jesus fitly followed John and faith will follow readily where repentance has been thoroughly preached and explained. The plow must lead the wayand then it is good sowing. We must first send in the sharp needle and then the silken thread will be drawn after it. There must be a measure of conviction of sin before there will be a joyful acceptance of the great Sin Offering! John had preached repentance.

Oh, you say, but John was dead. Yes, but he, being dead, yet speaks! There were the stones of the brook to which John had pointed and the reeds shaken of the wind to which he could never be likened. There was the river Jordan still flowing on, fit emblem of the stream of Grace which washes away the sin of the repentant. The good which men have done lives after them. Herod had cut off Johns head, but he had not silenced Johns voice. From the wilderness there still came the cry, Repent you: for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. A hallowed influence lingers about the scenes of faithful labors and I wonder not that our Lord sought retirement where every ripple of the river repeated the Baptists testimony. From scenes like these, the Church will be recruited with new disciples.

What fine preaching was that of John! He did no miracle, but all things that he spoke concerning Jesus were true. He spoke of One that was coming after him who was preferred before him, the laces of whose shoes he was not worthy to unloose. He spoke of Him in terms so plain that the Gospel preacher of today, in the full light of the Spirit of God, cannot find better languageBehold the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world. No wonder that many believed on Jesus there, where the savor of such a ministry lingered in mens minds! The population of the country round about had been saturated with such teaching as this and they had not forgotten, although they might not thoroughly have accepted, what the last of the Prophets had declared in their hearing. The true Elijah that was to come had so spoken as to fix his words in mens memories like well-fastened nails! Brothers, wherever there has been earnest preaching, we may expect that many will believe in the Lord Jesus Christ before long. Let no faithful preachers heart be faint within him! Christ is not preached in vainyou have not pointed to the Lamb of God for nothing. Even should you die without seeing it, there will come another after you who will reap a harvest from the Seed which you have sowed. Hidden Truths of God will break out all of a sudden and it shall be said, Many believed on Him there.

As for the place wherein we stand, I can solemnly assert that I have, with all my heart, preached to you the Gospel of the Grace of God. If a thousand persons were to believe in Jesus this morning, I would not be in the least surprised, for this I surely can claim, that to the best of my knowledge and ability I have, these many years, preached nothing among you but the Cross of Christ. I, too, have cried, Behold the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world. I have endeavored to point out to you Him whose shoe laces I am not worthy to unloose. I have prayed that He might baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. Many saints have joined me in that earnest prayer. If at Bethabara many believed on Him there, we may expect that many will believe on Him here!

The next remark about the place is thisit was a spot where God had borne witness to His Son Jesus. Jesus had come to be baptized by John and when He was baptized, He came up straightway out of the waterand the heavens were opened and the Spirit descended upon Him like a dove, while a voice said, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. The Holy Spirit is known to go where He has gone beforeand where the Father has borne witness to Christ, once, we may expect Him to bear witness again! Where Jesus was anointed for his lifework, the spot was hallowed. Where the Divine Voice sounded forth, not through a Prophet, but distinctly out of Heaven, we might look for other displays of God! Where God has spoken, He will speak again!

Has not God spoken to your soul in this Tabernacle? My Brothers and Sisters, has not God often borne witness to His Son in your hearts and consciences in this beloved House of Prayer? Not only has Christ been set forth visibly crucified among you, but the attesting Voice of Gods Holy Spirit has been heard within your spirits, saying, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Therefore let us hope that of this house it shall be said again and again, Many believed on Him there!

Once morenot only was this a very interesting spot to our Lord Jesus Christ, but Bethabara was also very interesting to the leaders of the little band who accompanied Himit was the place where the Lords first disciples had been won. They heard John speak and followed Jesus. John and James and Andrew and Peter had been, there, brought to Jesus and certain others also had joined the chosen band. To visit the place of their own spiritual birth would cause a renewal of their vows and act as an encouragement to persevere in winning others. Brothers and Sisters, we feel hopeful that God will bless others in the place where He has blessed us. In the place where Peter and John and Andrew have been found, it is to be hoped that other Peters and Johns and Andrews will be discovered. Where solid stones have been quarried, there remains much more material which may yet be brought forth.

Eternity, alone, shall tell how many souls have been born to God in this House. We have actually registered nearly 11,000 persons who have come forward and confessed their faith, and joined this Churchbut these are only a small part of the whole, for great numbers come here and return to the country and unite with other Churches. My Brethren, if the Lord has found you out in this place, you will cry day and night unto Him that others may be found of Him also. Sit in your pews this morning and say, Lord, I believed on You in this place; therefore I pray You this day grant that many others may do the same and may it be saidMany believed on Jesus in the Tabernacle.

I suppose it was a lovely quiet spot by the banks of the Jordan with only a little village or hamlet, named Bethany, close by. The word Bethany was altered by Origin into Bethabara, I suppose for distinctions sake. It really was Bethany, and so our Lord had two Bethanys. It was there, in a rural retreat, that many believed on His name. O hills of Piedmont, when the Vaudois preached the Christ amidst your valleys, it may be said of you, Many believed on Him there! O mosses and hillsides of Scotland, in the Covenanting times, many believed on Him there! Talk not so exceedingly proud, O you cathedrals or you great tabernacles, for many have believed on Jesus by the side of the highway, out on the village green, or under the spreading oak. Out in the desert of southern France, where men fled for their lives to hear the Gospel, many believed on Jesus!

In what place cannot Jesus triumph? He needs no Solomons Temple, no, in its porch He finds quibblers, but yonder by the willows of the Jordan He finds a people that believe on Him! Go forth, you heralds of the Cross, and preach the Gospel everywhere beneath the arch of Heaven. At the corners of the street or on the hillside, publish the proclamation of the Great King. Let the trees of the woods sing out and the inhabitants of the rocks sing! In all ears proclaim the Gospel, till, by river, sea and plain it shall be said, Many believed on Him there. Thus have we seen that it is pleasant to note the place where we first believed in Jesus.

II. Secondly, IT IS VERY INSTRUCTIVE TO NOTE THE TIME when persons are led to faith. Many believed on Him then and therewhen He was preaching at the place where John first baptized.

As I have said, some of you do not know when you believed, but you know that you have believed and that knowledge is quite sufficient. Still, it is interesting to know when you believed. Let us see if there were not certain noteworthy circumstances about the season of the conversion of these many. When was it?

First, it was after a time of very great and obstinate opposition. The Savior could make nothing of these quibbling Jews. They were so desperately prejudiced against Him that He turned away from them to more hopeful spirits. No sooner does He cross the river than we read that, many believed on Him there. So great a difference may we find in a few miles and a few hours! Opposition is no sign of defeat, but the contrary. When the devil roars, it is because his kingdom is being shaken, or he is afraid that it will be shaken. It should not depress us when we see a bitter spirit awakenedit should grieve us to see men opposing the Truth of God, but it should not lead us to abstain from spreading it. In the face of intense opposition our eyes should sparkle

*With that stern joy which warriors feel*

*In foemen worthy of their steel.*   
In the name of God expect victory! Now the foe advances to the fight, the Lord has delivered him into our hands. Hear how David puts itThey compassed me about like bees, they are quenched as the fire of thorns: for in the name of the Lord I will destroy them. Have but confidence in God and all will be well. Nothing is worse than stagnation. The stolid indifference of a thoughtless age is hard to deal with, but there is some little hope of a people who will resist you. Take courage from the blackening down of the darkness and hope that very soon you will see the dawn of a better day. Be you steadfast, immoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as you know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord. If today men take up stones to stone the Christ, tomorrow hearts of stone may be turned to flesh and we may hear that, Many believed on Him there.

The next point which is worthy of thought is that the time when these believed was a time of calm, unbroken quietude. The Savior was abiding at Bethany beyond Jordan and there He found a resting place. I suppose there was a ferry there and, by this means, our Lord crossed to the other side of the Jordan, into a lone spot where He could feel safe from quibblers. Those who came there came with the desire to hear and learnthey resorted to Him and were prepared to hear thoughtfully. Some persons may be converted through those who strive and cry and cause their voice to be heard in the streets, but I do not think the best minds are won in that manner. Conversion of a solid character is effected in a more solid way. Solemn thought and consideration are the healthiest for Gospel preaching.

One of the fathers has a famous sermon upon this text in which he deals with women and speaks of them as having so much more time for retirement and quiet than men. And he thinks that this is one of the reasons why so many of them believe in proportion to men. Men live in the noise of public life and so grow worldly and forget the Lord, but women are more often alone and walk in quieter places and we may, therefore, expect to see more of them turning to God. Certainly an opportunity to think is a great privilege to any man or any womanand these people at Bethabara, delivered from the noise and clamor of Jerusalem and its priests and sectaries, were able to weigh the claims of Jesus and were led to decide for Him. Give me the riverside, away from the rush of fashion, and I will preach with great hopefulness!

They began to speak of John. Do you wonder? It was the natural topic to discuss upon the spot where John, at first, baptized. John did no miracle, but all things that he spoke concerning this Man were true therefore this Man is the Messiah. This is He of whom John said, Who coming after me is preferred before me: for He was before me. I thank my God most heartily for giving us quiet worship. We are not dull and sleepy, but we are not excited and noisy. I am glad to hope that some men are converted to God amid war, earthquakes and pestilencebut I am inclined to be suspicious of that kind of conversion, for fear it should die with its cause.

We had an earthquake in Essex, some time ago, and in the little towns everybody went to the place of worship that week. I asked one of the ministers of a certain village in Essex how they were getting on, now that frisky Essex had, once more, settled down. Oh, he said, we are as dead as ever. We need an earthquake every week to wake us up. If that had not been true of Essex, I am sure it is true of other places. That which is born with fear dies with fear, but our Savior, in the calm of the hamlet by the rivers bank, instilled the Truth of God into thoughtful minds. The Jordan rolled between Him and His adversaries; no disturbance of the peace was to be feared; those who came to Him were sincere enquirers and our Lord, therefore, preached with great success and, many believed on Him there.

A time of calm thoughtfulness and peace of mind should suggest to us the propriety of setting our house in order towards God and considering the claims of the Lord Jesus. If you are, this day, free from care, free from labor, free from fret, I beseech you calmly judge of your condition as to the world to come of which we speak. Think of the Son of God. See whether He is not worthy of your immediate confidence. Judge whether it is not a day of Grace to your soul wherein it would be wise to believe in Jesus.

This time when many believed was a time of great desire for hearing. Let me read itMany resorted unto Him and many believed on Him there. You cannot catch fish where there are none. But when the fish come swarming up to the net, we may hope that some will be taken in its meshes. We cheerfully hope that when men dock to hear the Gospel, some will believe it. When I see the vast crowds flooding this place like a sea, I hope it will not all be in vain. When men are as eager to enter the House of Prayer as others are to get into a theater, surely we may hope that God means to bless them! Oh that God would bless the multitudes that contend for standing room in these aisles! To what purpose does He incline them to come here if it is not that they should believe and live? May it be said of this House, not only that many resorted to it, but that they resorted to Jesusnot only that they

heard of Him, but that they believed in Him!

What else shall I say as to this time when many believed in Jesus? I will say nothing else except that it was a time of which nothing else need be said. Many believed on Him there. Blessed is that age which has no history, but more blessed is that age of which this is the historyMany believed on Him there. Happiest of days in which many believed in Jesus! Brightest of spots of which it is said, Many believed on Him there! The most honorable record of any House of Prayer will be thisMany believed on Him there. I am praying that this may be the case here today. I began the morning with this prayer and my dear Brothers, the deacons and elders, when they came in to pray with me before I ventured on this platform, pleaded for the same thing. Only one note has sounded from the harp of our prayerit is thisOh that many may, this day, believe in the Lord Jesus Christ! Oh that this second Sabbath of October may be marked, not only by the fall of the leaf, but by the Lord Jesus Christ gathering ripe fruit which shall be the reward of the travail of His soul! Why should it not be so? Why should it not be said todayMany believed on Him then and there!

III. We now make a third remark, which is thisIT IS CHEERING TO OBSERVE THE FACT ITSELF. We have noticed the place and the time, but these are of secondary consequenceit is most charming to observe the factMany believed on Him.

This fact was a great refreshment to our dear Saviors heart . I do not say that John tells us so, but I think that from the style of his writing in this passage it looks so. There is an air of quietude about the passage. He writes, And there He abode. He seemed at home there. He could rest at Bethabara, because many believed on Him there. He must have been wounded when the inhabitants of His Fathers city again and again took up stones to stone Him. But He was pleased to see the plain country folk flock to hear Him. When the polished citizens rejected Him; when the wise Jews would not hear Him, the plain rustics of Peraea stood listening with delight to His dear Words and then weighed them with care and expressed, one by one, the conviction that Johns witness was, indeed, true, and that in Jesus of Nazareth they saw the Messiah! This was to be an oasis of comfort for our Lord before He traversed the burning desert of His passion and death. Before He was called by His last bitter agony to finish the work which the Father had given Him to do, He was to be refreshed by many true hearts putting their trust in Him.

I observe again that no doubt it was the fruit of Johns words. The good mans labors were not in vain. Now, at last, the Seed which the faithful John had sown brings forth the blade and the ear! By the rivers brink the handful of corn grows and ripens to a harvest. Good work never dies!

It was, however, more directly and clearly the result of our Lords own Presence. They first saw Him and what He did, and what He said and then they compared this with what John had testified, beforehand, and drew the conclusion that all things that John spoke of this Man were true! Brethren, we must have Jesus, Himself, here, and I rejoice to believe that He will not refuse to come! Our dear Lord has been known to come to this House on errands of lovethere is scarcely a seat in this House which He has not visitedall over the place He has caused the tears of repentance and the songs of faith to flow forth! He is no stranger, by His Spirit, to this House of Prayer! This week He has been here, not only with those who have confessed His name, but with some who last Wednesday were stricken down by conviction and made to cry out in the midst of the congregation, What must we do to be saved? In His infinite mercy and boundless condescension Jesus is with us! And from this fact we believe and are sure that power to heal and save will go forth on all sides. By prayer we will hold Him fastwe will not let Him go until He bless many souls!

The fact is very cheering, for you notice concerning the faith produced, that it was decided. They did not say that they would try to believe, but they believed on Him there! They did not promise to think on it, but they believed on Him there! They did not say that they felt impressions, but they believed on Him there! They did not say that they hoped and trusted and so on, but they believed on Him there! That is the consummation for which I pray at this time, that you should not talk about faith or feeling, nor resolve and promise, but that you should actually believe on Him straight away! Oh that I might see in you a sharp, clear, crisp faith in Jesus Christa faith about which there shall be no question! Remember, if you have a certain faith, you have a certain salvation! A doubtful faith will leave a doubt about your security, but those who believe out and out shall have joy and peace through believing!

That belief was prompt . Christ had preached without result for years to some others, but to those who came to this place He spoke only for a short time and they believed on Him there! How I wish that many who have never heard the Gospel before may believe on Jesus this day! I believe that new hearers are often the most hopeful hearers. If you could take a blind man out under the heavens and in a moment remove the scales from his eyes and let him see the stars for the first time, how amazed he would be! It is said that much of the special results of the preaching of Wesley and Whitefield arose out of the fact that the Gospel had become a novelty in England, so that when they preached it, men were struck with amazement at it! I have, therefore, hopes that the preaching, today, of the fact that the blood of Jesus Christ, Gods dear Son, cleanses as from all sinand that there is immediate pardon to be had by simply trusting in the Lord Jesus Christwill take some of you so by surprise that you will believe at once and it shall be said, Many believed on Him there. These people did not stop to get home; they did not wait for next weekbut then and there, by the rivers brinkthey looked to Him who is the Lamb of God and believed on His name!

The believing was of the most solid kind because they could give a reason for it. It was not a hasty, ignorant faith, but they argued thusThis is the Man of whom John spoke: we have seen what He did and what He said and He is exactly the Man that John said He would be. Assuredly He is the Messiah, of whom John spoke. And They believed on Him there. I would like you to argue the matter out. I would have you know your sin and the way by which it is removed. I desire you to understand the Doctrine of Substitution, to get at the back of the plan of salvation and see the reason why the Lord Jesus is the fit object of our faith. When you do this, you will believe with a grip and a hold to your faith such as an ignorant faith can never supply. Oh that we might see worked here, today, a solid immovable faith which can give a reason for its existence!

This faith is said to have been widespread, for, many believed on Him there. I dare say many men, women and childrenmany of all sorts believed on Him there. Oh, the privilege of knowing that Christ is no Savior for the few, but He gave His life a ransom for many! Heaven is not confined in its admissions to a few score, but a number that no man can number shall fill the Glory Land. I do not think we have anybody left in this congregation of that ancient order of close fellows who glory in the fewness of the elect. I hope they are nearly all gone to Heaven out of all the congregations whom once they harassed! These Brothers and Sisters used to think that if one or two converts were brought in each year, a great work was being done. If they heard of an evangelist holding revival services and learned that two or three hundred were added to the Church, they said, Ah, hm! These excitements end in rejection. It is all very fine to hear of so many joining the Church. I hope they will all turn out right. This meant, being interpreted, that they did not think they would and that they would be sorry if they did! Now we are not of that mind. We believe in many conversionswe look for them and we have them! That power which converts one can convert a hundred! The same argument which convinces one candid man will convince a thousand candid men. The same Gospel which wins one heart by the Holy Spirits power can win 10,000 hearts! O great Master, let us see it done today!

Many believed on him. This was what He lived for! This is what He died for, that men might believe in Him. This is what we preach for! This is what you have come here for! God gives you to hear the Gospel that you may believe on Jesus! This is why the Bible was writtenThese are written, that you might believe on His name. Your Sundays are given you that you may believe in Christ. Your houses of prayer are built that you may believe in Christ. If you will not believe, our preaching is an unhappy failure for us, an unhappier failure for you. If you believe not, you shall die in your sins. If you will not believe, surely you shall not be established. He that believes and is baptized shall be saved: he that believes not shall be damned. God save us from that, for Christs sake!

IV. And now I close with the fourth head, which is thisit has been pleasant to know the place, instructive to note the time and cheering to observe the factand now IT IS MOST IMPORTANT THAT WE SHOULD HAVE A SECOND EDITION OF IT. It is most important that many should believe on Christ here, in this very place, at this very hour!

For first, this morning many are here. From different motives and from different quarters of the globe you have come here at this time. We have so far realized the text that many resorted unto Him. This is a good beginningwe ought to be very thankful to see it.

Next, the Lord Jesus Christ is here by His Spirit. He declares that where two or three are met together in His name, there He iswe have many twos and threes here. He has promised to be with His people to the end of the world when they go forth to preach the Gospel. We have been crying to Him for a blessing, this morning, and He comes to answer our prayers! So far all is hopeful. We have the Lord and the many resorting to Him.

Furthermore, the witness borne is even more abundant than that which was borne at Bethabara. John is not here, but then he was not there, for he had been beheaded. His witness was there as his witness is here. Truth is not affected by timeJohns witness is as good after 19 centuries as after three years. We have also the witness of the Prophets who all spoke of Jesus. We have what these people had notwe have the witness of the Apostles who saw Him live and die and rise again and go up into Heaven! We have, moreover, the witness of beloved friends who have been saved by the Lord Jesus and can testify that all that has ever been said in the Saviors honor is true. He is able to save; He is willing to save; He casts out none that come to Him! If you put hundreds of us into the witness box, we shall all utter our solemn testimony that Jesus is a Savior and a great one, willing to deliver you from the wrath to come!

Beside that, you have the testimony of His own Gospel. The Gospel is its own sufficient witness. Somebody wrote a book and wished to present it to old George the Third. Farmer George asked, Whats the book about, Sir? Sire, it is an apology for the Bible. What? said George, What? Apology for the Bible? Apology for the Bible? Never heard of such a thing! Dont want your book, Sir! Apology for the Bible, indeed! Quite right, King George! Surely we do not need any apologies for the Gospelit is its own witness. God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them. Jesus Christ suffered, bled, and died, bearing human sin in Himself, and whoever believes in Him shall be immediately forgiven, immediately renewed in his heart by the Holy Spirit and made a new creature in Christ! Why, this is evidently a Divine message. Look and live. Such a Gospel never was invented by men, for no man likes it well enough to invent it, nor even to accept it after it is invented till God renews his heart! Let it sound forth that Jesus, mighty to save, invites men to trust Him and, trusting Him, they shall live!

Let us now come to bayonet point. Friend, will you believe in Jesus Christ?that is the point! You have heard about Him long enoughwill you now believe on Him? Wagon loads of sermons have been lost upon youwill you now believe on Him? I will think about it. I dont ask you to think about it, but to believe on Him. I shall go home and try what I can do. Do not try to do anythingbelieve on Jesus, for the Gospel precept isBelieve on the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved. May the sweet Spirit of God come upon you mightily, now, and take you away from all things but the one thing necessary! Oh that you would cast your guilty souls on Jesus and find Him mighty to redeem! Here is a simple verse for you to say in your hearts

*A guilty, weak, and helpless worm,   
On Christs kind arms I fall;   
He is my strength and righteousness,   
My Jesus, and my All.*

If you have said that from your heart, you are a saved man! Go your way rejoicing in His salvation! The Lord bless you! Amen and amen! Adapted from The C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307  
Sermon #2818 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

JESUS AND HIS FORERUNNER   
NO. 2818

A SERMON   
INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS-DAY, FEBRUARY 15, 1903.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, JUNE 24, 1877.

**Therefore they sought again to take Him: but He escaped out of their hands, and went away again beyond the Jordan to the place where John at first baptized, and there He abode. And many resorted unto Him and said, John did no miracle: but all things that John spoke of this Man were true. And many believed on Him there. John 10:39-42.**

THE unbelieving and infuriated Jews again and again took up stones to cast at our Lord and here they sought to take Him prisoner, but He escaped from them, apparently with the greatest possible ease. He did this on several occasions. When the men of Nazareth would have cast Him down, headlong, from the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, He passed through the midst of them and went His way. He made His escape, over and over again, in the same wonderful manner, thus proving that He was not in the power of any man. He need not, therefore, at the last, have died unless His death had been in accordance with His own will. He might have appealed to His Father and He would have given Him legions of angels for His deliverance. Or He might, as Elijah did, have called for fire from Heaven to destroy those who sought to arrest Him. His Divine power would never have been at any loss in providing means for His own protection. He might, readily enough, have slain those who came to take Him in the gardenand He might even have come down from the Cross, if He had pleased thus to prove what power He possessed.

Yet He did not so act, but voluntarily laid down His life, according to His own words, I lay down My life, that I might take it again. No man takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of My Father. Let us, then, bless and praise Him for that wondrous, voluntary, substitutionary death upon the tree! It was for our sins that He suffered. There was no reason for His death except that which was found in our dire necessities and in His own great heart of love. Whenever we think of the sufferings of Christ upon the Cross, let us remember how spontaneous was the Sacrifice by which He redeemed us from sin, death and Hell. Blessed, forever blessed, be the name of this willing Friend of guilty men! And let us, in similar fashion, always be ready to serve Him. Let the willingness of Christ bring forth willingness in uslet us not be as bullocks unaccustomed to the yoke, but cheerfully let us take His yoke upon us and learn of Him. May the Lord grant us Grace, not merely to be willing, but even to be eager for His service, as He was eager to serve us, for He could truly say, I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it is accomplished!

Another thought is suggested by our Lords action. When He was driven from one place by the unbelief and malice of His adversaries, He did not, therefore, retire altogether from His service. If He could not speak to the people in the streets of Jerusalem, He would find a place of audience in the desert beyond the Jordan, but, somewhere or other, He would be seeking the welfare of men. He went about doing good. They could not stop His mouth, whatever they might do. When they, again and again, in one place, took up stones to stone Him, He saw that His testimony would be useless to them, for it had already only increased their condemnation, so He went off to another place, away from those furious persecutors, that others might listen to the message of mercy which they had despised and rejected. Jesus was always working, always teaching, always blessing and, to this day, He is still diligent in His service on behalf of the sons of men. From the highest Throne of Glory He scatters down mercies and favors with both hands, by day and by night, upon us, His unworthy creatures! As He continues thus to serve us, let us continue to serve Him. And if He is unwearied, let us be unwearied, too. If we can do little or nothing for Him in one place, let us find another spot where we can serve Him, but never let us lay down our charge till we also lay down our livesnever let us case to work until we cease to live! May this mind be in us which was also in Christ Jesus our Lord!

I. Now to come more closely to the subject of this evenings meditation, the first thing that I see in the text is A FRUITFUL PLACE OF MINISTRYBeyond the Jordan. Our Savior preached in the place where John at first baptized, and many believed on Him there.

It is not every place that is fruitful, for there are some portions of the field, which is the world, that are like the wayside, where the birds of the air come and take away the seed as soon as it is sown. There are other parts where the soil is very shallowand there the seed springs up only to perish in the heat of the sun. Our Savior had been in many places where He was unsuccessful as a preacher, where He was absolutely rejected of men and His message altogether despised. For when He spoke the Truth of God, they even called it blasphemy and took up stones that they might stone Him as one unfit to live! Christian ministers may have to work in such places, yet they are always glad when they get on the soil that yields a hundred-fold. They are delighted if their Master bids them cast the net where there are great shoals of fish. Our Savior was evidently in such a spot when He was preaching beyond the Jordan.

Notice about this place, first, that it was a place of retreat from persecution. I do not think that we should ever look upon the most violent opposition to the Gospel as anything to be altogether lamented, for, even in this instance, it is just after the Jews have said that Christ blasphemed and have sought to stone or to seize Him, that He is most successful in His preaching! You may regard it as a very safe rule that when the devil roars, it is because he has been hit pretty hard and that whenever there is the most rage against the Gospel, it is one evidence of the Gospels growing power! To go and preach in a town, or village, or hamlet and to be scarcely noticedto deliver your testimony for Christ and yet to produce no visible effect of any kindis horrible. But if all the hosts of Hell are stirred up against you and men even begin to act despitefully to the preacher, you may take courage and rest assured that something is being done! Depend upon it, there would not be all that stir and uproar unless the Lords power had gone with His Word to the hearts and consciences of men. We are not to cease our preaching because of opposition, but we are then to be more earnest and zealous than ever possibly, in another place, as it was in our Lords casebut still, our testimony for our Lord is to be given somewhere! After the thunderstorm will often be the very best time for sowing the good seed of the Kingdom. It was so in our Saviors experience for He had, there, a most fruitful season after He had met with the most violent and bitter opposition.

If I am addressing any servant of God who has been passing through a season of fierce persecution, let him be encouraged! Brother, when the night is over, the day will be all the brighter because of the blackness that preceded it. So, be hopeful that after the wearing and wearying time of opposition that you have had, you will come into smoother waters and that God will bless you yet more abundantly.

Perhaps another reason why that place was so fruitful was because it was a retired spot. It was beyond the Jordan. It was away from the noise and strife of Jerusalem. Those who were there had evidently traveled a considerable distance with the desire to hear the Savior. In the streets of Jerusalem, Jesus preached to many who did not want to hear. And we must do the same, for we are to preach the Gospel to every creature. But I think we have the best hope of doing good when people take trouble to come to hear uswhen they journey for miles to the place of preachingwhen they are removed from their ordinary associations and feel that they can, in quiet, listen to the Word. Chrysostom once preached a sermon upon the last verse of my text, dwelling especially upon the word, theremany believed on Him there. Very singularly he accounts for the larger numbers of women who are converted, beyond the number of men, from the fact that women are more at home than men are, and have more quiet times for reflection and consideration upon the Word. I lay no stress upon that thought, but it has occurred to me, also, and when I met with it in Chrysostom, I thought that there might be some force about it, for we do need quiet times in which we can think of Divine things.

Some of you men are busy all day longup early in the morning and then right on till late at night. You are hacking and soaring away about your worldly business and you do not get time to sit down and calmly calculate this problem, What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Let me persuade you to sometimes go into the desert and rest a while. Surely, Heaven is worth a little thought if it is to be gained! It must be worthwhile to secure the necessary time for thought about how we are to escape from Hell and to be delivered from sin. I think that if youespecially on Sabbath afternoons, between the morning and evening servicesI mean, you unconverted peoplewould set apart an hour or even half an hour to really look into your case, to come to close dealings with yourselves and your God, we would preach in the evening with very great hope of blessing because such hearers would have come to us prepared and anxious to learn the way of salvation. Do you not know that when you go to a place of worship you will generally catch what you fish for? Some of you come because the preacher is thought to be eccentricyou will, possibly, hear something which will confirm you in that idea. But, if you come because you want to hear of Jesus Christ and to find salvation, you will get what you come for! It is the will of the Lord that those who seek shall find. I think there is something very suggestive in the fact that this fruitful place was a quiet spot away from the crowds and bustle of Jerusalem.

And, again, one reason why our Lord was so successful on this occasion when many believed on Him was, no doubt, that He had a large congregation. It is first said that many resorted unto Him. And then that many believed on Him. It is a self-evident fact that you cannot have many converts if you do not have many hearers. Hence, we delight to see the House of Prayer crowded. We are glad that when we cast the net we cast it among multitudes of fish. If a man can preach the Gospel to half a dozen people, he ought to do it with all his mightand if God should give him the souls of that half dozen hearers, it will be an abundant reward for him. But if there are any means by which half a dozen thousands of people can be brought to hear the Word, we may hope that the converts will be multiplied in equal proportion if God the Holy Spirit is pleased to bless the Word! At any rate, the greater the number of the preachers hearers, the greater is the likelihood of blessing to a large number of people. This puts an end, I think, to the foolish talk about the finest thought of the age being always delivered to an elite company of very few special individuals. If you preach with great thoughtfulness, especially after the style of the modern school of thought, you cannot expect that the multitude will come to hear you. Very well, then, let us not preach in that way, for, the greatest good to the greatest number should be the motto of every man who loves his race and desires its highest well-being. Let us endeavor to so adapt our style, if we are preachers of the Word, that the multitude will be willing to hear and will be able to understand for then we may hope that with the blessing of God, many will be converted.

But, once more, our Lord had met with a fruitful place because it was a place of fragrant memories. For what was that spot, beyond the Jordan, already noted? It was the place where John at first baptized where, in fact, Jesus Himself had been baptized by John! We believe not in the sacredness of places, but, still, where a good man has labored for the Master, there often lingers a holy fragrance which is a means of blessing to others. Many of those people had probably heard Johns testimony of his Lord. And the trees by the rivers edge, and the flowing stream would always remind them of the Baptist, who there urged them to repent of their sins. Now the good man is dead and buried, but the soil which he had plowed is the better prepared for the Masters seed-sowing. And the Master knows that He will have all the greater harvest in that place because John has been there before Him. O my Brothers and Sisters, it will be a grand thing for us to have so lived that when we are dead and gone, those who come after us will have all the easier task because of our service for the Savior! You Sunday school teachers are often like John the Baptistyou get the youthful minds ready for the preachers instruction and you who have, perhaps, been preaching for years without success, may, nevertheless, be John the Baptists to others who will come after you and who may be the means of blessing to those for whom you think you have labored in vain. When I go to some places to preach, I feel that I am sowing upon stony ground, but if the preacher before me has wept over his hearers, and pleaded with them, and prayed for them, I find that they are as ready to drink in the Word as the thirsty soil drinks in the rain when the blessed clouds end the long and terrible drought!

II. Now, secondly, in our text you will see A TESTIMONY TO A DEPARTED MINISTER.   
The people said, as they stood where John had preached and baptized, John did no miracle: but all things that John spoke of this Man were true. Oh, how I hope that you will be able to say this of me when I have gone the way of all flesh! He did no miracle: but all that he said concerning Christ was true. There are some preachers of whom people will say, when they are gone, They were not very eloquent. They were not very learned. They were not very refined and they could not do any miracles, butoh, that blessed but!but all things that they spoke concerning Christ were true.   
Notice the character which the people gave to John, three years, or thereabouts, after he was dead. He was still remembered by them and they bore most satisfactory testimony concerning him. First, they testified that he spoke concerning Christ. It was Johns businessit was all his business here below, to speak concerning Jesus Christ, and he did it so thoroughly that this was the one thing that his hearers recalled after he was gone. He rebuked the Pharisees and Sadducees, but his main work was to testify concerning Him who was to come after him, whose shoe laces he felt that he was not worthy to unloose. Ah, Brothers, there is no ministry that will stand the testing on a sick-bed, or on our deathbed, except that which has been full of testimony to Christ! When there has been a great deal of philosophy and only a homoeopathic dose of Christ in the preachingjust enough of the latter to give it the name of Christian teachingmay God have mercy upon both preacher and hearer! But to preach Christ first, Christ last, Christ midst, Christ always this is what John the Baptist did and this is what all preachers should do. An American gentleman who was here many years ago, came again about 14 or 15 years afterwards and he said to me as he went out, I see you are still on the old tack. Yes, I replied, I intend to be like Casablanca on the burning ship, where his father had told him to standand where he meant to remain as long as life should last.   
I will preach new doctrine when I find it in the Bibletill then, I will keep to the old! The State of Massachusetts passed a resolution declaring that it would be governed by the laws of God until there was time to make better onesand I have passed a resolution that I will preach Christs Gospel until I have time to find out something betterand that can never be, for it is the only Gospel that can ever meet the needs of the human race! There was no bite from any of the fiery serpents which a look at the bronze serpent could not cureand this Gospel of Gods Grace is the one remedy for all the spiritual diseases to which mankind is heir and, therefore, we will cling to it as long as we live.   
John the Baptist spoke concerning Christ and what he said about Christ was true. That is the important point, for it is possible for Christ to be preached and yet for the truth about Christ not to be preached. His Humanity may be left out, or His Deity may be kept in the background, or there may be lisping and hesitancy with regard to the doctrine of His atoning Sacrifice. And if this is the case, then the ministry will be without power. It used to be said of a certain noted preacher that his doctrine of the Atonement was that Jesus Christ did something or other, which, in some way or other, was connected with our salvation. That cloudy sort of teaching is not preaching Christ in truth! But to declare that He was made a curse for usthat the Lord caused to meet upon Him the iniquity of all who believe in Him. That He, who knew no sin, was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Himto clearly preach the definite Substitution of Christ on our behalfthis is to tell the truth about Christ! And I pray that all of us, whether preachers or teachers, may not only speak about Christ, but also, like John the Baptist, speak the truth about Him.

One other thing about John was that all he said about Christ was the Truth of God. All things that John spoke of this Man were true. Not merely some things, but all things. Any part of Christ is precious, but a whole Christ is what the sinner needs. As far as we know Him, we are bound honestly to make Him known to others. And even if we have to do it with but small ability and if, when we die, we have to regret that we had such slender powers, yet shall it be a sweet thought to us if we know that those we leave behind will be able to say, All things that he spoke concerning this Man were true.   
There was one thing which the people did not say, and which they had no need to say, because it was self-evidentthat is that John the Baptist had so preached Christ that they could not forget it. He had been dead some years, yet they remembered what he had preached about while he was with them. They remembered how he preached it, toothat he preached Christ in truth and that all he said about Christ was the Truthso that, when the Messiah Himself stood before them, the savor of Johns ministry was still fresh upon them. Oh, that it might be our lot, and the lot of all Gods servants, to make the Gospel arrows stick as well as strikeand to cause men to carry with them, for many a year, the remembrance of the things which we have spoken unto them while we were yet present with them!   
III. Now, thirdly, I am going away from the text in order to notice WHAT THE DEPARTED MINISTERS TESTIMONY REALLY WAS. What did John say concerning Christ?

Well, first of all, John said that Jesus was the Son of God. His testimony was, I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God. John delighted to extol his Lordhe felt that he was not worthy to take the place of the slave who took off his masters sandalsit was too great an honor for him to be the body-servant of Christ. How sweetly did John speak about Jesus as, the only-begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father! Do you all believe that blessed Truth of God of the Sonship of Christ? Do you all believe that the Man of Nazareth was, very God of very God? If you do, then trust Him to be your Savior and, doing so, you shall be saved by Him! Let the testimony of John be accepted by you, for it is now borne out by the life of Christ and a thousand proofs besides. Jesus of Nazareth is God in human fleshtrust yourselves with Him and you shall be eternally saved!

John also bore witness to another grand Truth about his Lord and Master, namely, that He was the Lamb of God. How plainly he cried to all the people, and afterwards to his own disciples, Behold the Lamb of God! Had John the paschal lamb in his minds eye? Very likely he had. This, he said, is the Lamb of God, whose blood is to be shed to preserve His people, just as the blood of the paschal lamb, when it was sprinkled upon the lintel and the two side-posts of the houses in Egypt, saved the Israelites when the destroying angel had unsheathed his terrible sword. O dear Hearers, I would that you would all receive Christ as the great Sin-Offeringthe only Preserver and Defender against the destroying angel in the day of Gods wrath!

But did John, do you think, have that passage in the 53rd of Isaiah in his mind, He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He opens not His mouth? When he said, Behold the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world, do you not think that he had in his mind that passage, The Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all? It is extremely likely that this was the case. This was a choice topic for John to dilate uponand we would dilate upon it, too, if we had the time. But, as we have only a few minutes left, we cry to you, Behold the Lamb of God! That Jesus, who is now reigning in Heaven at His Fathers right hand, suffered in the place of all who will believe in Him. Behold Him! Look unto Him and be you saved. If you trust in Him, you will thereby prove that your sin was laid upon Him and if so, all that sin of yours has been put away by His Sacrifice of Himself. Why do you not trust Him? May the Holy Spirit bring you to do so, for Johns testimony was true when he said that Jesus was the Lamb of God!

John also bore witness, concerning Christ, as the Baptizer with the Holy Spirit and with fire. And this, too, is true. Any of you who have trusted Christ, know into what sacred fire He plunges your spirit, so that it refines and purifies your soul and burns up all the dross. He immerses us into the Holy Spirit, so that we are

*Plunged in the Godheads deepest sea,   
And lost in His immensity.*

And, once more, John called Jesus the Bridegroom. That is one of His sweetest names. John spoke of himself as the Bridegrooms Friend, or best man. He was that, but nothing more, so his work was done when the Bridegroom came. O Beloved, the Lord Jesus Christ, by His love to His Church, has proved Himself to be her true Bridegroom! Out of His side was she taken when He fell asleep, even as Eve was taken out of the side of Adam, and to her His love always goes forth, for He says to her, You are bone of My bone, and flesh of My flesh. For this purpose did He leave His Father, that He might cleave unto His Church, that they two might be one. Truly does Paul write, Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. This is another grand Truth of God for us to talk aboutthe union of Christ with His Churchthe blessed bonds that bind Him to us, and us to Him, so that we are able to defy the whole universe to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

IV. I have thus given you a summary of what Johns testimony concerning Jesus was and of which the people said, All things that John spoke of this Man were true. Now, the last thing I have to speak upon is THE BLESSED RESULT. Our Lord was preaching in a fruitful place. He was following a man who had left a precious memory behind him and that memory was all about Himself. What was the result?

First, the people standing on that spot, where John had stood, began to consider. John said such-and-such about the promised Messiahthis Man exactly answers to the description that John gave. All men acknowledge that John was a Prophet, so what he said concerning Jesus is clearly true and He must, therefore, be the Christ whom God has sent into the world. He must be the Son of God, the Lamb of God, the One who is to baptize us with the Holy Spirit and with fire and, therefore, after careful consideration, they believed in Him!

Beloved Hearers, have you ever given due consideration to Divine things? It would be worthwhile for you, who are unsaved, not to do any more business until you are saved. You are very cute and clever about worldly things, but I tell you solemnly, that you are great fools with regard to your immortal souls. I am certain that if the life of any one of you were, at this moment, in peril from some very dreadful disease, you would not wait long before seeking the best advice concerning it that you could afford. If you were told, while I am preaching, that your house was on fire, you would not stay till I had finished the sermonyou would be off to your home at once, so concerned are you, and rightly so, about your earthly things. Yet your souls are even now abiding under the wrath of God! You dare not say you do not believe thatyet you do not really believe it, or you act in a way which implies that you do not! Suppose your breath were to stop for one minute, where would you be? Where would you be if you had to ask in vain for a drop of water to cool your parched tongue? Every instant life is in jeopardylet only one of the ten thousand strings of this poor harp but snapand harp strings often do snapand the soul must appear before its Godunready, unwashed, unclothed, forever lost! O Beloved, do as these people beyond the Jordan didbegin to consider, see whether Christ is not the Son of God, and the Lamb of Godand if He is, believe in Him! Trust Him with your souls and so find eternal salvation!

Further, having considered, these people did believe on Jesus. That is to say, they did accept Him as the Lamb of God and the Son of God. They did receive Him as the Bridegroom of their hearts, they did believe that He would baptize them with the Holy Spirit and with fireand so they were saved. Will not the same result follow this service? Will not some of you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, who is so worthy of confidence yes, who demands that we believe in Him, for this is what He says, He that believes not shall be damned? It is said, in our text, Many believed on Him. I will be thankful if only two or three believe on Jesus Christ, yet I cannot be content unless many believe on Him. He is so true that it is a grievous crime to doubt Him! He is so abundantly able to save that it is the greatest folly not to trust Him!

It sometimes puzzles me how God can have such patience with unbelievers. When He has given His only-begotten Son to bleed and die for the guilty, and He says, This is My well-beloved Son, bleeding and dying for you, only trust Himif men say that they will notwhat can be conceived more horrible than that? And what clearer proof can there be of the desperate malignity of the human heart that it will not even accept the Son of God, Himself, when He comes dressed in robes of love to save mankind?

I finish with the last word of my textMany believed on Him there, that is, on the spot where He then stood and preached. I would to God that many would believe on Jesus Christ in this Tabernaclethere in that area, or in that aisle, or up in the galleries. Alas, many say, We will go home and think about it. Do not do that! Believe on Him there. I know how apt you are to indulge in idle chat on your way home. I know how, at the supper table, too often the Word which you have heard is driven away by the foolish talk which is unfit for the Sabbath. The devil only wants you to wait, for he knows that he can then come and steal away the good Seed of the Kingdom. But if the Lord should give you the Grace to decide for Him at onceif you were to believe on Jesus

now what joy there would be among the angels and the spirits of just men made perfect! They would ring the bells of Heaven and rejoice over lost ones found! What peace there would be in your own heart and what thankfulness and delight there would be among the people of God when they heard of it! You Christians, try to have a quiet, earnest talk with the unconverted, if you can, before they get away from this building. It may be that they will be led by you to believe on Jesus here and now. God grant that it may be so, for our Lord Jesus Christs sake! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **MATTHEW 3:1-12; JOHN 1:15-37; 3:22-36.** We are going to read three passages relating to John the Baptists testimony concerning Christ.

Matthew 3:1-4. In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, Repent you: for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. For this is he that was spoken of by the Prophet Isaiah, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare you the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. And the same John had his raiment of camels hair, and a leather girdle about his loins; and his food was locusts and wild honey. Everything connected with John the Baptist was in harmony with his message. He was the preacher of repentance, so the place where he preached was most suitableit was in the wilderness where there was nothing to distract his hearers attention, as there would have been in crowded cities. His dress was striking and everything about him, even down to the food that he ate, went to show that he was the rough pioneer preacher preparing the way for his Master. John did not teach the fullness of joy and peacethat was left for our Lord Jesus to proclaimbut John came to prepare the way of the Lord by preaching repentance.

5. Then went out to him, Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, There seems to have been, about that time, a widespread anticipation of the coming of the Messiah, so, no sooner did the news come that a Prophet was preaching in the desert, than great multitudes went out to hear him.

6-8. And were baptized of him in the Jordan, confessing their sins. But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who has warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth, therefore, fruits meet for repentance. Did he not speak after the style of the Prophet Elijah? Yet those bold speeches of his were not at all stronger than the evils of the age required. When the self-righteous Pharisees and the skeptical Sadducees, the Ritualists and the modern thought men of that day, came to him to be baptized, he welcomed them not, but bade them, bring forth fruits meet for repentance, evidences of a change of heart and life.

9. And think not to say within yourselves, we have Abraham for our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones.In the bed of Jordan, where he was baptizing

9. To raise up children unto Abraham. John bade them boast not of their descent from Abraham, yet that was the great thing in which they did glory! They despised the Gentiles as so many do outside the true fold. Note how John the Baptist really preaches the Gospel to us indirectly while he is denouncing these peoples confidence in their carnal descent. Regeneration is not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

10. And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which brings not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire. Other teachers came, as it were, only to lop and prune the trees, but the time had come for the felling of those that were fruitless. John did this and so did our Lord Jesus Christ, for His preaching dug up the very roots of sin, superstition and evil of every kind.

11, 12. I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but He that comes after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: He shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit, and with fire: whose fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly purge His floor, and gather His wheat into the garner; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire. Now let us turn to the Gospel according to John where we have another account of the ministry of John the Baptist.

John 1:15. John bore witness of Him, and cried, saying, This was He of whom I spoke, He that comes after me is preferred before me: for He was before me. He was not before John in the order of human birth, yet He was truly before John, for He had an eternal pre-existence, as He was none other than the uncreated Son of God!

16-21. And of His fullness have all we received, and Grace for Grace. For the Law was given by Moses, but Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ. No man has seen God at any time; the only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him. And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who are you? And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ. And they asked him, What then? Are you Elijah? And he said, I am not. Are you that Prophet? And he answered; No. As they meant, Are you, literally, the Prophet Elijah risen from the dead? John said, I am not. Are you that Prophet of whom Moses foretold? And he answered, No. John gave short, sharp answers to these cavilers. He was not a man of dainty words and polished periods, especially in dealing with such people as they were.

22, 23. Then said they unto him, who are you that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What say you of yourself? He said, I am the voice. Not, the WordChrist is that, but John was the voice.

23-37. Of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the Prophet Isaiah. And they which were sent were of the Pharisees. And they asked him, and said unto him, Why do you baptize, then, if you are not that Christ, nor Elijah, neither that Prophet? John answered them, saying, I baptize with water: but there stands One among you, whom you know not; He it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe laces I am not worthy to unloose. These things were done in Bethabara beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing. The next day John saw Jesus coming unto him, and said, Behold, the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world. This is He of whom I said, After me comes a Man which is preferred before me: for He was before me. And I knew Him not: but that He should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come to baptize with water. And John bore record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from Heaven like a dove, and it abode upon Him. And I knew Him not: but He that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom you shall see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, the same is He which baptizes with the Holy Spirit. And I saw, and bear record that this is the Son of God. Again the next day John stood with two of his disciples, and looking upon Jesus as He walked by, he said, Behold the Lamb of God! And the two disciples heard Him speak, and they followed Jesus. In the third chapter of the same Gospel, we have yet another testimony by John the Baptist concerning Christ.

John 3:22-29 After these things came Jesus and His disciples into the land of Judea, and there He tarried with them, and baptized. And John was also baptizing in Aenon near Salim, because there was much water there: and they came, and were baptized. For John was not yet cast into prison. Then there arose a question between some of Johns disciples and the Jews about purification. And they came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, He that was with you beyond the Jordan, to whom you bore witness, behold, the same baptizes, and all men come to Him. John answered and said, A man can receive nothing except it be given him from Heaven. You yourselves bare me witness that I said I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before Him. He that has the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegrooms voice: therefore in this, my joy is fulfilled. I have introduced the Bridegroom and, henceforth, it will be my part to gradually disappear from the scene.

30. He must increase, but I must decrease. As fades the morning star when the sun itself arises, so was it the joy of the herald of Christ to lose himself in the supreme radiance of his Lords appearing!

31-34. He that comes from above is above all: he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaks of the earth: He that comes from Heaven is above all. And what He has seen and heard, that He testifies; and no man receives His testimony. He that has received His testimony has set to his seal that God is true. For He whom God has sent speaks the words of God: for God gives not the Spirit by measure unto Him. Did not the Holy Spirit descend and remain upon Himand that without measure or limit?

35, 36. The Father loves the Son, and has given all things into His hand. He who believes on the Son has everlasting life. He has it now and he can never lose it, or else it would not be everlasting. He has a life that must exist forever and ever.

36. And he that believes not the Son shall not see life. He shall not even know what spiritual life is! He shall not be able to understand it, or to form any idea of it. While he is an unbeliever, he is blind to spiritual things. What a dreadful sentence that isHe shall not see life.

36. But the wrath of God abides on him. God is always angry with him because he has rejected Gods own Son and refuses the great salvation. HYMNS FROM OUR OWN HYMN BOOK331, 381, 550.  
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A MYSTERY! SAINTS SORROWING AND JESUS GLAD!   
NO. 585

**DELIVERED ON SUNDAY MORNING, AUGUST 7, 1864,**

**BY THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead. And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent you may believe; nevertheless let us go unto him.   
John 11:14, 15.**

THERE lived in the little village of Bethany a very happy family. There was neither father nor mother in itthe household consisted of the unmarried brother Eleazar, or Lazarus, and his sisters, Martha and Mary, who dwelt together in unity so good and pleasant that there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life forevermore. This affectionate trio were all lovers of the Lord Jesus Christ and were frequently favored with His company. They kept open house whenever the great Teacher came that way. Both for the Master and for the disciples there was always a table, a bed and a candlestick in the prophets chamber and sometimes sumptuous feasts were prepared for the whole company.

They were very happy and rejoiced much to think that they could be serviceable to the necessities of one so poor and yet so honored as the Lord Jesus. But, alas, affliction comes everywhere! Virtue may sentinel the door, but grief is not to be excluded from the homestead. Man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward. If the fuel is a log of sweetsmelling sandal wood, yet the sparks must rise and even so the best of families must feel affliction. Lazarus sickens. It is a mortal sickness beyond the power of physicians. What is the first thought of the sisters but to send for their Friend, Jesus?

They know that one word from His lips will restore their brotherthere is no absolute need that He should even risk His safety by a journey to Bethany. He has but to speak the word and their brother shall be made whole. With glowing hopes and moderated anxieties they send a tender message to JesusLord, behold, he whom you love is sick. Jesus hears it and sends back the answer which had much comfort in it, but could hardly compensate for His own absence, This sickness is not unto death, but for the Glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby. There lies poor Lazarus after the message is come. He does not recover he is a little more cheerful because he hears that his sickness is not unto death, but his pains do not abate.

The clammy death-sweat gathers on his brow. His tongue is dry. He is full of pains and racked with anguish. At last he passes through the iron gate of death and there lies his corpse before the weeping sisters eyes. Why was not Jesus there? Why did He not come? Tender-hearted as He always was, what could have made Him thus unkind? Why tarries He so?

Why is He so long in coming? How can His words be true? He said, This sickness is not unto death, and there lies the good man cold in death and the mourners are gathering for the funeral. Look at Martha! She has been sitting up every night watching her poor brotherno care could have been more constantno tenderness more excessive.

There is no potion in the range of her activities which she has not compounded. This herb and the other she has gathered and she has administered all sorts of medicinal drinks and nourishing foods. And anxiously she has watched until her eyes are red for want of sleep. Jesus might have spared her all this. Why did He not? He had only to wish it and the flush of health would have returned to the cheek of Lazarus and there would have been no more need of this weary nursing and this killing watchfulness.

What is Jesus doing? Martha was willing to serve Himwill He not serve her? She has always cumbered herself about muchserving for His sake, giving Him not only necessaries but daintiesand will He not give her what is so desirable to her heart, so essential to her happinessher brothers life? How is it He can send her a promise which He does not seem to keep and tantalize her with hope and cast down her faith? As for Mary, she has been sitting still at her brothers side, listening to his dying words, repeating in his ear the gracious words of Jesus which she had been accustomed to hear when she sat at His feet. As she caught the last accents of her expiring brother, she thought less about the medicine and about the diet than Martha did. She thought more about his spiritual health and about his souls enjoyment.

She endeavored to stay the sinking spirits of her beloved brother with words like these, He will come, He may wait, but I know Him, His heart is very kind, He will come at the last. And even if He lets you sleep in death it will be but for a little. He raised the widows son at the gates of Nain He will surely raise you whom He loves far more. Have you not heard how He wakened the daughter of Jairus? Brother, He will come and quicken you and we shall have many happy hours yet and we shall have this as a special love token from our Master and our Lord, that He raised you from the dead.

But why, why was she not spared those bitter tears which ran scalding down her cheeks when she saw that her brother was really dead? She could not believe it! She kissed his forehead, and oh, how cold was that marble brow! She lifted up his handHe cannot be dead, she said, for Jesus said this sickness was not unto death. But the hand fell nerveless by her sideher brother was really a corpse and putrefaction soon set inand then she knew that the beloved clay was not exempt from all the dishonor which decay brings to the human body.

Poor Mary! Jesus loved you, it is said, but this is a strange way of showing His love! Where is He? Miles away He lingers. He knows your brother is sick. Yes, He knows that he is dead and yet He abides still where He is. Oh, sorrowful mystery that the pity of such a tender Savior should sink so far below their plumb line to gauge, or His mercy should range so high beyond their power to reach! Jesus is talking of the death of His friend. Let us listen to His wordsperhaps we may find the key to His actions in the words of His lips.

How surprising! He does not say, I regret that I have tarried so long. He does not say, I ought to have hastened, but even now it is not too late. Hear and marvel! Wonder of wonders! He says, I am glad that I was not there. Glad? The word is out of place! Lazarus, by this time, stinks in his tomb and here is the Savior glad! Martha and Mary are weeping their eyes out for sorrow and yet their Friend, Jesus, is glad? It is strange, it is passing strange! However, we may rest assured that Jesus knows better than we do and our faith may therefore sit still and try to spell out His meaning, where our reason cannot find it at the first glance.

I am glad, He says, for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent you may believe. Ah, we see it nowChrist is not glad because of sorrow, but only on account of the result of it. He knew that this temporary trial would help His disciples to a greater faith and He so prizes their growth in faith that He is even glad of the sorrow which occasions it. He does as much say, I am glad for your sakes that I was not there to prevent the trouble, for now that it is come it will teach you to believe in Me and this shall be much better for you than to have been spared the affliction. We have plainly before us the principle that our Lord, in His infinite wisdom and superabundant love, sets so high a value upon His peoples faith that He will not screen them from those trials by which faith is strengthened!

Let us try to press the wine of consolation from the cluster of the text. In three cups we will preserve the goodly juice as it flows forth from the winepress of meditation. First of all, Brothers and Sisters, Jesus Christ was glad that the trial had come for the strengthening of the faith of the Apostles. Secondly, for strengthening the faith of the family. And thirdly, for giving faith to othersfor you find by the forty-fifth verse that the goblet passed round to sympathizing friendsMany of the Jews which came to Mary and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on Him!

I. Jesus Christ designed the death of Lazarus and his after resurrection FOR THE STRENGTHENING OF THE FAITH OF THE APOSTLES. This acted two waysnot only would the trial itself tend to strengthen their faith, but the remarkable deliverance which Christ gave to them out of it would certainly minister to the growth of their confidence in Him.

1. Let us at once observe that the trial itself would certainly tend to increase the Apostles faith! Faith untried may be true faith, but it is sure to be little faith. I believe in the existence of faith in men who have no trials, but that is as far as I can go. I am persuaded, Brethren, that where there is no trial, faith just draws breath enough to live and that is all. Faith, like the fabled salamander, has fire for its native element. Faith never prospers so well as when all things are against hertempests are trainers and the lightings are her illuminators. When a calm reigns on the sea, spread the sails as you will, the ship moves not to its harborfor on a slumbering ocean the keel sleeps, too.

Let the winds come howling forth and let the waters lift up themselvesthen, though the vessel may rock and her deck may be washed with waves and her mast may creak under the pressure of the full and

swelling sailyet it is then that she makes headway towards her desired haven! No flowers wear so lovely a blue as those which grow at the foot of the frozen glacier! No stars are as bright as those which glisten in the polar sky! No water is so sweet as that which springs amid the desert sand. And no faith so precious as that which lives and triumphs in adversity! Thus says the Lord, by the mouth of the Prophet, I will leave in the midst of you an afflicted and poor people and they shall trust in the name of the Lord.

Now, why afflicted and poor? Because there is an adaptation in the afflicted and poor among the Lords people to trust in the Lord. He does not say, I will leave in the midst of you a prosperous and rich people and they shall trust. No! These scarcely seem to have such capacity for faith as the afflicted ones have. Rather I will leave in the midst of you an afflicted and poor people and they, by reason of their very affliction and poverty, shall be the more graciously disposed to repose their faith in the Lord. Untried faith is always small in stature. And it is likely to remain dwarfish so long as it is without trials. There is no room in the placid pools of ease for faith to gain leviathan proportions. She must dwell in the stormy sea if she would be one of the chief of the ways of God.

Tried faith brings experience. And every one of you who are men and women of experience must know that experience makes religion become more real to you. You never know either the bitterness of sin or the sweetness of pardon till you have felt both. You never know your own weakness till you have been compelled to go through the rivers and you would never have known Gods strength had you not been supported amid the floods. All the talk about religion which is not based upon an experience of it is mere talk. If we have little experience, we cannot speak so positively as those can whose experience has been more deep and profound.

Once when I was preaching upon the faithfulness of God in time of trial in the earlier days of my ministry, my venerable grandfather was sitting in the pulpit behind me. He suddenly rose up and took my place and coming to the front of the pulpit, said, My grandson can preach this as a matter of theory, but I can tell you it as a matter of experience, for I have done business upon the great waters and have seen the works of the Lord for myself. There is an accumulation of force in the testimony of one who has personally passed through the things of which others can only speak as though they had seen them in a map or in a picture.

Travelers who write from their easy chairs what they have seen from their bedchambers may invite books to beguile the idle hours of those who stay at home. But he who is about to traverse regions full of danger seeks a guide who has really trod the road. The writer may excel in fluid wordsthe veritable traveler has real and valuable wisdom. Faith increases in solidity, assurance, and intensity the more she is exercised with tribulation and the more she has been cast down and lifted up again. Let not this, however, discourage those who are young in faith. You will have trials enough without your seeking for them! The full portion will be measured out to you in due season.

Meanwhile, if you cannot yet claim the result of long experience, thank God for what Divine Grace you have. Praise Him for that which you have attained. Walk according to that rule and you shall yet have more and more of the blessing of God till your faith shall remove mountains and conquer impossibilities! It may be asked, What is the method by which trial strengthens faith? We might answer in various ways. Trial takes away many of the impediments of faith. Carnal security is the worst foe to confidence in God. If I sit down and say, Soul, take your ease, you have much goods laid up for many years, faiths road is barricaded. But adversity sets the barn on a blaze, and, the goods laid up for many years, cease to block up the path of faith.

Oh, the blessed axe of sorrow clears a pathway for me to my God by cutting down the thick trees of my earthly comforts! When I say, My mountain stands firm, I shall never be moved, the visible fortification, rather than the invisible Protector, engages my attention! But when the great earthquake shakes the rocks and the mountain is swallowed up, I fly to the immovable Rock of Ages to build my confidence on high! Worldly ease is a great foe to faith. It loosens the joints of holy valor and snaps the sinews of sacred courage. The balloon never rises until the cords are cut affliction does this sharp service for believing souls. While the wheat sleeps comfortably in the husk it is useless to man! It must be threshed out of its resting place before its value can be known. Trial plucks the arrow of faith from the repose of the quiver and shoots it against the foe.

Nor is affliction of small service to faith when it exposes the weakness of the creature. This trial would show the Apostles that they must not depend upon the bounty of any one man, for though Lazarus may have entertained them and filled their little bag with food, yet Lazarus dies. And Mary may die. And Martha may die and all friends must die and this would teach them not to look to broken cisterns, but to fly to the everflowing Fountain. Oh, dear Friends, we are in much danger of making idols of our mercies! God gives us His temporal favors as refreshments along the way and then straightway we kneel down and cry, These are your gods, O Israel. It is of the Lords mercy that these idol-gods are broken in pieces. He blasts the gourds under which we sat in ample shade in order that we may lift up our cry to Him and trust in Him alone. The emptiness of the creature is a lesson we are so slow to learn and we must have it whipped into us by the rod of affliction. But learned it must be, or else faith can never attain to eminence.

Furthermore, trial is of special service to faith when it drives her to her God. I make a sad confession, over which I mourn, that when my soul is happy and things prosper, I do not, as a rule, live so near to God as I do in the midst of shame and contempt and casting down of spirit. O my God, how dear You are to my soul in the night when the sun goes down! You bright and morning star, how sweetly do you shine! When the worlds bread is sugared and buttered, then we devour it till we grow sickbut when the world changes our diet, fills our month with vinegar and makes our drink gall and wormwoodthen we cry for the breasts of our dear

God again!

When the worlds wells are full of sweet but poisonous water, we pitch our tents at the wells mouth and drink again and again and forget the well of Bethlehem which is inside the gate. But when earths water becomes bitter like the stream of Marah, then we turn away all sick and faint and cry after the Water of Life, spring up, O well! Thus afflictions fetch us to our God as the barking dog drives the wandering sheep to the shepherds hand. And then trial has a hardening effect upon faith. As the Spartan lads were prepared for fighting by the sharp discipline of their boyish days, so are Gods servants trained for war by the afflictions which He sends upon them in the early days of their spiritual life.

We must run with footmen, or we shall never be able to contend with horses! We must be thrown into the water, or we shall never learn to swim. We must hear the whizzing of the bullets, or we shall never become veteran soldiers. The gardener knows that if his flowers were kept always under glass and fostered in a great temperature, when he might put them outside, should there come a cold night they would quickly die. So he does not give them too much heat but exposes them by degrees and gets them used to the cold, that they may stand in the open air.

And thus the only wise God does not put His servants in hothouses and rear them delicately, but He exposes them to trials that they may know how to bear it when it comes. If you want to ruin your son, never let him know a hardship. When he is a child carry him in your arms. When he becomes a youth still dandle him, and when he becomes a man still drynurse him and you will succeed in producing an arrant fool! If you want to prevent his being made useful in the world, guard him from every kind of toil. Do not suffer him to struggle. Wipe the sweat from his dainty brow and say, Dear child, you shall never have another task so arduous. Pity him when he ought to be punished! Supply all his wishes, ward off all disappointments, prevent all troubles and you will surely tutor him to be a reprobate and to break your heart!

But put him where he must work. Expose him to difficulties. Purposely throw him into peril and in this way you shall make him a man! And when he comes to do a mans work and to bear a mans trial, he shall be fit for either. My Master does not daintily cradle His children when they ought to run alone. And when they begin to run He is not always putting out His finger for them to lean uponHe lets them tumble down to the cutting of their kneesbecause then they will walk more carefully, byand-by, and learn to stand upright by the strength which faith confers upon them. You see, dear Friends, that Jesus Christ was gladglad that His disciples were blessed by trouble! Will you think of this, you who are so troubled this morning? Jesus Christ does sympathize with you, but still He does it wisely and He says, I am glad for your sakes that I was not there.

He is glad that your husband is taken away, that your child is buried. Glad that your business does not prosper. He is glad that you have those aches and pains and that you have so weak a bodyto the intent that you may believe. You would never have possessed the precious faith which now supports you if the trial of your faith had not been like fire. You are a tree that never would have rooted so well if the wind had not rocked you to and fro and made you to take firm hold upon the precious Truths of the Covenant of Grace.

2. But not to tarry here, let us notice that the deliverance which Christ worked by the resurrection of Lazarus was calculated, also, to strengthen the faith of the Apostles. At the worst Christ can workwhy what a plight were they now in! Here was a case which had come to the very worst. Lazarus is not merely deadhe has been buried! The stone has been rolled to the mouth of the sepulcher. Worse than that, he has become putrid! Here are miracles so many that I must describe the resurrection of Lazarus not as one miracle, but as a mass of wonders. We will not go into detail, but suffice it to say we cannot suppose anything to be a more prodigious exhibition of the Divine strength than the restoration of health and life to a body through which the worms did creep and crawl!

And yet in this very worst case Christ is not brought to a nonplus. Here was a case where human power evidently could do nothing. Now bring the violin and the harp, and let music try its charms. Bring here, physician, your most potent draught! Now, for the true aqua vilae! Now see what you can do. What? Does the elixir fail? The physician turns away disgusted, for the stench may sooner destroy the physicians life than he restore the corpse. Now, seek round the world and ask all men that areHerod and his men-at-arms, and Caesar on the imperial throneCan you do anything here?

No, Death sits with a ghastly smile laughing at them all. I have Lazarus, says he, beyond your reach. Yet Jesus Christ wins the day! Here Divine sympathy became most manifest. Jesus wept when He thought of Lazarus and his weeping sisters. We do not find it often said that He wept. He was a Man of Sorrows and acquainted with grief, but those were precious and rare drops which He shed over that dead body. He could do no more when He thought of JerusalemHe does no less now that He thinks of Lazarus. What an exhibition these disciples had of the Divine power as well as the Divine sympathy, for Christ does but say, Lazarus, come forth, and Death can hold his captive no longer!

Forth from the morgue he comes, restored to perfect health! Do you not think that all this must tend to strengthen the Apostles faith? It seems to me to be a part of the best education they could possibly receive for their future ministry. I think I see the Apostles in after time shut up in prison they are condemned to die, but Peter comforts John by saying, He can bring us out of prisondo you not remember how he brought Lazarus out of his grave? He can certainly appear for us and set us free. When they went forth to preach to sinners, how would they be strengthened by remembering these cases! Their hearers were debauched, depraved, immoralthe Apostles went into the midst of the worst conditions of human nature and yet they feared not for the resultfor they knew that putrid Lazarus revived at Christs word!

Peter would argue, Did not Christ restore Lazarus when his body was stinking and decayed? He can certainly bring the most reprobate hearts to the obedience of the Truth of God and raise the vilest of the vile to a new life. Many of the apostolic Churches were far gone. They had in them unworthy members. But this would not too much buffet the faith of the Apostles, for they would say, That same Christ who raised up Lazarus can make Sardis and Pergamos and Thyatira yet to be a praise in the earth! And Churches which seem to be corrupt and foul in the nostrils of the Most High may yet be made a brightness and glory and a sweet-selling savor unto Him.

I am persuaded that very often such a miracle as this would return to them and strengthen them in the times of their suffering and laborand make them able to bear afflictions and even martyrdom itself, in confidence in Christ. I will not, however, say more, because the thing seems obvious enough. But you must not forget the principle we are trying to bring outthat in the case of the Apostles, Christ considered that for them to have strong faith was worth any cost. No matter what pangs it cost Mary and Martha, or in what grief it might involve Himself or His Apostles, they must bear it because the result was so exceedingly beneficial.

The surgeon handles the knife without tears. Sharp is the cut, but he knows it will cure. The mother puts the draught to the childs mouth and the child cries and heaves and loathes the bitterness, but the mother says, Drink it all up, my Child, because she knows there is life in every drop. So Christ is glad for the Apostles sake that He is not there, to the intent that they may believe.

II. Jesus Christ had an eye also to THE GOOD OF THE FAMILY. Mary and Martha had faith but it was not very strong, for they suspected Christs love when they said, Lord, if You had been here, my brother had not died. There was a sort of whisperWhy were You not here? Do You love us? Why, then, did You tarry? They certainly doubted His power. Martha, when she could believe in the resurrection but could not believe in the present resurrection for her brother. And when, again, she said, he has been dead four days, had faith, but it was very weak. Christ therefore sent the trial to Mary and Martha for their sakesand was glad to send itto the intent that they might believe.

Observe, dear Friends, that these were choice favorites of the Lord Jesus Christ. He loves all His elect, but those three were as the darlings of the family, elect out of the elect! They were three special favorites upon whom very distinguishing regard was set and therefore it was that He sent them a special trial. The lapidary, if he takes up a stone and finds that it is not very precious, will not spend much care in cutting it. But when be gets a rare diamond of the first water, then he will be sure to cut and cut and cut again.

When the Lord finds a saint whom He lovesloves muchHe may spare other men trials and troubles, but He certainly will not this wellbeloved one! The more beloved you are, the more of the rod you shall have. It is an awful thing to be a favorite of Heavenbut it is a thing to be sought after and to be rejoiced in! But remember, to be of the Kings council-chamber is a thing involving such work for faith that flesh and blood might shrink from the painful blessing. The gardener gets a tree and if it is but of a poor sort he will let it grow as it wills and take what fruit comes from it naturally. But if it is of a very rare sort, he likes to have every bough in its proper place, so that it may bear well. And he often takes out his knife and cuts here and cuts there, because, says he, That is a favorite tree and it is one which bears such fruit that I would have much from it and would leave nothing whatever that would cause it detriment.

You who are Gods favorites must not marvel at trials, but rather keep your door wide open for them and when they come in, say, Hail, messenger of the King! The sound of your Masters feet is behind you. You are welcome here, for your Master sent you. Special trial was attended with a special visit. It may be that Christ would not have come to Bethany if Lazarus had not been dead. But as soon as there is a corpse in the house, there is Christ in the house, too. O Christian, it shall be much for your comfort and for the strengthening of your faith if Christ comes to you in your troubles! I tell you, if you see no smiles on His face in your prosperity, you shall not be without them in your adversity.

The Lord Jesus will go out of His way to see you. You know when a mother is most kind to her child she lets it run about and scarcely notices it when it is well. But when it cries, My head, my head!take it to the mother and tell her it is illhow tender she is over it! How all the blandishments of love and the caresses of affection are lavished upon the little sick one! It shall be so with you. And in receiving these special visits you shall know yourself to be highly favored above the rest.

This special visit was attended with special fellowship. Jesus wept wept with them that wept. Ah, you shall have Jesus sitting by the bedside and weeping with you when you are sick. You may be well and strong and have but little fellowship with Christ, but He shall comfort you in your sickness. Though you might walk along the green sward without the Savior, when you come into the midst of the fire, like Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, you shall not be without Him then! I witness that there is no fellowship with Christ so near and sweet as that which comes to us when we are in deep trials. Then the Master takes His child, not upon His knee, but to His very heart and bids him lay his head upon His beating bosom. Christ will reveal His secrets to you when the world is against you and trials surround you. The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him. And He will show them His Covenant, but they shall never have such discoveries of that secret and that Covenant, as when they most need itin the darkest and most trying times.

There are, then, special loves, special trials, special visits and special fellowship. And soon you shall have special deliverance. In days to come you will talk about these trials. You will say, I fretted myself and worried over them, but oh, if I could have seen the end as well as the beginning, I should have said

*Sweet afflictions! Sweet afflictions!*

*Thus to bring my Savior near.*   
I tell you, you will sit yet under your own vine and under your own fig tree and talk to poor tried saints and say, Do not be cast down, for I cried unto the Lord and He heard me and delivered me from all my fears. Perhaps in Heaven this will help to make a part of your happinessto remember Gods love to you in your tribulations

*There on a green and flowery mount   
Our weary souls shall sit,   
And with transporting joys recount,   
The labors of our feet.*

Are we not to tell angels and principalities and powers the faithfulness of Christ? We will tell all Heaven that, His love was strong as death and His jealousy as cruel as the grave. Many waters could not quench His love, neither could the floods drown it.

What do you say, my Friend, you who are under the smarting rod? Will you murmur any more? Will you repine against it any more? I beseech you to take my text and read it the other way! SayGod help you to say itI am glad that my God did not deliver me, because the trial has strengthened my faith. I thank His name that He has done me the great favor to permit me to carry the heavy end of His Cross. I thank my Father that He has not left me unchastened, for Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept Your Word. It is good for me that I have been afflicted. I tell you, this is the shortest way out of your troubles, as well as the most profitable spirit while you are in them. The Lord generally stays the rod when He finds His child receiving it as a favor. When you are agreed with Gods rod, then that rod will have no further quarrel with you. When you can look into the Fathers eyes, and say, Your will be done, then His afflicting hand has done its work.

III. Now I come to the third point and here may God the Holy Spirit bless the word. This trouble was permitted for GIVING FAITH TO OTHERS. I shall address myself chiefly to those who cannot say they are Gods people but who have some desire towards Christ. It is very likely you have had some great trouble in your life and looking back you wish you had never had it. But my Lord, who knows better than you do, says, I am glad for your sakes that I did not spare you that trouble, to the intent that you may be led to believe.

Know assuredly that afflictions often lead men to faith in Christ because they give space for thought. The man was strong, and hale, and hearty, and went on working from day to day and never had a thought about God. The ox knows his owner and the ass his masters crib, but he did not know, he did not care. He left all thoughts of eternity to those who were silly enough to be religious. But for himwhat did it matter to him? Death was a long way off, and besides, if it were not, he had not the time to think about it.

By Gods Grace an accident occurred. He had to be upon his bed and at first he fretted and fumed, but it could not be altered and there, in the ward of the hospital, he groaned through many a weary hour at night. What could he think of? Why, then, the man began to think of himself, of his condition before God, of what would be his lot if he should die! When his life trembled like the even balance and no one could tell which way it would turn, the man was forced to consider. Many a soul has been plowed in the hospital and then has been sown in the sanctuary. Many a man has been first brought to God by the loss of a limb, or by long sickness, or by deep poverty.

Afflictions lead men to faith full often by preventing sin. A young man had resolved to climb a mountainhe had determined against good advice to reach the summit, though one far older than he had warned him of the danger. He had not proceeded far up the mountainside before a thick mist surrounded him. He was alarmed. The mist was so thick he could scarcely see his own hand. He retraced his steps, following the way by which he came and returned sorrowfully to his fathers house, telling him that he had been in great peril. His father said he was glad of itfor if he had not met with that peril, he might have advanced a little farther and fallen never to rise again.

Often trouble puts men out of temptation. They would have gone into bad company, to drunkenness, or lust, but they could not. The appointment was madeah, the very night was set apartbut the black hand of Gods kind angel came. I said a black hand, for so it seemed, and the man could not do what he had wished to do and so his course was checked and this, in the hand of Godwas the means of bringing him to faith. Troubles, again, often bring men to believe in Jesus because they compel them to stand face to face with stern realities. Did you ever lie upon the edge of death for a week? Did you ever lie with your body racked with pain, listening for the physicians whispers and knowing that they amounted to thisthat there were ninety-nine chances to one that you could not possibly recover?

Did you ever feel that death was near? Did you ever peer into eternity with anxious eyes? Did you ever picture Hell and think yourself there? Did you ever lie awake and think of Heaven and yourself shut out of it? Ah, it is in such times as these that Gods Holy Spirit works great things for the sons of men! For these reasons Christ is glad when they are brought very low, when their soul abhors all manner of meat and they cry unto God in their trouble! He is glad because this is the steppingstone to real and genuine trust in Him and so to eternal life! It is much better to lose an eye or a hand than to lose your soulbetter to go to Heaven poor and ragged, than to go to Hell richbetter to melt into Heaven by the process of consumption than it were to go down to Hell with bones filled with marrow and sinews full of strength! Glory be to God for the trials and troubles some of us have had if they have been the means of bringing us to Christ!

Trials tend to make men believe in Christ when they are followed by deliverances. Perhaps some of you have been raised from a sick bed, or you have been helped over a time of temporal distress. Well, have you no gratitude? Do you not love God for His goodness? Does not your heart melt towards the Lord for the kind deeds He has done for you? Have you no song of praise for His name? I have known many who have said, Now that God has been pleased to raise me up and help me in this way, I will give Him my heart. What can I do for Him who has done so much for

me? Gratitude, I doubt not, has led many to put their trust in Christ.

Besides, if you sought God and asked for help in time of trouble and He did help you, this will tend to encourage you to pray later. If He helped you then, He will help you now. If He spared your life, why will He not spare your soul? If God has been pleased to lift you up from the grave, why may He not also deliver you from the pit of Hell? I bless God there are many in this Church who were led to seek the Lord through answers to prayer. God was gracious to them in their distress. His mercy listened to their prayer. The blessing came and the result is that they cry unto Him and will cry as long as they live. If once we have prevailed with God and believing in God we have had some deliverance, this, I hope, will be used to make us trust God for everything in the future.

Remember that the one thing needed for eternal life is trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ! I know you will tell me you cannot be perfect. No, I know you cannot. You will say, I have many sins. I have done much that is wrong. It is true, most true, but he who believes in the Lord Jesus Christ has his sins forgiven. You know the storyChrist came down from Heaven and took His peoples sins upon His own shoulders. When God came forth to strike the sinner, Justice said, Where is he? and Christ came and stood in the sinners place and Gods sword went through the Saviors heart. Why? That it might never cut nor wound the heart of those for whom Jesus died. Did He die for you? He did if you believe in Him your faith will be to you the evidence that Christ was Substitute for you and oh, if Christ suffered for you, you cannot suffer!

If God punished Christ He will never punish you! If Jesus Christ paid your debts, you are free! Before Gods Throne today, if you believe, you are as clear as the angels in Heaven! You are a saved soul if you are resting upon the Atonement of Christ and you may go your way and sing

*Now, freed from sin, I walk at large,   
The Saviors bloods my full discharge.   
At His dear feet my soul I lay,   
A sinner saved and homage pay.*

If this is the result of your affliction, Christ may well say, I am glad for your sakes that I was not there to stop the trouble, to the intent that you may believe. May God bring you to faith for Jesus sake. Amen.

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EVEN NOW   
NO. 2249

**INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS-DAY, MARCH 27, 1892. DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, FEBRUARY 8, 1891.

**Even now.   
John 11:22**

I HOPE that there are a great many persons here who are interested in the souls of those around them. We shall certainly never exercise faith concerning those for whose salvation we have no care. I trust, also, that we are diligent in looking after individuals, especially those who are among our own family and friends. This is what Martha didher whole care was for her brother. It is often easier to have faith that Christ can save sinners in general, than to believe that He can come into our own home and save some particular member of our household. But, oh, the joy when this comes to passwhen we are able to kneel beside some of our loved ones and rejoice with them in being made alive by the power of the Holy Spirit! We cannot expect to have this privilege, however, unless, like Martha, we send our prayers to Jesus and go to meet Him and tell Him of our need. In the Presence of Christ it seems very natural to trust Him even at the worst extremity. It is when we are at our wits end that He delights to help us. When our hopes seem to be buried, then it is that God can give a resurrection! When our Isaac is on the altar, then the heavens are opened and the voice of the Eternal is heard. Are you giving way to despair concerning your dear friend? Are you beginning to doubt your Savior and to complain of His delay? Be sure that Jesus will come at the right time, though He will be the judge of which is the best time for Him to appear.

Martha had a fine faith. If we all had such an honest belief in Christ as she had, many a man who now lies dead in his sins, would, before long, hear that Voice which would call him forth from his tomb and restore him unto his friends. Marthas faith had to do with a dreadful case. Her brother was dead and had been buried, but her faith still lived and, in spite of all things which went against her, she believed in Christ and looked to Him for help in her extremity. Her faith went to the very edge of the gulf as she said, But I know, that even now, whatever You will ask of God, God will give it to You.

Still, Martha had not so much faith as she thought she had. But a few hours after she had confessed her confidence in the power of the Lord Jesus, or perhaps it was only a few minutes, she stood at the grave of her brother and evidently doubted the wisdom of Him she professed to trust. She objected to the stone being removed and, strong in the admitted facts of the case, she urged her reason and said, Lord, by this time he stinks. Well, but, Martha, you said, not very long ago, I know that even now Christ can interpose. Yes, she said itand she believed it in the way in which most of us believebut when her faith was sharply tried by a matter of fact, she did not appear to have had all the faith she professed! I suspect this also is true of most of us. We often fancy our confidence in Christ is much stronger than it really is.

I think I have told you of my old friend, Will Richardson, who said, when he was 75 years of age, that it was a very curious thing, that all the winter through, he had thought he should like to be a-harvesting, or out in the hay field, because he felt so strong. He imagined that he could do as much as any of the youngsters. But, he said, do you know, Mr. Spurgeon, when the summer comes, I do not get through the haymaking; and when the autumn comes, I find I have not sufficient strength for reaping? So it often is in

spiritual things! When we are not called upon to bear the trouble, we feel wonderfully strongbut when the trial comes, very much of our boasted faith is gone in smoke! Take heed that you examine well your faith! Let it be true and real, for you will need it all.

However, Christ did not take Martha at her worst, but at her best. When our Lord says, According to your faith be it unto you, He does not mean According to your faith in its ebb, but, According to your faith in its flood. He reads the thermometer at its highest point, not at its lowestnot even using the mean temperature of our trust. He gives us credit for our quickest pace, not counting our slowest, nor seeking to discover our average speed in this matter of faith. Christ did for Martha all she could have asked or believedher brother did rise again and he was restored to her, and to his friends. In your case, too, O you trembling, timorous Believer, the Lord Jesus will take you at your best, and He will do for you great things, seeing that you desire to believe greatly and that your prayer is, Lord, I believe; help You my unbelief!

The point upon which Martha chiefly rested, when she expressed her faith, was the power of Christ in intercession with His Father. I know, she said, that, even now, whatever You will ask of God, God will give it to You. Since the Omnipotence of God could be claimed, she felt no anxiety as to the greatness of the request. Whatever was asked could easily be gained, if it were only asked by Him who never was denied! Beloved in the Lord, our Christ is still alive and He is still pleading! Can you believe, even now, that whatever He shall ask of God, God will give it to Him and give it you for His dear Sons sake? What an anchorage is the intercession of Christ! He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever lives to make intercession for them. Here is a grand pillar to rest the weight of our souls uponHe ever lives to make intercession for them. Surely, we may have great faith in Him who never wearies, and who never fails! Who lives, indeed, for no other purpose than to plead for those who trust in His dying love and in His living power! Who is He that condemns? It is Christ that died, yes, rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us. Fall back upon the intercessory power of Christ, in every time of need, and you will find comfort that will never fail you!

It is a grand thing to have faith for the present, not bemoaning the past, nor dreaming of some future faith which we hope may yet be ours. The present hour is the only time we really possess. The past is gone beyond recall. If it has been filled with faith in God, we can no more live on that faith, now, than we can live, today, on this bread we ate last week. If, on the contrary, the past has been marred by our unbelief, that is no reason why this moment should not witness a grand triumph of trust in the faithful Savior! Let us not excuse our present lack of faith by the thought of some future blessing. No confidence which we may learn to put in Christ, in the days to come, can atone for our present unbelief. If we ever mean to trust Him, why should we not do so now, since He is as worthy of our belief, now, as He will ever be, and, since what we miss, now, we miss beyond recall

*The present, the present, is all you have   
For your sure possessing,   
Like the Patriarchs angel, hold it fast,   
Till it gives its blessing.*

In this verse, I know, that even now, whatever You will ask of God, God will give it to You, I want to fix your attention only on the two words, Even now. We have just sung

*Pass me not, O tender Savior,   
Let me love and cling to You.   
I am longing for Your favor,   
When You come, call for meEven me.*

Our hymn was Even me. The sermon is to be Even now. If you have been singing Even me and so applying the truth to your own case, say, also, with an energy of heart that will take no denial, Even now, and listen with earnest expectation to that Gospel which is always in the present tenseWhile it is said, Today if you will hear His voice, harden not your heart, as in the provocation. Remember, too, that this is not only the preachers word, for the Holy Spirit says, TodayEven now.

I shall use these words, first, in reference to those who are concerned about the souls of others, as Martha was about her dead brother. Believe that Christ can save even now! Then I shall speak to you who are somewhat concerned about your own souls. You believe, perhaps, that Christ can save. I want you to be persuaded that He can save you even now! That is to say, at this exact hour and minute, going by the clock, while you hear these wordseven nowChrist can forgive! Even now Christ can save! Even now Christ can bless!

I. First, CAN WE BELIEVE THIS WITH REFERENCE TO OTHERS? If you are in the same position as Martha, I can bring out several points of likeness which should encourage you to persevere. You, Mother, have prayed for your boy. You, Father, have pleaded for your girl. You, dear Wife, have been much in prayer for your husband. You beloved Teacher, have frequently brought your class before Godand yet there is a bad case pressing upon your mind and your heart is heavy about some dear one whose condition seems hopeless. I want you to believe that now, even now, Christ can grant your prayer and save that soul! That now, even now, He can give you such a blessing that the past delay shall be more than recompensed to you.

There is one, for instance, in whom we are deeply interested, and we can say that the case has cost great sorrow. So Martha could have said of Lazarus. Blessed Master, she might have said, my brother took the fever(for I should think it was a fever that he had)and I watched him. I brought cold water from the well and I washed his burning brow. I was by his bedside all night. I never took off my clothes. Nobody knows how my heart was wrung with anguish as I saw the hot beads drops upon his brow, and tried to moisten his parched tongue and lips. I sorrowed as though I was about to die, myself, but in spite of all that, I believe, even now, that You can help me. Even now. Alas! There are many griefs in the world like this. A mother says, Nobody knows what I have suffered through that son of mine. I shall die of a broken heart because of his conduct. No one can tell, says the father, what grief that daughter of mine has caused me. I have sometimes wished that she had never been born. There have been many, many such stories told me, in which a beloved one has been the cause of untold anguish and agony to gracious, loving hearts. To those so sorely troubled I now speak! Can you believe that even now the Living Intercessor is mighty to save? It may be that you are, at this moment, trembling on the verge of the blessing you so long have sought. God give you faith to grasp it even now!

With other persons we are met with a fresh difficulty. The case has already disappointed us. That is how some of you have found it, is it not? Yes, you say, I have prayed long for a dear friend, and I believed, some time ago, that my prayer was heard and that there was a change for the better. Indeed, there was an apparent change, but it came to nothing. You are just like Martha. She kept saying to herself, Christ will come. Brother is very ill, but Jesus will come before he dies! I know He will. It cannot be that He will stay away much longer. And when He comes, Lazarus will soon be well. Day after day, Mary and she sent their messenger to look toward the Jordan, to see if Jesus was coming. But He did not come. It must have been a terrible disappointment to both these sisters enough to stagger the strongest faith that they had ever had in the sympathy of Christ! But Martha got the better of it and she said, Even now, though disappointed so bitterly, I believe that You can do whatever You will. Learn from Martha, my discouraged Brothers and Sisters! You thought that your friend was converted, but he wanted to go back, again. You thought that there was a real work of Grace upon his heart, but it turned out to be a mere disappointment and disappeared like the mist of the sun. But can you not believe over the head of your disappointment and say, I believe even now, even now? Blessed shall your faith be, if it gets so far!

Perhaps further difficulties have met us. We have attempted to help someone and the case has proved our helplessness. Ah, yes, says one, that exactly describes me. I never felt so helpless in my life! I have done all that I can do and it amounts to nothing. I have been careful in my example. I have been prayerful in my words. I have been very patient and long-suffering. I have tried to induce my beloved one to go and listen to the Gospel here and there. I have put holy books in his way and, all the while, I have seized opportunities to plead with himoften with tears in my eyesbut I can do nothing! I am dead beat. Yes, that is just where Martha got toshe had done everything but nothing seemed to be of the least use. None of the medicines she applied seemed to soothe the sufferer. She had gone down to the villageperhaps to the home of Simon the leper, who was a friend of hers, and he possibly advised some new remediesbut nothing seemed to make the least difference. Her brother grew worse and worse, until she saw that, though she had nursed him back to health the last time he had been ill, she was now utterly powerless. Then he died. Yet, even though things had gone as far as that, she had faith in Christ! In like manner, your case is beyond your skill, but can you not believe that, even now, the end of nature will be the beginning of Grace? Can you not even now feel that you shall find that word true, He shall not fail? Christ never failed, yet, and He never will! When all the doctors give a patient up, the Great Physician can step in and heal! Can you believe, concerning your friend, even now?

But perhaps you are in a worse plight. The case has been given up. I think I hear one kind, gracious soul, whose hope has been crushed, say, Well, Sir, that is just what we have come to about my boy. We held a little family meeting and said we must get him to go away to Australia, if we can. If he will only go to America, or somewhere abroad, it will be a relief to have him out of our sight. He keeps coming home intoxicated and gets brought before the magistrates. He is a disgrace to us! He is a shame to the name he bears. We have given him up. Martha had come to this. She had given her brother up and had actually buried himyet she believed in the power of Christ! Ah, there are many people that are buried alive! I do not know that such a thing ever happens in the cemetery, but I know it happens in our streets and homes. Many are buried, morally, and given up by us before God gives them up. And, somehow, it is often the given-up people that God delights to bless! Can you believe that even noweven nowprayer can be heard? That even now the Holy Spirit can change the nature and that even now Christ can save the soul? Do you believe this? I shall rejoice if you can and you, too, shall rejoice before long!

But there is still a lower depth. Here is one who is much concerned about an individual and the case is loathsome. Though we loved him once, he says, his character has now become such that it is pestilential to the family. He leads others astray. We cannot think of what he has done without the very memory of his life spreading a taint over our conscience and over our mind. There are persons alive in the world who are just masses of living putridity. There may be such here. I would be glad if a word I said could reach them. It is a shocking thing that there are men and women, made in the image of God, with talents and ability, with capacity and conscience, who, nevertheless, seem to live for nothing else but to indulge their licentious passions and to lead others into vices which otherwise they had never known. There must come an awful day of reckoning to such when the Christ of God shall sit upon His Throne and shall weigh before all men the secret doings of libertines, of debauched men and depraved women!

If any of you have such a one related to you, can you believe that even now Christ can raise that one? Yours is just the same sort of case as Martha had. She could have said, Brother is buried! Worse than that, he stinks. She did not like to say that of dear Lazarus, her own brother, but she could not help saying it. And there are some men of whom we are compelled to say, no matter how much our love seeks to shield them, that their character stinks. But can you still believe that, even now, there is hope that God can intervene and that Grace can save? Why, my dear Friend, you and I know that it is so! I believe itwe must all believe it! If it comes to a case very near and dear to you and you begin to be a little bit staggered, remember what you used to benot openly so depraved, perhaps, but inwardly, quite the sameand take hope for these foul men and women from the remembrance of what you were! And such were some of you; but you are washed.

When John Newton used to preach at St. Mary Woolnoth, he always believed in the possibility of the salvation of the worst of his hearers, for he had been, himself, one of the vilest of the vile! When he was very old and they said, Dear Mr. Newton, you are too old to preach. You had better not go into the pulpit, now, he said, What? Shall the old African blasphemer who has been saved by Grace leave off preaching the Gospel while there is a breath in his body? Never! I think while there is breath in the body of some of us, we must go on telling the Gospel, for, if it saved us, it can save the worst of sinners! We are bound to believe that even now, Christ can save even the most horrible and the most vile

*His blood can make the foulest clean,   
His blood availed for me!*

Perhaps there is still even a more desperate difficulty with reference to someone whom we would wish to see living for God. The case is beyond our reach. Yes, that Brother quickly answers, now you have come to my trouble. I do not even know where my boy is! He ran away and we have not heard from him for years. How can I help him? Why, believe that, even now, Christ can speak to him and save him! He can send His Grace where we can send our love. The great difficulty which lies like a stone at the door of the sepulcher will not prevent Him speaking the life-giving Word! He has all forces at His command and when He says the Word, the stone shall be rolled away and the son that is lost shall be found! Even the dead shall be made alive! Though you cannot reach your son, or your daughter, Christ can meet with them! The Lords hand is not shortened that it cannot save; neither is His ear heavy, that it cannot hear. Though your prodigal boy or your wandering girl is at the end of the earth, Christ can reach them and save them! Have faith in God. Even now Christ can aid you

*Faith, mighty faith, the promise sees,   
And looks to God alone,   
Laughs at impossibilities,   
And says, It shall be done.*

I know there are some Christian people who have drifted into the terribly wicked state of giving up their relatives as hopeless. There was a Brother here, who is now in Heavena good, earnest Christian man whose son had treated him very shockingly, indeed, and the father, justly indignant, felt it right to give his son up. He had often tried to help him, but the young man was so scandalous a scapegrace that I did not wonder that the old man turned him away. But one night, as I was preaching here, I spoke in something like the same way in which I have spoken now, and the next morning the old mans arm was about his childs neck. He could not help himself! He felt he must go and find his son out and seek, again, to reclaim him. It seemed to have been the appointed time for that boys salvation, for it pleased God that within a few months that son died and he passed away with a good hope, through Grace, that he had been brought to his Saviors feet by his fathers love! If any of you have a very bad son, go after him, seeking, until, by the Grace of God, you shall find him! And you that have grown hopeless about your relatives, you must try not to give them up. If other people cast them off, you must not, for they are allied to you by the ties of blood. Seek them out! You are the best person in the world to seek them and the most likely to find them, if you can believe that even now, when the worst has come to the worst, even now, almighty Grace can step in and save the lost soul.

Oh, that some here may have faith to claim, at this moment, the salvation of their friends! May desire be worked into expectancy and hope become certainty! Like Jacob at Jabbok, may we lay hold of God, saying, I will not let You go, except You bless me. To such faith the Lord will give a quick response. He that will not be denied shall not be denied! My Friend, Hudson Taylor, who has done such a wonderful work for China, is an instance of this. Brought up in a godly home, he, as a young man, tried to imitate the lives of his parents. But failing in his own strength to make himself better, he swung to the other extreme and began to entertain skeptical notions. One day, when his mother was from home, a great yearning after her boy possessed her and she went up to her room to plead with God that, even now, He would save Him.

If I remember aright, she said that she would not leave the room until she had the assurance that her boy would be brought to Christ. At length her faith triumphed and she rose quite certain that all was well and that, even now, her son was saved! What was he doing at that time? Having half an hour to spare, he wandered into his fathers library and aimlessly took down one book after another to find some short and interesting passage to divert his mind. He could not find what he wanted in any of the books, so, seeing a narrative tract, he took it up with the intention of reading the story and putting it down where the sermon part of it began. As he read, he came to the words, the finished work of Christ, and almost at the very moment in which his mother, who was miles away, claimed his soul of God, light came into his heart! He saw that it was by the finished work of Christ that he was to be saved. And kneeling in his fathers library, he sought and found the life of God.

Some days afterwards, when his mother returned, he said to her, I have some news to tell you. Oh, I know what it is! she answered, smiling, You have given yourself to God. Who told you? he asked in astonishment! God told me, she said, and together they praised Him, who, at the same moment, gave faith to the mother and the life to the sonand who has since made him such a blessing to the world! It was the mothers faith, claiming the blessing, even now, that did it! I tell you this remarkable incident that many others may be stirred up to the same immediate and importunate desire for the salvation of their children and relatives. There are some things we must always pray for with submission as to whether it is the will of God to bestow them upon usbut for the salvation of men and women we may ask without fear. God delights to save and to bless; and when the faith is given to us to expect an immediate answer to such a prayer, thrice happy we are! Seek such faith even now, I beseech you, even now.

II. But, in the second place, I want to speak very earnestly to any here who are concerned about their own souls. Jesus came to save you even now. CAN WE BELIEVE THIS FOR OURSELVES? Can you expect the Lord, even while you hear these words, to speak to you the Word of Power and bring you forth from your sleep of sin?

For some of you, the time is late, very lateyet it is not too late. You are getting into years, my Friend. I want you to believe that even now Christ can save you. I often notice the number of old people who come to the Tabernacle. I am glad to see the aged saints, but among so many elderly people, no doubt, there are some unsaved sinners whose gray hairs are

not a crown of glory, but a fools cap! But, however old you are, though you are 60, seventy, 80 or even 90 years of age, yet, even now, Christ can give you life! Blessed be God for that! But it is not altogether the years that trouble youit is your sins. As I have already said, if you have gone to the very extremity of sin, you may believe that, after all those years of wandering, the arms of Free Grace are still open to receive youeven now. There is an old proverb, It is never too late to mend. It is always too late for us to mend ourselves, but it is never too late for Christ to mend us! Christ can make us new and it is never too late for Him to do it. If you come to Him and trust Him, He will receive you, even now!

By the long-suffering of God, there is a time left to you in which you may turn to Him. What a thousand mercies it is that, even now, is a time of mercy to youit might have been the moment of your everlasting doom! You have been in accidentsyou have been within an inch of the grave many times! You have been ill, seriously ill. You have been well-near given up for dead and here you are, still alive, but still an enemy of God! Plucked by His hand from the fire and flood and, perhaps, from battle. Delivered from fever and choleraand still ungrateful, still rebelling, still spending the life that Grace has lent you in resisting the love of God! Long years ago you should have believed in Christ, but the text is, even now. Do not begin to say, I believe that God could have saved me years ago there is no faith in that. Do not meet my earnest plea by saying, I believe that God can save me under such-and-such conditions. Believe that He can save you now, up in the top gallery there, just as you are! You came in here careless and thoughtless, yet, even now, He can save you! Away yonder, quite a man of the world, free and easy, destitute of all religious inclinations though you may be, He can save you even now! O God, strike many a man down, as You did Saul of Tarsus, and change their hearts by Your own supreme love, as You can do it, even now, on the very spot where they sit or stand!

But though God waits to be gracious to you, though you have yet time to repent, remember, it is but a time, therefore seize it. Your opportunity will not last forever. I believe that even now God can save, but if you reject Christ, there will come a time when salvation will be impossible. On earth, as long as a man desires to be saved, he may be savedwhile there is life there is hope. I believe that if a mans breath were going from his body, if he could then look to Christ, he would live. But

*There are no acts of pardon passed   
In the cold grave, to which we haste!   
But darkness, death, and long despair,   
Reign in eternal silence there!*

Do not venture on that last leap without Christ, but even now, before the clock strikes another time, fly to Jesus! Trust Him even now!

It is a time of hope . Even now there is still every opportunity and every preparation for the sinners salvation. Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation. Shall I give you some reasons for believing that even now is a time of hope? There are many good arguments which may be brought forward in order to banish the thought of despair.

First, the Gospel is still preached. The old-fashioned Gospel is not dead. There are a great many who would like to muzzle the mouths of Gods ministers, but they never will. The old Gospel will live when they are dead and, because it is still preached to you, you may believe and live! What is the old Gospel? It is seeing that you are helpless to save yourself, or bring yourself back to God, Christ came to restore youthat He took those sins of yours, which were enough to sink you to Helland bore them on the Cross, that He might bring you to Heaven! If you will but trust Him, even now, He will deliver you from the curse of the Law of God, for it is written, He that believes on Him is not condemned. If you will trust Him, even now, He will give you a life of blessedness which will never end, for, again, it is written, He that believes on the Son has everlasting life. Because that Gospel is preached, there is hope for you! When there is no hope, there will be no presentation of the Gospel. God must, by an edict, suspend the preaching of the Gospel before He can suspend the fulfillment of the Gospel promise to every soul that believes! Since there is a Gospel, take it! Take it now, even now! God help you to do so!

In the second place, I know there is hope now, even now, for the Christ still lives. He rose from the dead, no more to die, and He is as strong as ever. I am He that lives and was dead. He says, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. These words were spoken to the Apostle John and when he saw Him, he said that, His head and His hairs were white like wool, as white as snow. But when the spouse saw Him, she said, His locks are busy, and black as a raven. Yet both truly saw! Johns vision of the white hair was to show that Christ is the Ancient of Days, but the view of the spouse was to show His everlasting youth, His unceasing strength and power to save! If there is any difference in Him, Christ is, today, more mighty to save than He was when Martha saw Him. He had not, then, completed the work of salvation, but He has perfectly accomplished it now and, therefore, there is hope for everyone who trusts in Him. My Lord has gone up yonder where a prayer will find Him with the keys of death and Hell jingling at His belt, and with the Omnipotence of God in His right hand! If you believe on Him, by His eternal power and Godhead He will save you, and save you even now, on the spot, before you leave this house!

Moreover, I know that this is a time of hope, in the next place, because the precious blood still has power. All salvation is through the blood of the Lamb. Still

*There is a fountain filled with blood,   
Drawn from Immanuels veins,*   
and still, even now   
*Sinners, plunged beneath the flood,   
Lose all their guilty stains.*

The endless efficacy of the atoning Sacrifice is the reason why you may come and believe in Jesus, even now! If that blood had diminished in its force, I should not dare to speak as I do. But I can, even now, say with confidence   
How many have already entered into Glory by the blood of the Lamb! When a man comes to die, nothing else will do for him but this! Our own works are a poor staff for us when we pass through the river. All those who are now in the Land of Light have but one confidence and but one songthey stand upon the merit of Jesus Christand they praise the Lamb who was slain, by whose blood they have been cleansed and sanctified! There is no other way of salvation but that! Even now that blood has virtue to take away your sin! Christ is a sufficient Savior because His death has unexhausted power. Believe that He can save you even now.

*Dear dying Lamb, Your precious blood Shall never lose its power,   
Till all the ransomed Church of God Be saved to sin no more.*

Again, I would remind you that even now is a time of hope to you because the Spirit still can renew. He is yet at work, regenerating and sanctifying. He came down at Pentecost to dwell with His people and has never gone back. He is still in the Church! Sometimes we feel His mighty power more than at other times, but He is always at work. Oh, you that do not know anything about the power of the Holy Spirit, let me tell you that this is the most wonderful phenomenon that can ever be observed! Those of us who have seen and known His mighty energy can bear testimony to it! In my retirement, at Mentone, during the last few weeks, if you had seen me, you would have found me sitting every morning, at half-past nine oclock, at my little table, with my Bible, just reading a chapter and offering prayermy family prayer with the little group of 40 to 50 friends, who gathered for that morning act of worship. There they metand the Spirit of God was manifestly moving among them, converting, cheering, comforting! It was because of no effort of mineit was simply the Word of God, attended by the Spirit of God, binding us together and binding us all to Christ!

And here, in this House of God, for 37 years I have, in all simplicity, preached this old-fashioned Gospel. I have just kept to that one theme content to know nothing else among menand where are they that preached new gospels? They have been like the mist upon the mountains brow! They came and they have gone. And so it will always be with those who preach anything but the Word of God, for nothing will abide but the Mountain, itself, the everlasting Truth of the Gospel to which the Holy Spirit bears witness! That same Holy Spirit is able to give you a new heart even now, to make you a new creature in Christ Jesus at this moment! Do you believe this?

Once more. I know that even now Christ can save you and I pray you to believe it, for the Father is still waiting to receive returning prodigals. Still, as of old, the door is open and the best robe hangs in the hall, ready to be put upon the shoulders of the son who comes back from the far country, even though he returns reeking with the odor of the swine trough. How longingly the Father looks along the road to see whether, at last, some of you are turning homeward! Ah, did you but know the joy that awaits those who come, and the feast which would load the welcoming table, you would even now say, I will arise and go to my Father. You should have returned long ago, but, blessed be His love, which even now waits to clasp you to His heart!

Last of all, faith is but the work of a moment. Believe and live! You have nothing to do! You need no preparations! Come as you are, without a single plea, but that He bids you to come! Come now, even now! If Christ were far away, the time that is left to some of you might be too short to reach Him. If there were many things which first of all you had to do, your life might close before they were half done! If faith had to grow strong before it received salvation, you might be in the place of eternal despair before your faith had time to be more than a mere mustard seed! But Christ is not far awayHe is in our midstHe is by your side! You have nothing to do before you trust HimHe has done it all and, however weak your faith, if it but comes in contact with Christ, it will convey instant blessings to you! Even now you may be saved forever, for

*The moment a sinner believes,   
And trusts in His crucified God,   
His pardon at one He receives,   
Redemption in full, through His blood.*

Surely all these are sufficient reasons why, even now, is a time of hope to you! May it also be a time of blessing! It shall be so if you will but, at this instant, cast yourself on Christ. He says to you that if you will but believe, you shall see the Glory of God! Martha saw that Glory! You shall see it, too, if you have the same precious faith.

I long that God would give me some souls tonight, on this first occasion when I have met an evening congregation since my return from the sunny South. I desire earnestly that He would set the bells of Heaven ringing because sinners have returned and heirs of Glory have been born into the family of Grace! I stirred you up to pray this morning. Pray mightily that this word, tonight, simple but pointed, may be blessed to many!

**Portion of Scripture Read before SermonJohn 11.** HYMNS FROM OUR OWN HYMN BOOK95 (PART II), 607, 612.  
Adapted from The C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307 Sermon #1799 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

THOUGH HE WERE DEAD   
NO. 1799

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, SEPTEMBER 14, 1884, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**Martha said unto Him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day. Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believes in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and   
whoever lives and believes in Me shall   
never die. Do you believe this?   
John 11:24-26**

MARTHA is a very accurate type of a class of anxious Believers. They do truly believe, but not with such confidence as to lay aside their care. They do not distrust the Lord, or question the Truth of what He says, yet they puzzle their brain about, How shall this thing be? And so they miss the major part of the present comfort which the Word of the Lord would minister to their hearts if they received it more simply. How?and why? belong unto the Lord! It is His business to arrange matters so as to fulfill His own promises! If we would sit at our Lords feet with Mary and consider what He has promised, we would choose a better part than if we ran about with Martha, crying, How can these things be?

Martha, you see, in this case, when the Lord Jesus Christ told her that her brother would rise again, replied, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day. She was a type, I say, of certain anxious Believers, for she set a practical boundary to the Saviors words. Of course there will be a resurrectionand then my brother will rise with the rest. She concluded that the Savior could not mean anything beyond that. The first meaning and the most common meaning that suggests itself to her must be what Jesus means! Is not that the way with many of us? We had a statesman, once, and a good man, too, who loved reform. But whenever he had accomplished a little progress, he considered that all was done. We called him, at last. Finality John, for he was always coming to an ultimatum and taking for his motto, Rest and be thankful.

Into that style, Christian people too frequently drop with regard to the promises of God! We limit the Holy One of Israel as to the meaning of His words. Of course they mean so much, but we cannot allow that they intend more! It were well if the spirit of progress would enter into our faith, so that we felt within our souls that we had never beheld the innermost glory of the Lords Words of Grace. We often are amazed that the disciples put such poor meanings upon our Lords words, but I fear we are almost as far off as they were from fully comprehending all His gracious teachings! Are we not, still, as little children making little out of great words? Have we grasped, as yet, a tenth of our Lords full meaning in many of His sayings of love? When He is talking of bright and sparkling gems of benediction, we are thinking of common pebbles in the brook of mercy! When He speaks of stars and heavenly crowns, we think of sparks and childish coronals of fading flowers! Oh that we could but have our intellect cleared. Better still, that we could have our understanding expanded, or, best of all, our faith increased so as to reach to the height of our Lords great arguments of love!

Martha also had another fault in which she was very like ourselves she laid the Words of Jesus on the shelf, as things so trite and sure that they were of small practical importance. Your brother shall rise again. Now, if she had possessed enough faith, she might truthfully have said, Lord, I thank You for that word! I expect within a short space to see him sitting at the table with You. I put the best meaning possible upon Your words, for I know that You are always better than I can think You to be and, therefore, I expect to see my beloved Lazarus walk home from the sepulcher before the sun sets.

But no, she lays the Truth aside as a matter past all dispute and says, I know that my brother shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day. A great many precious Truths of God are laid up by us like the old hulks in the Medway, never to see service again, or like aged pensioners at Chelsea, as relics of the past. We say, Yes, quite true. We fully believe that doctrine. Somehow it is almost as bad to lay up a doctrine in lavender as it is to throw it out of window. When you so believe a Truth of God as to put it to bed and smother it with the bolster of neglect, it is much the same as if you did not believe it at all! An official belief is very much akin to infidelity. Some persons never question a doctrinethat is not their line of temptationthey accept the Gospel as true, but then they never expect to see its promises practically carried out! It is a proper thing to believe, but by no means a prominent, practical factor in actual life. It is true but it is mysterious, misty, mythical, far removed from the realm of practical common sense.

We often do with the promises as a poor old couple did with a precious document which might have cheered their old age had they used it according to its real value. A gentleman, stepping into a poor womans house, saw framed and glazed upon the wall a French note for a thousand francs. He said to the old folks, Where did you get this? They informed him that a poor French soldier had been taken in by them and nursed until he died, and he had given them that little picture when he was dying as a memorial of him. They thought it such a pretty souvenir that they had framed it, and there it was, adorning the cottage wall. They were greatly surprised when they were told that it was worth a sum which would be quite a little fortune for them if they would but turn it into money!

Are we not equally unpractical with far more precious things? Have you not certain of the words of your great Lord framed and glazed in your heartsand do you not say to yourselves, They are so sweet and precious, and yet you have never turned them into actual blessingnever used them in the hour of need? You have done as Martha did when she took the words, Your brother shall rise again, and put round about them this handsome frame, in the resurrection at the last day. Oh that we had Grace to turn Gods bullion of Gospel into current coin and use them as our present spending money!

Moreover, Martha made another blunder, and that was setting the promise in the remote distance. This is a common folly, this distancing of the promises of the Most High. In the resurrection at the last dayno doubt she thought it a very long way off and, therefore, she did not get much comfort out of it. Telescopes are meant to bring objects near to the eye, but I have known people use the mental telescope in the wrong way they always put the big end of it to their eyeand then the glass sends the object further away! Her brother was to be raised that very dayshe might so have understood the Saviorbut instead of it she looked at His words through the wrong end of the glass and said, I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.

Brothers and Sisters, do not refuse the present blessing! Death and Heaven, or the Advent and the Glory, are at your doors! A little while and He that will come shall come and will not tarry. Think not that the Lord is slack concerning His promise! Do not say in your heart, My Lord delays His coming, or dream that His words of love are only for the dim future. In the ages to come, marvels shall be revealed, but even the present hour is bejeweled with loving kindness! Today the Lord has rest, peace and joy to give to you! Lose not these treasures by unbelief!

Martha also appears to me to have made the promise unreal and impersonal. Your brother shall rise againto have realized that would have been a great comfort to herbut she mixes Lazarus up with all the rest of the dead. Yes, he will rise in the resurrection at the last day, when thousands of millions shall be rising from their gravesno doubt Lazarus will rise with the rest. That is the way with us. We take the promise and say, This is true to all the children of God. If so, it is true to us, but we miss that point! What a blessing God has bestowed upon the covenanted people! Yes, and you are one of thembut you shake your head as if the word were not for you! It is a fine feast and yet you are hungry! It is a full and flowing stream, but you remain thirsty!

Why is this? Somehow the generality of your apprehension misses the sweetness which comes of personal appropriation. There is such a thing as speaking of the promises in a magnificent style and yet being in deep spiritual povertyas if a man should boast of the wealth of old England and the vast amount of treasure in the Bankwhile he does not possess a penny with which to bless himself! In your case you know it is your own fault that you are poor and miserable, for if you would but exercise an appropriating faith, you might possess a boundless heritage. If you are a child of God, all things are yours and you may help yourself! If you are hungry at this banquet, it is for lack of faith. If you are thirsty by the brink of this river, it is because you do not stoop down and drink! Behold, God is your portion! The Father is your Shepherd, the Son of God is your Food, and the Spirit of God is your Comforter. Rejoice and be glad, and grasp with the firm hand of a personal faith that royal gift which Jesus sets before you in His promises.

I beg you to observe how the Lord Jesus Christ, in great wisdom, dealt with Martha. In the first place, He did not grow angry with her. There is not a trace of petulance in His speech. He did not say to her, Martha, I am ashamed of you that you should have such low thoughts of Me. She thought that she was honoring Jesus when she saidI know, that even now, whatever You will ask of God, God will give You. Her idea of Jesus was that He was a great Prophet who would ask of God and obtain answers to His prayers. She has not grasped the truth of Jesus own personal power to give and sustain life. But the Savior did not say, Martha, these are low and groveling ideas of your Lord and Savior. He did not chide her, though she lacked wisdomwisdom which she ought to have possessed. I do not think Gods people learn much by being scoldedit is not the habit of the great Lord to scold His disciples and, therefore, they do not take it well when His servants take upon themselves to rate them.

If ever you meet with one of the Lords own who falls far short of the true ideal of the Gospel, do not bluster and upbraid. Who taught you what you know? He that has taught you did it of His infinite love and Grace and pityand He was very tender with you, for you were stupid enough therefore be tender with others and give them line upon line, even as your Lord was gentle towards you! It ill becomes a servant to lose patience where his Master shows so much. The Lord Jesus, with gentle spirit, proceeded to teach her more of the things concerning Himself. More of Jesus! More of Jesus! That is the sovereign cure for our faults! He revealed Himself to her, that in Him she might behold reasons for a clearer hope and a more substantial faith.

How sweetly fell those words upon her earsI am the resurrection and the life! Not, I can get resurrection by My prayers, but, I am, Myself, the resurrection. Gods people need to know more of what Jesus is, more of the fullness which it has pleased the Father to place in Him. Some of them know quite enough of what they are, themselves, and they will break their hearts if they go on reading much longer in that black-letter book! They need, I say, to rest their eyes upon the Person of their Lord and to spy out all the riches of Grace which lie hidden in Him. Then they will pluck up courage and look forward with surer expectancy! When our Lord said, I am the resurrection and the life, He indicated to Martha that resurrection and life were not gifts which He must seek, nor even gifts which He must createbut that He, Himself, was the resurrection and the life these things were wherever He was.

He was the Author, Giver and Maintainer of life, and that life was Himself! He would have her to know that He was, Himself, precisely what she wanted for her brother. She did know a little of the Lords power, for she said, If You had been here, my brother had not died, which, being very kindly interpreted, might mean, Lord, You are the life. Ah, but, says Jesus, you must also learn that I am the resurrection! You already admit that if I had been here Lazarus would not have died. I would have you further learn that I, being here, your brother shall live though He has died; and that when I am with My people none of them shall die forever, for I am to them the resurrection and the life. Poor Martha was looking up into the sky for life, or gazing down into the deeps for resurrectionwhen the Resurrection and the Life stood before her, smiling upon her and cheering her heavy heart! She had thought of what Jesus might have done if He had been there earliernow let her know what He is at the present moment!

Thus I have introduced the text to you and I pray God the Holy Spirit to bless these prefatory observations, for if we learn only these first lessons we shall not have been here in vain. Let us construe promises in their largest sense. Let us regard them as real and set them down as facts. Let us look to the Promiser, even to Jesus the Lord, and not so much to the difficulties which surround the accomplishment of the promise! In beginning the Divine Life, let us look to Jesus, and later, running the heavenly race, let us still be looking unto Jesus till we see in Him our All in All! When both eyes look on Jesus, we are in the Light of God! But when we have one eye on Him and one eye on self, all is darkness. Oh, to see Him with all our souls eyes!

Now, I am going to speak as I am helped of the Spirit, and I shall proceed thusfirst, by asking you to view the text as a stream of comfort to Martha and other bereaved persons. And, secondly, to view it as a great deep of comfort to all Believers.

I. First, I long for you to VIEW THE TEXT AS A STREAM OF COMFORT TO MARTHA AND OTHER BEREAVED PERSONS. Observe, in the beginning, that the Presence of Jesus Christ means life and resurrection. It meant that to Lazarus. If Jesus comes to Lazarus, Lazarus must live! Had Martha taken the Saviors words literallyas she should have doneas I have already told you, she would have had immediate comfort from them and the Savior intended her to understand them in that sense. He virtually says, I am to Lazarus the Power that can make him live again. And I am the Power that can keep him in life. Yes, I am the resurrection and the life.

A statement so understood would have been very comfortable to her. Nothing could have been more so. It would, then and there, have abolished death so far as her brother was concerned. Somebody says, But I do not see that this is any comfort to us, for if Jesus is here, yet it is only a spiritual presence, and we cannot expect to see our dear mother, or child, or husband raised from the dead thereby. I answer that our Lord Jesus is able, at this moment, to give us back our departed ones, for He is still the resurrection and the life! But let me ask you whether you really wish that Jesus would raise your departed ones from the dead. You say at first, Of course I do! But I would ask you to reconsider that decision, for I believe that upon further thought you will say, No, I could not wish it. Do you really desire to see your glorified husband sent back to this world of care and pain? Would you have your father or mother deprived of the glories which they are now enjoying in order that they might help you in the struggles of this mortal life? Would you discrown the saints?

You are not so cruel! That dear childwould you have it back from among the angels, and from the inner Glory, to come here and suffer again? You would not have it so. And to my mind it is a comfort to you, or should be, that it is not within your power to have it so, because you might be tempted, in some selfish moment, to accept the doubtful gift. Lazarus could return and fit into his place again, but scarcely one in 10,000 could do so. There would be serious drawbacks in the return of those whom we have loved best. Do you cry, Give me back my father! Give me back my friend? You know not what you ask! It might be a cause of regret to you as long as they lingered here, for you would, each morning, think to yourself, Beloved one, I have brought you out of Heaven by my wish. I have robbed you of infinite happiness to gratify myself.

For my own part, I had rather that the Lord Jesus should keep the keys of death than that He should lend them to me. It would be too dreadful a privilege to be empowered to rob Heaven of the perfected merely to give pleasure to imperfect ones below. Jesus would raise them, now, if He knew it to be rightI do not wish to take the government from His shoulder. It is more comfortable to me to think that Jesus Christ could give them back to me and would, if it were for His glory and my good! My dear ones that lie asleep could be awakened in an instant if the Master thought it best. But it would not be best and, therefore, even I would hold His sleeve, and say, Tread softly, Master! Do not awaken them! I shall go to them, but they shall not return to me. It is not my wish they should returnit is better that they should be with You where You are, to behold Your Glory. It does not seem to me, then, dear Friend, that you are one whit behind Marthaand you ought to be comforted while Jesus says to you, I am even now the resurrection and the life.

Furthermore, here is comfort which we may, each one, safely take, namely, that when Jesus comes, the dead shall live. The Revised Version has it, He that believes on Me, though he dies, yet shall he live. We do not know when our Lord will descend from Heaven, but we do know the message of the angel, This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into Heaven, shall so come in like manner as we have seen Him go into Heaven. The Lord will come! We may not question the certainty of His appearing. When He comes, all His redeemed shall live with Him. The trumpet of the archangel shall startle the happy sleepers and they shall wake to put on their beauteous arraythe body transformed and made like Christs glorious body shall be once more wrapped about them as the vesture of their perfected and emancipated spirits! Then our brother shall rise again and all our dear ones who have fallen asleep in Jesus, the Lord will bring with Him. This is the glorious hope of the Church wherein we see the death of death and the destruction of the grave. Comfort one another with these words!

Then we are also told that when Jesus comes, living Believers shall not die. After the coming of Christ there shall be no more death for His people. What does Paul say? Behold, I show you a mystery. We shall not all die, but we shall all be changed. Did I see a little schoolgirl put up her finger? Did I hear her say, Please, Sir, you made a mistake. So I did! I made it on purpose. Paul did not say, We shall not all die, for the Lord had already said, Whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. So Paul would not say that any of us should die, but he used his Masters own term and said, We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed. When the Lord comes there will be no more death! We who are alive and remain (as some of us may bewe cannot tell) will undergo a sudden transformation, for flesh and blood, as they are, cannot inherit the Kingdom of God and by that transformation our bodies shall be made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.

There shall be no more death, then. Here, then, we have two sacred handkerchiefs with which to wipe the eyes of mournerswhen Christ comes, the dead shall live and when Christ comes those that live shall never die! Like Enoch, or Elijah, we shall pass into the Glory state without wading through the black streamwhile those who have already forded it shall prove to have been no losers thereby! All this is in connection with Jesus. Resurrection with Jesus is resurrection, indeed. Life in Jesus is life, indeed. It endears to us resurrection, glory, eternal life and ultimate perfection when we see them all coming to us in Jesus. He is the golden pot which has this manna, the rod which bears these almonds, the life whereby we live!

But further, I have not yet made you drink deep enough of this streamI think our Savior meant that even now His dead are alive. He that believes on Me, though He dies, yet shall He live. Those that believe in Jesus Christ appear to die, but yet they live! They are not in the grave, they are forever with the Lord! They are not unconsciousthey are with their Lord in Paradise. Death cannot kill a Believerit can only usher him into a freer form of life! Because Jesus lives, His people live. God is not the God of the dead, but of the livingthose who have departed have not perished! We laid the precious body in the cemetery and we set up stones at the head and footbut we might engrave on them the Lords wordsShe is not dead, but sleeps. True, an unbelieving generation may laugh us to scorn, but we scorn their laughing!

Again, even now His living do not die. There is an essential difference between the decease of the godly and the death of the ungodly. Death comes to the ungodly man as a penal infliction, but to the righteous as a summons to His Fathers palace! Death comes to the sinner as an execution, to the saint an undressing! Death to the wicked is the King of terrorsdeath to the saint is the end of terrors, the commencement of Glory. To die in the Lord is a Covenant blessing! Death is oursit is set down in the list of our possessions among the all thingsand it follows life in the list as if it were an equal favor! No longer is it death to die! The name remains, but the thing, itself, is changed. Why, then, are we in bondage through fear of death? Why do we dread the process which gives us liberty? I am told that persons who, in the cruel ages, had lain in prison for years, suffered much more in the moment of the knocking off of their fetters than they had endured for months in wearing the hard iron. And yet I suppose that no man languishing in a dungeon would have been unwilling to stretch out his arm or leg, that the heavy chains might be beaten off by the blacksmith! We should all be content to endure that little inconvenience to obtain lasting liberty!

Now, such is deaththe knocking off of the fettersyet the iron may never seem to be so truly iron as when that last liberating blow of Grace is about to fall! Let us not mind the harsh grating of the key as it turns in the lock. If we understand it aright, it will be as music to our ears! Imagine that your last hour is come! The key turns with pain for a moment, but, lo, the bolt is shot! The iron gate is open! The spirit is free! Glory be unto the Lord forever and ever!

II. I leave the text, now, as a stream of comfort for the bereaved, for I wish you to VIEW IT AS A GREAT DEEP OF COMFORT FOR ALL BELIEVERS. I cannot fathom it any more than I could measure the abyss, but I can invite you to survey it by the help of the Holy Spirit.

I think, first, this text plainly teaches that the Lord Jesus Christ is the life of His people. We are dead by nature and you can never produce life out of deaththe essential elements are lacking. Should a spark be lingering among the ashes, you may yet fan it to a flame, but from human nature the last spark of heavenly life is goneand it is vain to seek for life among the dead! The life of every Christian is Christ. He is the beginning of life, being the Resurrection. When He comes to us we live. Regeneration is the result of contact with Christwe are begotten, again, unto living hope by His resurrection from the dead. The life of the Christian, in its commencement, is in Christ alonenot a fragment of it is from himself and the continuance of that life is equally the same. Jesus is not only the resurrection to begin with, but the life to go on with!

I have life in myself, says one. I answernot otherwise than as you are one with Christyour spiritual life, in every breath it draws, is in Christ. If you are regarded for a moment as separated from Christ, you are cast forth as a branch and are withered. A member severed from the head is dead flesh and no more. In union to Christ is your life. Oh that our hearers would understand this! I see a poor sinner look into himself and look again, and you cry, I cannot see any life within! Of course you cannot! You have no life of your own. Alas, cries a Christian, I cannot find anything within to feed my soul! Do you expect to feed upon yourself? Must not Israel look up for the manna? Did one of all the tribes find it in his own bosom? To look to self is to turn to a broken cistern which can hold no water! I tell you, you must learn that Jesus is the resurrection and the life!

Listen to that great, Ithat infinite EGO! This must cover over and swallow up your little ego. I live; yet not I, but Christ lives in me. What are you? Less than nothing and vanity! But over all springs up that Divine all-sufficient Personality, I am the resurrection and the life. Take the first two words together and they seem to me to have a wondrous majesty about themI AM! Here is Self-Existence. Life in Himself! Even as the Mediator, the Lord Jesus tells us that it is given Him to have life in Himself, even as the Father has life in Himself (John 5:26). I am fills the yawning mouth of the sepulcher! He that lives and was dead and is alive forevermore, the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end, declares, I am the resurrection and the life. If, then, I want to live unto God, I must have Christand if I desire to continue to live unto God, I must continue to have Christ! And if I aspire to have that life developed to the utmost fullness of which it is capable, I must find it all in Christ! He has come not only that we may have life, but that we may have it more abundantly.

Anything that is beyond the circle of Christ is death. If I conjure up an experience over which I foolishly dote, which puffs me up as so perfect that I need not come to Christ as a poor empty-handed sinner, I have entered into the realm of death! I have introduced into my soul a damning leaven! Away with it! Away with it! Everything of life is put into this golden casket of Christ Jesusall else is death. We have not a breath of life anywhere but in Jesus, who always lives to give life. He says, Because I live, you shall live, also, and this is true. We live not for any other reasonnot because of anything in us or connected with us, but only because of Jesus. For you are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

Now, further, in this great deep to which we would conduct you, faith is the only channel by which we can draw our life from Jesus. I am the resurrection and the life: He that believes in Methat is it. He does not say, He that loves Me, though love is a bright Grace and very sweet to God. He does not say, He that serves Me, though everyone that believes in Christ will endeavor to serve Him. But it is not put so. He does not even say, He that imitates Me, though everyone that believes in Christ must and will imitate Him. No, it is put, He that believes in Me. Why is that? Why does the Lord so continually make faith to be the only link between Himself and the soul? I take it because faith is a gift which arrogates nothing to itself and has no operation apart from Jesus, to whom it unites us.

You want to conduct the electric fluid and, in order to this, you find a metal which will not create any action of its own. If it did so, it would disturb the current which you wish to send along it. If it set up an action of its own, how would you know the difference between what came of the metal and what came of the battery? Now, faith is an empty-handed receiver and communicatorit is nothing apart from that upon which it relies and, therefore, it is suitable to be a conductor for Divine Grace. When an auditorium has to be erected for a speaker in which he may be plainly heard, the essential thing is to get rid of all echoes. When you have no echoes, then you have a perfect buildingfaith makes no noise of its ownit allows the Word of God to speak. Faith cries, Non nobis Domine! Not unto us! Not unto us! Christ puts His crown on Faiths head, exclaiming, Your faith has saved you! But faith hastens to ascribe all the glory of salvation to only Jesus! So you see why the Lord selects faith rather than any other Gracebecause it is a self-forgetting thing. It is best adapted to be the tubing through which the Water of Life runs because it will not communicate a flavor of its own, but will just convey the stream purely and simply from Christ to the soul. He that believes in Me.

Now notice, to the reception of Christ by faith there is no limit. He that believes in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whoeverI am deeply in love with that word, whoever. It is a splendid word! A person who kept many animals had some great dogs and some little ones and, in his eagerness to let them enter his house freely, he had two holes cut in the doorone for the big dogs and another for the little dogs. You may well laugh, for the little dogs could surely have come in wherever there was room for the larger ones. This, whoever, is the great opening, suitable for sinners of every size! Whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Has any man a right to believe in Christ? The Gospel gives every creature the right to believe in Christ, for we are bid to preach it to every creature, with this

command, Hear, and your soul shall live.

Every man has a right to believe in Christ, because he will be damned if he does notand he must have a right to do that which will bring him into condemnation if he does it not! It is written, He that believes and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believes not shall be damned. That makes it clear that I, whoever I may be, as I have a right to endeavor to escape from damnation, have a right to avail myself of the blessed command, Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and live. Oh that, whoever, that hole in the door for the big dog! Do not forget it! Come along with you and put your trust in Christ! If you can only get linked with Christ, you are a living man! If but a finger touches His garments hem, you are made whole! Only the touch of faithand the virtue flows from Him to youand He is to you the Resurrection and the Life!

I desire you to notice that there is no limit to this power. Before I was ill this last time, and even since, I have had to deal with such a swarm of despairing sinners that if I have not pulled them up they have pulled me down! I have been trying to speak very large words for Christ when I have met with those disconsolate ones. I hear one say, How far can Christ be life to a sinner? I feel myself to be utterly wrong, I am altogether wrong; there is nothing right about methough I have eyes I cannot see, though I have ears I do not hear! If I have a hand I cannot use it; if I have a foot I cannot run with itI seem altogether wrong. Yes, but if you believe in Christ, though you were still more wrongthat is to say, though you were dead, which is the most wrong state in which a mans body can be though you were dead, yet shall you live! You look at the spiritual thermometer and you say, How low will the Grace of God go? Will it descend to summer heat? Will it touch the freezing point? Will it go to zero? Yes, it will go below the lowest conceivable pointlower than any instrument can indicateit will go below the zero of death. If you believe in Jesus, though you are not only wrong, but dead, yet shall you live!

But, says another, I feel so weak. I cannot understand. I cannot lay hold of things, I cannot pray. I cannot do anything. All I can do is feebly trust in Jesus. All right! Though you had gone further than that and were so weak as to be dead, yet should you live! Though the weakness had turned to a dire paralysis that left you altogether without strength, yet it is written, He that believes in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. Oh, Sir, says one, I am so unfeeling. Mark you, these generally are the most feeling people in the world. I am sorry every day because I cannot be sorry for my sinthat is the way they talkit is very absurd, but still very real to them. Oh, cries one, the earth shook, the sun was darkened, the rocks rent, the very dead came out of their graves at the death of Christ.

*Of feeling all things show some sign   
But this unfeeling heart of mine.*   
Yet if you believe, unfeeling as you are, you live, for if you were gone further than numbness to deadness, yet if you believe in Him you shall live!

But the poor creature fetches a sigh, and cries, Sir, it is not only that I have no feeling, but I am become objectionable and obnoxious to everybody! I am a weariness to myself and to others. I am sure when I come to tell you my troubles you must wish me to be at Jericho, or somewhere else far away. Now, I admit that such a thought has occurred to us, sometimes, when we have been very busy and some poor soul has grown prosy with rehearsing his seven-times-repeated miseries! But if you were to get still more wearisome. If you were to become so bad that people would as soon see a corpse as see you, yet remember Jesus says, He that believes in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. Yes, if you went so far as to go in and out among men like an unquiet ghost, so that everybody got out of your way, it would not put you beyond the promise, He that believes in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.

Oh, Sir, I have no hope; my case is quite hopeless! Very well. But if you had got beyond that, so that you were dead and could not even know you had no hope, yet if you believed in Him you should live! Oh, but I have tried everything and there is nothing more for me to attempt! I have read books. I have spoken to Christians and I am not bettered. No doubt it is quite sobut if you had even passed beyond that stage, so that you could not try anything more, yet if you believed in Jesus you should live! Oh, the blessed power of faith! No, rather say the matchless Power of Him who is the Resurrection and the Life, for though the poor Believer were dead, yet shall he live! Glory be to the Lord who works so wonderfully!

To conclude, if you once believe in Christ and come to live, there is this sweet reflection for you, Whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Our Arminian friends say that you may be a child of God today and a child of the devil tomorrow. Write out that statement and place, at the bottom of it, the name, Arminius, and then put the scrap of paper into the fireit is the best thing you can do with it, for there is no Truth of God in it! Jesus says, Whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Here is a very literal translationAnd everyone who lives and believes on Me, by no means shall die forever. This is from, The Englishmans Greek New Testament, and nothing can be better. The Believer may pass through the natural change called death, as far as his body is concerned, but as for his soul, it cannot die, for it is written, I give unto My sheep, eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand. He that believes in Me has everlasting life. The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. He that believes and is baptized shall be saved.

These are not, ifs, and, buts, and faint hopesthey are dead certainties! No, they are living certainties, out of the mouth of the living Lord Himself! You get the life of God in your soul and you shall never die! Do you mean that I may do as I like and live in sin? No! I mean nothing of the sort! What right have you to impute such teaching as that to me? I mean that you shall not love sin and live in it, for that is deathbut you shall live unto God. Your likes shall be so radically changed that you shall abhor evil all your days and you shall long to be holy as God is holy! And you shall be kept from transgression and shall not go back to wallow in sin. If, in some evil hour, you backslide, yet shall you be restoredand the main current of your life shall be, from the hour of your regenerationtowards God, holiness and Heaven! The angels that rejoiced over you, when you repented, made no mistakethey shall go on to rejoice till they welcome you amidst the everlasting songs and Hallelujahs of the blessed at the right hand of God!

Do you believe this? Come, poor Soul, do you believe this? Who are you? That does not matteryou can get into the whoever. That ark will hold all Gods Noahs! What have you done? One said to me the other day, I should like to tell you some of my sins! I answered quickly, I would like you would notI have enough of my own without being infected with yours. What is any man that he should have the filth of another mans drains poured into his ears? No, no! Confess to God, but not to man unless you have wronged him and confession of the wrong is due to him. Ah, says one, you dont know what I am. No, and I dont want to know what you arebut if you are so far gone that there seems to be not even a ghost of a shade of a shadow of a hope anywhere about youyet if you believe in Jesus you shall live!

Trust the Lord Jesus Christ, for He is worthy to be trusted! Throw yourself upon Him and He will carry you in His bosom! Cast your whole weight upon His Atonement! It will bear the strain! Hang on Him as a vessel hangs on the nail and seeks no other support! Depend upon Christ with all your might just as you now are and, as the Lord lives, you shall live! And as Christ reigns, you shall reign over sin! And as Christ comes to Glory, you shall partake of that Glory forever and ever! Amen.

**PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMONJohn 11:1-27.** HYMNS FROM OUR OWN HYMN BOOK414, 839, 327.  
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THE BELIEVER CATECHIZED   
NO. 1568

**DELIVERED ON SUNDAY MORNING, NOVEMBER 21, 1880, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**Do you believe this?   
John 11:26.**

THE Savior said to Martha, I am the resurrection and the life: He that believes in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. DO YOU BELIEVE THIS? When Believers are sorrowful, they may be assured that a consolation is provided exactly adapted to their cases. For every lock that God has made, He has provided a key. As every blade of grass has its own drop, so every grief has its comfort. I doubt not that for every pain which racks this mortal frame there is a pain reliever among the herbs of the fields and for every disease there is a remedy in Gods wondrous laboratory if we could but find it.

As for us who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, we may rest assured that if we are borne down by excessive sorrow, it is almost always our own fault and arises from a defect in our faithfor if our faith were as strong as it ought to be, we would take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches and in distresses for Christs sake. We would find that as our tribulations abounded, so would our consolations abound by Christ Jesus. It will be well, therefore, when we are greatly distressed, not so much to look to the apparent cause of the present trouble as at the condition of our own heartsit will be wise to inquire where our faith is lacking and what it may be which prevents our laying hold upon the comfort provided for the present distress.

It frequently happens that our faith is defective because of slender knowledge. A man cannot believe what he does not know. My dear, tried Friend, there is a promise in the Scriptures which would exactly meet your case and, if grasped by faith, it would immediately cheer you! But you know nothing of its efficacy because you may never yet have read it, or, having read it, you may never have paused over it and considered its meaning and so you are needlessly distressed because your relief lies close at hand. It may be that as yet you have not learned the whole circle of Gospel doctrines and this, also, deprives you of comfort. You have laid hold upon the vital and saving part of Revelation, but the strengthening and exhilarating part of it you know not.

You have fed on the necessary bread of Christs house, but not upon the luscious fruits of His garden! You have been in the field, but you have not walked in the garden to eat His pleasant fruit. Faith cannot believe what it does not know and, therefore, you have missed fat things full of marrow and wines on the lees well-refined which might have been your strength and your joy. We would, all of us, grow in comfort if we grew in Grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and had a more intelligent appreciation of the preciousness of the Truths of God which He has revealed! Faith may be defective through ignorance and it may also be defective through a lack of appreciation of the Person of Christ. It was so in Marthas caseshe did not know enough about her Lord to perceive His power to meet her sorrow.

The Apostle Paul says, in the passage which I just now quoted, Grow in Grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, as if the knowledge of Jesus were, indeed, the most important and gracious knowledge which a Believer can obtain and so it is! If we are but half instructed as to our Lord, we shall be but half-comforted. O mourners, you have not rated the Savior highly enough! You have not yet a large enough idea of His love for you and of His design of Infinite Wisdom in permitting you to be afflicted. If the Lord Jesus were better known, our afflictions would be lightened and our hearts would even rejoice in them! If we did but know You, O blessed Christ, then if the same trials remained with us they would lose their gloom beneath Your smile and we would even come to rejoice in them as ministering to our fellowship with You in Your sufferings! Jesus known, sorrow loses its stingsurely even the bitterness of death is past!

It is not to be supposed that every true Believer in Christ is assuredly a perfect Believer. Martha truly believed in Jesus, but she did not perfectly believe in Him. I do not know how many here have, or think they have, perfect faithsuch good people will get very little from the discourse of this morningbut then, happily, they do not need it! Those of us who have an imperfect faithand I suspect that this would describe most of usmay gather instruction from the Saviors question to Martha, Do you believe this? May the Holy Spirit cause it to be so. Let us think we hear His loving lips enquiring of us at this time concerning this Truth and the otherDo you believe this?

We desire to believe everything that is true and we wish to receive into our minds every doctrine which the Holy Spirit has revealed, for we would perfect our discipleship and is not this one of its privilegesWhen He, the Spirit of Truth, is come, He shall guide you into all Truth? We long to believe everything that is within the range of our spiritual knowledge, so that our faith, taking the entire range of Divine Truth, may be complete for every emergency and mighty in every conflict. Submit, then, to a heart-searching enquiry as to your faith and hear Jesus say, by His Spirit, Do you believe this?

I. Our first head will beDO YOU BELIEVE THIS PARTICULAR DOCTRINE? I will not just now suggest any one doctrine above another, but merely advise your putting the question about every revealed Truth of God. You who are Believers have faith in the Scriptures in general. You can boldly declare that from the first word of Genesis to the last word of Revelation you believe all that is written in the Inspired volume. Now, the point is to take out of this general mass of things believed, or supposed to be believed, each one separate item and look it over in detail and then say with your heart and conscience, I believe this.

It is easy to talk in the whole and it is very easy to think that we have a vast amount of faith and yet we may have little or none worth having! We may have put the treasure of the Truths of God into a bag that is full of holes and so may have lost it as fast as we have found it. We may fancy that we embrace within our arms the whole of revealed Truth and yet, when we come to a quiet examination of our soul, we may find that much is slipping away from us by a process of questions and doubts which we hardly dare acknowledge! Things believed and never used are like a sluggards farm which lies fallow and is never tilledwe hardly call such ground a farm and can we call such belief real faith? Why, some Truths of God taught in the Word are not even known by numbers of professors and we cannot believe what we do not know! It is the same case as that supposed in the Apostles question, How shall they believe in Him when they have not heard? If we do not see the surface meaningwhich is within our reachwe cannot be said to believe in any real sense.

Martha, when our Savior questioned her, had already expressed her faith in certain great Truths of God. She said, Lord, if You had been here, my brother had not died. She believed in the Saviors power to heal the sick. She believed that so long as her brother breathed, the power of Christ could have kept him alive. She was convinced that Jesus was the Master of disease and could restore the suffering to health. This was something worthy of her faith, but it was not enough. Our Lord set a further fact before her and asked, Do you believe this? It is for us to grow in knowledge and to exercise faith in proportion as we do so.

Next, Martha believed that though her brother was dead, such was the efficacy of Christs prayer that He could do something. She does not quite say what, to comfort the bereavedI know, that even now, whatever You will ask of God, God will give it You. She had faith in our Lords prevalence with God in prayer and that to an unlimited degree. She believed in Jesus as a mighty Intercessor, One who had but to speak with the Most High and His request would surely be answeredthis is a very commendable measure of faithI wish that we all had as much! So much faith was something admirable, but it was not enough for her present comfort and, therefore, Jesus puts before her a fact even more honorable to Himself and then adds, Do you believe this?

Martha also expressed her firm conviction as to the certainty of the general ResurrectionI know that my brother shall rise again in the Resurrection at the Last Day. She had gathered this, doubtless, from the Old Testament Scriptures and from the general belief among orthodox Hebrews. She may also have learned this master Truth of God from the teaching of the Savior, Himself. She was, in this great fundamental doctrine, a thoroughly sound believer, but she had not yet seen the Resurrection in the Christian light and perceived our Lords connection with it. She had not yet learned enough to afford her comfort under her heavy loss, for it is clear that she derived very little consolation from the fact of a distant and general Resurrectionshe needed resurrection and life to come nearer home and to become more a present fact to her.

Our Savior points her to a Truth concerning Himself which would answer that purpose and says to her, I am the Resurrection and the Life: he that believes in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this? Here was a well of comfort from which she had never drank, because, like Hagar in the wilderness, she had never seen the Divine supply! Christ points her to it and asks her if she will not drink. I would to God, dear Friends, that all of us who call ourselves Christians would, every now and then, go over the Bible and rehearse the great doctrines, in order, before our minds. We need to stop at each one of them and ask our heart and mind, Do you believe this?

Take, for instance, that great and earliest of doctrines, the Election of Grace. Whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ; according as He has chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will. Pause over these texts and consider their evident meaning and then say to your own hearts, Do you believe this?

Some believers in Christ do not attempt to accept this doctrine and even call it horrible! And others speak of it as so mysterious and unpractical that it is not to be preached in public! I would invite such, honestly, to look the doctrine in the face and see whether they believe it or not, for if they do not, they may as well take a pen and cross out of the Word of God all passages which plainly teach it! They would not want to do this and yet they do that which amounts to the same thing! When a man is afraid of a doctrineor ashamed of ithas grave cause to suspect that he does not believe it!

Take another grand Truth of GodA man is justified by faith and not by the works of the Law. Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. He that believes in Him is not condemned. The perfect pardon of the Believerthe complete justifying power of the righteousness of Christ to them that believe is plainly taught in the BibleDo you believe this? If you do, why do you go every day and perpetually call yourself a miserable sinner, when you are so no longer, but a blood-washed saint and a happy child of God? Why do you talk about your sin as if it were not forgiven and speak of yourself as if you were still an heir of wrath, even as others, whereas you are justified in Christ Jesus and accepted in the Beloved? Look at the Scriptural Truth of God and at your conduct and then say to yourself, Do you believe this?

Suppose you turn to the Scriptures and read of the union of Christ to His people, I in them and You in Me, that they may be made perfect in one. I am the vine, you are the branches. When you thus read, inquire of your heart, Do you believe this? Do you believe that all who live unto God are one with Christ? Do you believe this? If so, why are you troubled as to your acceptance with God since you are one with Christ? Why do you think that you shall ultimately perish if you are one with Him? Will Christ lose the members of His body? Shall it be that one after another the limbs of His mystical frame shall rot away and die? Has He not said, Because I live you shall live also? Do you believe this?

It may be that Brothers and Sisters will say of a certain Truth of God that this is a high doctrine, or a mysterious doctrine which seems almost too good to be truebut all this is wide of the mark. The one question isIs it revealed? King Agrippa, said Paul, Do you believe the Prophets? I know that you believe. So would I say to each one of youif you believe the Prophets and the Apostles, why do you not believe, one by one, those great Truths of God which He has spoken by them? And if you believe them to be revealed, how dare you cast a slur upon them as being this, that and the other? I will not ask you to believe my statement, nor the statements of theologians and divines, but turn to the Infallible Book, itself, and see what is written there and then ask yourself, Do you believe this?

As you meet with such-and-such a statement of Holy Writ, do not cut it down or quibble at it, nor twist it, nor try to see if some eminent commentator has not evaporated the very soul out of it! But believe it just as you find it and if you cannot do so, stop until you can and cry out to God for further Light till you can, without hesitation, answer the Saviors question and say, with Martha, Yes, Lord. How this enquiry, well managed and pressed home, will enlarge the range of faith! How it will strengthen its grasp and hold! How rich would our souls become! Upon what meat would our inward confidence be fed if we would but treasure up each crumb of revealed Truth!

Search the Scriptures and take the teaching of the Word of God in detail, line by line and word by wordand then ask your soul, Do you believe this? Ask for an anointing from the Holy One that you may know all things and understand with all saints what are the heights and depths and know the love of Christ which passes knowledge. There will be profit connected with this, our first point, if each one will conscientiously catechize his mind and say, Do you believe this particular doctrine of the Word?

II. Our next division shall be briefly handled. DO YOU BELIEVE THIS DISTINCT DOCTRINE? I find, especially among members of certain churches, great cloudiness as to their faith. I would not judge severely, but I notice that those converted persons who come to us from certain quarters, which I will not now name, believe the Gospel, but it is too much after the manner of the collier in the old story. When he was asked, What do you believe? He answered, I believe as the church believes. He was then questioned, But what does the church believe? He replied, The church believes what I believe. Being further asked, And what do you and the church believe? He answered, We both believe the same thing.

There was no getting further with him. Is not this kind of faith common enough at this day? Many who are called Christians have this blind faith and little more. This doting faith, in you know not what, is more fit for idiots than rational beings! Let those delight in it who are of slavish mind, or too idle to think for themselves. As for us, so long as we have eyes we shall not yield to walk blindfolded! We like a man to do his own thinking. Put your garments out to wash, if you please, but your thinking, you should do at home. There is no reaching the land of the Truth of God unless you will work your passage by thinking over the teaching of the Lord.

What I tell you, you may believe or not at your pleasure. But I beseech you, do not accept it for any other reason than that in your own judgment it is in accordance with the mind of God as unveiled in Holy Writ. God has given to each man a judgment and a conscience and an understanding and these, the owner of them is bound to use! The Light of God is not given to all alike and hence the use of guides to such as have not great knowledge. But it can only be seen by a mans own eyes and he cannot look at objects by proxy. By experience some men have learned far more than others and hence they are useful helpers. But still, no mans experience of Grace can stand instead of my owneach one must feel and know the Divine Life in his own soul. As food must be masticated and digested by each man for the sustenance of his own body, so must the Truth of God be read, marked, learned and inwardly digested by each man for the sustenance of his own soul.

The church of Rome says, Yield an implicit faith to the churchthis is a fine platform for priestcraft and you see through the scheme in a minute! But we say the very reverse and charge you not to believe a single word that any one of us, or all of us put together, shall say to you if it is contrary to the Word of God! Read that Word for yourselves and search the Scriptures to see whether these things are so or not, for so did the Bereans of old and they were noble because of it and you shall be noble if you rise to the dignity of your manhood and, by the help of God, use your own sense and understanding and pray for the teaching of His Spirit that you may know what the Truth of God is.

Our Savior puts a certain Truth before good Martha in distinct terms. He left the general haze of the Resurrection in which she believed and said, I who stand before you am the Resurrection and the Life. Do you believe this? Do you believe the doctrine put in this clear form and shape? He gave her crisp, sharp, definite teaching and said, Do you believe this? He brought before her mental vision not an impalpable, shadowy image and specter of truth, but a solid, substantial statement that He, Himself, was the Resurrection and the Life, raising those who believe in Him from the dead and keeping in life those who, being alive, believe in Him. And then He demandedDo you believe this?

A great many persons see doctrines in a kind of dim, hazy light and in that darkness visible they exercise a sort of faith, but they will never get comfort out of the Truth of God in that fashion. We must believe revealed Truth as we see it, in its own clear, well defined and accurate form as Scripture shows it. For instance, the doctrine of the Atonement is robbed of half its delight if indistinctly stated. Thousands of Christians believe in a kind of atonement, a means of reconciliation, a sort of propitiation made by Christ, which, in some way or other brings us to God. But, Beloved, I would have you believe that, He, His own self bore our sins in His own body on the tree. The Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. Do you believe this?

He has made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. Do you believe this? Read the 53rd chapter of Isaiah, in which you have Substitution set forth most clearly. Yes, read the chapter through and pause over such a verse as the 11th, He shall see of the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied: by His knowledge shall My righteous Servant justify many; for He shall bear their iniquities. And then put it to yourselfDo you believe this? The very life and soul and sweetness of Atonement will be found in the Substitution of the innocent Savior for the guilty sinner in the actual bearing of the penalty of sin, the real payment of the debtfor then I know that I am clear, because He, in my place, has vindicated Justice, honored the Law and glorified God! Do you believe this?

Dear Friend, ask God to give you Grace that you may believe in what Christ has taught and what the Prophets and the Apostles have spoken exactly as it was meant that you should believe it, not in a haphazard, unreal way, but with your whole heart and soul and mind, accepting Gods Word as it stands, in all its clearly cut lines and features. Have a quick and true answer to the question, Do you believe this distinct and clear Truth of God? Pray to be able to answer, by His Grace, Yes, Lord!

III. We will now go a little further, in the third place, to ask, DO YOU BELIEVE THIS DIFFICULT TRUTH? Certain Truths of God are hard to grasp. There are points about them which almost stagger faith till faith rises to her true character and is no longer dwarfed into carnal reasoning! But these difficult things are to be believed. It was not easy for Martha to understand how the Lord Jesus could, Himself, be the Resurrection and the Life and yet her brother was dead. It was not an easy Truth for her to believe, for it is not easy for us. How can he that died be alive? How can the Son of Man have such a wonderful power that resurrection and life should be entirely dependent upon Him? How can these things be?

We know the fact, but we do not understand it. It is well for us if we do not need to understand it, but regard it as sufficient for us to believe what is revealed even though, to our reason, it may seem a fathomless deep. Indeed, it was difficult for Martha to believe her Lord to be the Life because it seemed contrary to her experience. Though he were dead, yet shall he live. She might hope that this was possible in the case of Lazarus, but then the Lord had said, He that lives and believes in Me shall never die. How could that be true? Lazarus lived and believed in Jesus and yet he had died! Her experience seemed to be contrary to Christs statement and this might have rendered it difficult to believe and, therefore, the Lord asked, Do you believe this?

But, my Brothers and Sisters, when we become Christians we cease to consider difficulties of belief, for we take the Scriptures upon Divine authority and submit ourselves implicitly to their teaching. At any rate, I have done so. What their church is to the Romanists, that is what the Bible and the Holy Spirit are to me! This done, no difficulty remains one-half so great as those which I have surmounted! I believed, first of all, that God was in Christthat He who made the heavens and the earth came down below and took upon Himself human nature, was born at Bethlehem, was cradled in a manger and did suck His nourishment from a womans breast. After having believed that, I can believe anything! An Incarnate God, once accepted, no difficulty need stagger my faith!

Marthas speechI believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the worldproved her readiness to believe all else that Jesus might teach. The Incarnation, to begin withwithout which believing a man can be no Christian at allis so profound a mystery that other teachings are simple in its presence! Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh. Once rejoice in the Light of God, which is the very daystar of hope to usthat God has taken into union with Himself our human natureand you are ready for all Light! Only let me know that God says anything is true and that is enough for me!

I do not quite join with the poor old woman in her words, but I agree with her spirit, who put her implicit faith in Scripture in the most unguarded way, when someone ridiculed her for believing that the whale swallowed Jonah. Dear, she said, if the Word of God had said that Jonah swallowed the whale I would have believed it. Brothers and Sisters, prostrate yourselves before the utterance of God! Not before mans dictum or dogma! Not before the utterance of priest, presbyter, pastor, or philosopher! But before God, who cannot err, we prostrate our souls! In Him you must place implicit faith. Let Him say what He wills, we must believe it and that not in one case or 20, but in all that He says. Do you believe this?and this? and this? Whatever it is?

Yes, if it is, indeed, taught in Infallible Scripture by the Holy Spirit of God, we believe it! If your faith does not rise to this mark, evil will happen to it. Our Lord said, one day, to a company of those who were His followers, Except you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. For My flesh is meat, indeed, and My blood is drink, indeed. He that eats My flesh and drinks My blood dwells in Me and I in him. What followed? Read on. Many, therefore, of His disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is an hard saying; who can bear it? From that time many of His disciples went back and walked no more with Him.

They said, Can this Man give us His flesh to eat? and they came to the conclusion that it could not be and deserted their Teacher. Do we wish to do this? The Lord Jesus Christ, at the very outset of His ministry, prepares us to believe hard things. He bids us count the cost about this as well as everything else. Although we already believe certain mysteries, there are many more that we do not know of as yet which will, in due course, demand our faith. Did not Jesus say to Nicodemus when Nicodemus had been told of being born again and that had staggered him, If I have told you earthly things and you believe not, how shall you believe if I tell you of heavenly things? As if even regeneration, which is really full of heavenliness, were but a commonplace Truth of God compared with what Nicodemus had yet to believe!

If Nicodemus had said, Good Master, I can go as far as this, but I reserve my judgment and shall venture no further, then the ruler of the Jews and the Son of God would have parted, for he cannot be Christs disciple who will not receive all Christs wordslet those words be what they may. Do you believe this, then? This difficult Truth of God? I put this very earnestly to some of you because it may be that at this moment you are in trouble from lack of faith in a promise or a doctrine which seems hard to you. You have a promise, When you pass through the fire you shall not be burned, neither shall the flame kindle upon you. Do you believe this, though all things appear to be consumed in the heat of your affliction?

It may be that you are under a peculiar cloud and dense gloom and yet Jesus declares, I am the Light of the world, he that follows me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the Light of life. And, again, Whoever believes Me shall not abide in darkness. Do you believe this? Can you laugh at impossibility and say it shall be done because God has said it? Do you not know that things impossible with men are possible with God? Can your faith leap over the head of carnal reason? Can present circumstances and the deductions of your own judgment all be waved aside by the left hand as you say, Let God be true and every man a liar? If so, you have the faith which will comfort and bless you! But if not, like Martha, you will be bowed down with sorrow since you have not yet believed the Truth of God which can cheer you.

IV. Fourthly, to pass onDo you believe this? that is, DO YOU BELIEVE THIS TRUTH AS IT STANDS CONNECTED WITH JESUS? I called your attention, just now, to the fact that Martha believed that there would be a resurrection. Yes, says Christ, but I am the Resurrection. Do you believe this? Now it is one thing to believe doctrine, but it is another thing to believe that doctrine as it is embodied in the Person of Jesus Christ. Do you believe this? There the comfort liesin believing the Truth of God as you find it in Him who is the Truth of God! Martha was called upon to believe, first, in Christs personal power. The dead will rise. True, Martha, but do you believe that I shall make them risethat it is through Me the dead shall live? Yes, that I am the Life and Resurrection? Do you believe that?

She was to believe, moreover, in His present power. Mark that. Even now, says Jesus, I am the Resurrection and the Life; he that lives and believes in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live and whoever lives and believes in Me, shall never die. It is one thing to believe that Jesus will have power at the Last Day to raise the deadbut do we believe that He is, even now, the Resurrection and the Life? Oh the bliss of believing in the personal power of Christ and in the present power of Christ! Jesus, the I AM, says, I am the Resurrection and the Life.

Moreover, Martha was called on to believe in the union of Christ with His peoplethat they are one with Him, that they are partakers of His life, that if they should come under the power of death they should be delivered out of it and that being out of the power of death they shall never come under itin Christ the dead shall live, the living shall not die. Oh, says one, but I myself do not comprehend this, for I see good people die. Yes, you see what you think is death, but they do not truly diethey rise into a higher life. That which is the essence of death never touches Believersthey depart out of the world unto the Father. They go to be with Christ, which is far betterthey do not die! Death as a penal sentence, in its innermost meaning, never comes near to those for whom Jesus has borne death upon the Cross! His death, in their place, is the death of Death to them. Do you believe this?

Come now, let us each one ask, Do I really believe that Christ Jesus has all power in Heaven and in earth? Do I worship Him as God over all, blessed forever? Do I believe He is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that I ask or even think? And when I come in prayer before God, do I so believe in Christ that I remember His promise, Whatever you shall ask the Father in My name I will give to you? Not the Father, but Jesus! Even Christ Himself will give you all things! Have you such a notion and idea of your Lord that you know that He can do all things for you right now and, that in answer to your prayer He can grant you any blessing and save you out of any trouble and every troubledo you believe this? If you do not you have no right idea of Christ, for He is Lord of all. You are the King of Glory, O Christ, and as such we do believe in You and trust You and find comfort in Your present, personal power!

V. We must now pass on to a fifth head. Do you believe this?that is to say, DO YOU BELIEVE THIS TRUTH WHICH IS APPLICABLE TO YOURSELF NOW? That was the point with Martha and this was the place wherein she fell short. She believed that all would rise. But Jesus virtually says Do you believe that I am the Resurrection and the Life, because if it is so, I am able to raise your brother at oncedo you believe this? Now, observe that we sometimes believe great Truths of God and yet we are staggered by lesser Truths because, it may be, the great Truth has no practical bearing upon us just now, while the present Truth, though it is somewhat less in other respects, has a greater practical bearing upon ourselves and our condition.

We doubt the promise most necessary to our comfort! For look, she believes that all will risewell, then, it was a much smaller thing to believe that one would rise! She doubts whether Lazarus can rise because he is in the grave, yet she believes that millions upon millions will rise from the ground. Doubtless that was because of the distance of the time and the scene. Some such feeling must have operated on her mind, for the general Resurrection is the greater difficulty. Is it hard to believe that Lazarus can rise who has been dead four days? Well, then, it is a great deal harder to believe that bodies can be quickened which have been dead several hundreds of years! Yet she did believe that the dead would rise at the Resurrection at the Last Daynot only those who were stinking, but those whose bodies had been dissolved by corruption and scattered by the four winds of heaven to the utmost ends of the earth!

She believed the miracle on a grand scale, so she said, but when it came home to one person who had only been dead four days she could not believe it! She believed that there should be a general Resurrection of all sorts of people and yet, if that can be believed, it is much easier to expect that a favorite of Christ like Lazarus should rise! Jesus loved Lazarussurely He will call him from the tomb! I say she professed to believe the larger Truth of God and then she staggered at the lesser because it was applicable to herself. I beg you to see whether you are not often walking in the same path. Yonder is a poor soul who believes that Jesus Christ can wash away all sin. Now, my dear Friend, do you believe that He can wash your sins away?

That is the point because all the sins of millions are much greater than yours can be and if Jesus can take away the sins of so many, surely He can take away yours! Do you believe this? Will you come and trust Him for yourself? And you, Christian, you believe, in general, that all things work together for good to those who love Goddo you believe that all your ills, little and great, are working good for you? Will that toothache of yours work for your good? Do you believe that yesterdays bad debt will work for good? Do you believe that the death of your child will work for good? You know it must be easier to believe that the events of one day will work for good than to believe that all things in the world throughout life will do so and yet it may be you are staggered at your present trials and you confess your misgivings!

Have you faith in everything but that which would comfort you? Have you everything but the special requirement of the hour? How odd! How sad that the carpenter needs to drive a nail and he has all his tools with him except his hammer! What is he to do? What is the good of all his other tools? If you can believe everything except the Truth of God which would cheer you at this present moment, you are depriving yourself of comfort and strength! Believe this present promise given for this very daythe Lord has said, I will never leave you nor forsake you. Do you believe this? Underneath are the everlasting arms. Do you believe this?

Your shoes shall be iron and brass, and as your days so shall your strength be. Do you believe this? Gods Word is as the Tree of Life which yields its fruit every month. What a blessing to take the fruit from the Tree of Life in its month just when it is ripest and full of flavor. He has said, Delight yourself, also, in the Lord and He will give you the desire of your heart. Since you delight in Him, He will hear your prayer and give you the light of His Countenance. Do you believe this?

VI. The last point shall be thisDO YOU BELIEVE THIS PRACTICAL TRUTH? Martha said that she believed it. But her actions did not prove it. She comprehended the belief in the Lords word in her declaration, Yes, Lord, I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world. But yet she did not believe so as to act on the belief. Coleridge says, Truths, of all others the most awful and mysterious and at the same time of universal interest, are too often considered as so true that they lose all the power of truth and lie bed-ridden in the dormitory of the soul, side by side with the most despised and exploded errors.

How true is the remark! Do you not know people who are better than their creed? Why is that? Why, for the very same reason that many people are worse than their creed, because their creed is asleep and is not operating upon themthey believe as though they did not believe! This is a poor imitation of faith. There is, at this moment, a house on fire in London. I will suppose that I know the fact and tell you of it and you believe it. But what do you care? Not one of you stirs. Yes, but if you saw the engine hurrying along the street and believed that your own house was blazing, I guarantee you, you would bestir yourselves!

Your belief would come a little more home to you as your own concern. So there are certain Truths of God which do not seem to concern us to any high degree, at least for the present. They are true and important, but they operate no more upon us than if they were fictions. Martha says she believes in Jesus as the Resurrection and the Life, yet what is her action? Christ commands the bystanders to take away the stone from the sepulcher and she interposes with her cry, Lord, by this time he stinks! She fears the obnoxious consequences of uncovering such a mass of corruption, though He who is the Resurrection and the Life stands at the graves mouth! Ah, Martha, where is your faith in Him? Dear heart, she says that she believes in Jesus as the Resurrection and the Life and yet she is afraid that her brother will not rise though the Mighty One stands there to raise him!

Is she not just like you and I? We believe that God hears prayer and, therefore, we pray. But if the Lord desires to surprise us, He has only to answer our requests! I have seen Gods children running with vast astonishment to tell their friends, Here is a wonderful thing! Oh, such a marvelous event has happened to me! I offered a prayer and God has heard me. An amazing thing that God should do as He said He would? They put these things in books as marvels and call the volume, Remarkable Answers to Prayer. Dear me, is it remarkable that it is cold when it freezes? Do we speak of the remarkable warmth of the suns beams at midsummer? Is it remarkable that the fires in our houses should warm us when we put our hands to them? Is He a remarkable God because He says He will hear prayer and does? An answer to prayer should be remembered with gratitude and yet it should regarded as the most natural thing in all the world that our heavenly Father should fulfill His promises to His children.

It is a great wonder that God should promise, but not a wonder that He should perform. It is marvelous that God should promise to hear prayer, but no wonder at all that when He has promised to do so He is as good as His Word. Brothers and Sisters, we are, to a great degree, unpractical in other respects, also, and we may take up many and many a Truth of God that we do not act upon and say to our heart, Do you believe this? Might I not step outside the door, this morning, and, putting my hand upon a fainting Believer as he left the house say, Do you believe your God? You say, I am so faint in spirit that I shall utterly fall and perish at the last. But the Lord has said, He gives power to the faint and to them that have no might, He increases strength. Do you believe this?

I might go to another who is sighing and crying because of his poverty and say to him, God has said, No good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly. Do you believe this? What would the complainer say? How could he reconcile his discomfort and his murmuring with his belief in the comforting promise? My Brothers and Sisters, let us, then, go over these matters with our souls. We call ourselves Believers, but are we? If it is so that one after another we doubt the precious things of God when they come before us in detail, where is our faith? Let us entreat our God to grant us Divine Grace that we may put our finger on this doctrine, on that promise and on the other assurance and say of each one, Lord, I believe this, and I believe this, and I believe thisfor I believe whatever You say in Your Word and I know that it shall be even as You have told me.

God bless you, Beloved, and be always with you for Christs sake. Amen.   
Adapted from The C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307 Sermon #1198 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

THE MASTER NO. 1198

DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**She called Mary her sister secretly, saying, The Master is come, and calls for you.   
John 11:28.**

I SUPPOSE by Marthas whispering the word, The Master, in Marys ear, that it was the common name by which the sisters spoke of our Lord to one another in His absence. Perhaps it was His usual name among all the disciples, for Jesus said, You call me Master and Lord: and you say well; for so I am. It often happens that for persons whom we love we have some special title by which we speak of them familiarly when we are in the circle of those who join in our esteem of them. Instead of always using their official titles or their actual names, there is some one name which we have attached to them which calls up happy associations, or reminds us of endearing traits in their character and, therefore, it is very sweet in our mouths.

So I suppose that most of the disciples called Jesus, The Master, many of them coupling with it the word, Lord. Mary, I should suppose, was peculiarly given to the use of the termit was her name for the Lord. I fancy that she called Him my Master, only, of course, Martha could not say to her, your Master is come, for that would have been to cast suspicion on her own loyalty to Jesus and perhaps she did not feel exactly in a frame of mind to say, our Master, remembering that He was Master of so many more, besides, and half hoping that He might be Master over Death himself. She therefore said, The Master.

It was an emphatic title, The Master is come. Very remarkable is it that minds of a kindred spirit to Mary have always loved this title, The Master, and more especially that wondrous, sweet, mystic poet and dear lover of His Lord, George Herbert, who, whenever he heard the name of Jesus mentioned, would always say, my Master. He has given us that quaint poem, called The Odor, which begins

*How sweetly does my Master sound, my Master.* There must be something exceedingly precious about the title for a Mary and a Herbert thus to be enamored of it above all others. Jesus has many names, all full of musicthis must be choice, indeed, to be selected before them all as the title which His best beloved prefer to apply to Him.

There are many among us who are, ourselves, accustomed to speak of the Lord as, The Master and, though there are many other titles, such as The Well-Beloved, The Good Shepherd, The Friend, The Bridegroom, The Redeemer, and The Savior, yet we still cherish a very special affection for this one name which gives forth to us an oriental fragrance with which, all day we perfume our mind. You are aware that the word might just as well be translated, The Teacher, the authoritative teacher, for that is the gist of its meaning. I am glad to pronounce it, Master, because usage and sweet association have enshrined the word. And

also because we have still among us the custom of calling the Chief Teacher in a School or College, the Master, but still, had our version given us, The Teacher is come, it would have been nearer the mark.

I. I shall speak a few words, first, upon THE DEEP PROPRIETY OF THIS TITLE AS APPLIED TO OUR LORD. He is, indeed, The MasterThe Teacher. What if I put the two together and say, The Master-Teacher? He has a peculiar fitness for this office to be a Master-Teacher. To be so, a man must have a masterly mind. Certainly all minds are not cast in the same mold and are not possessed with the same vigor, depth, force and quickness of action. Some mental organizations are princely by their very formationthough they may belong to plowboys, the imperial stamp is on them! These minds cannot be smothered by a peasants smock frock, nor kept down by the load of povertymaster minds are recognized by an innate superiorityand force their way to the front.

I say nothing of the moral qualities of Napoleon, but a mind so vast as his could not have been forever hidden away among the soldiers in the ranks. He must become a captain and a conqueror. So, too, a Cromwell or a Washington must rise to be masters among men because the caliber of their minds was masterly. Such men see a thing quickly. They hold it with a comprehensive grasp and they have a way of infusing faith into others about it which, before long, pushes them into a masters position, with the common consent of all around them. You cannot have, for a masterteacher, a man with a little soul. He may insinuate himself into the chair of the teacher, but everyone will see that he is out of place and no one will delight to think of him as his master.

There are many painters, but there have been few Raphaels, or Michelangelosfew who could found schools to perpetuate their names. Many songsters have there been, but few poets have founded schools of tuneful thought in which they have been the beloved choirmasters. Many philosophers have there been, but a Socrates or an Aristotle will not be found every dayfor great teachers must have great mindsand these are rare among men. The teacher of all teachers, the master of all the teachers, must be a grand, colossal spirithead and shoulders above other men! Such a soul Mary saw in her Lord Jesus Christ. And such we see there, also, and we therefore claim, for our Lord, the name of, The Master.

There we have Divinity itself, with its Omniscience and Immutability, and at the same time a complete, full-orbed Manhood, harmonious in all its qualitiesa perfect equilibrium of excellence in which there is no excess and no deficiency. You find in Him a perfect mind and that mind so human as to be intensely manly and sweetly womanly, also. In Jesus there was all the tenderness and sympathy of woman joined with the strength and courage of man. His love was feminine, but not effeminate. His heart was masculine, but not hard and stern. He was the complete Man, unfallen Manhood in its perfection! Our Lord was a Man who impressed all who came near Himthey either hated Him intensely or loved Him fervently!

Wherever He was, He was seen to be a Prince among the sons of men! The devil recognized Him and tempted Him beyond all others. He saw in Him a foe worthy of his steeland took Him into the wilderness to have a duel with Him, hoping to defeat the race by vanquishing its manifest Chief. Even scribes and Pharisees, who despised everyone who made not broad the borders of his garment, could not despise this Manthey could hate Himbut their hate was the unconscious reverence which evil is forced to render to superlative goodness and greatness! Jesus could not be ignored and overlooked. He was a force in every place, a power wherever He might be. He is a master, yes, The Master. There is a grandeur about His whole human Nature so that He stands out above all other men, like some mighty Alpine peak which overtops the minor hills and casts its shadow all adown the vales.

But to make a master teacher, a man must not only have a master mind, he must have a master knowledge of that which he has to teach and it is best if that is acquired by experience rather than by instruction. Such was the case with our Lord Jesus. He came to teach us the science of life and in Him was life. He experienced life in all its phases and was tempted in all points like we are, though without sin. The highest were not above Him, the lowest He did not regard as beneath Him, but He condescended to their infirmities and sorrows. There are no dreary glens of melancholy which His feet have not trod, nor lofty peaks of joy which He has not scaled. Wondrous was the joy, as well as the sorrow of our Lord Jesus Christ.

He leads His people through the wilderness and, like Hobab of old, He knows where they should encamp in the wilderness and understands all the way which they must traverse to reach the promised land. He was made perfect through suffering. He teaches us no Truth of God as mere theory, but as matter of actual experiment on His own Person. The remedy He gives to us He has tested. If there is bitterness for us, He has quaffed full bowls of itand if there is sweetness in His cup He gives us of His joy. All things that have to do with this life and godlinessthe whole science of salvation from the gates of Hell up to the Throne of GodHe understands right well by personal acquaintance. There is not a single chapter of the Book of Revelation which He does not comprehend, nor a solitary page of the book of experience which He does not understand and, therefore, He is fit to teach, having both a master mind and a master knowledge of that which He comes to inculcate.

Moreover, our great Master, while here below, had a masterly way of teaching, and this, also, is essential, for it is not every man of vast knowledge and great mind that can teach others. Aptness to teach is required. We know some whose utterances never seem to be in the tongue of ordinary men. If they have anything to say, they say it in a jargon of their own which they and a few of their disciples probably comprehend, but it is Greek to the common people. Blessed is that teacher who teaches what he understands, himself, in a way which enables others to understand him! I like the style of old Cobbett when he said, I not only speak so that men can understand me, but so that they cannot misunderstand me. And such a teacher was Christ to His own disciples. When they sat at

His feet He made the Truth of God so clear that wayfaring men, though fools, need not err therein. By homely parables and phrases which caught the ear and won the heart, He brought down celestial Truths to ordinary comprehensionswhen the Spirit of God had once cleansed those comprehensions and made them able to receive the Truth. He taught, moreover, not only plainly, but lovingly. So gently did He open up things to His own disciples that it must have been a pleasure to be ignorant in order to require to be taughtand a greater pleasure, still, to learnto learn in such a way! The way in which He taught was as sweet as the Truth He taught.

Everybody that came into Christs school felt at home, felt pleased with their Master and confident that if they could learn anywhere they must learn at His feet. The Master gave, in connection with His teaching, a measure of the Holy Spiritnot the full measurefor that was reserved until He had ascended up on high and the Spirit should baptize the Church. But He gave to each of His people a measure of the Spirit of God, by which Truths were not taught to their ears, only, but to their hearts. Ah, my Brothers, we are not such teachers as Christ! For, when we have done our best, we can only reach the ear. We cannot give the Holy Spirit only He can.

And when the Spirit, this day, comes from Christ and takes of His things and reveals them to us, then we see yet more of our Lords masterly modes of teaching and learn what a Master Jesus is, who writes His lessons, not on the blackboard, but on the fleshy tablets of the heart! It is Jesus who gives us schoolbooksnoHe is, Himself, the Book! It is He who gives us lessonsyesis, Himself, the Lesson. He performs before us that which He would have us do, so that when we know Him, we know what He has to teach! And when we imitate Him, we have followed the precepts which He gives. Our Lords way of embodying His instruction in Himself is a right royal one and none can rival Him in it.

Do not children learn infinitely more by example than they do by precept? And this is how our Master teaches us. Never man spoke like this Man is a grand Christian proverb, but it might be eclipsed by another Never man acted like this Man, for this Mans deeds and words tally with each otherthe deeds embody and enforce the words, give them lifeand help us to understand them. He is a Prophet like unto Moses, because He is mighty both in word and in deedand so He is of Prophets and teachers, The Master. Here a master mind, a master experience and a master mode of teaching! Well is He called, The Master.

But, dear Friends, there was, over and above thisif I have not reached it in what I have already saida master influence which Jesus, as The Teacher, had over those who came within His range. They did not merely see, but feel. They did not only know, but love. They did not merely prize the lesson, but they worshipped the Teacher. What a Master was this Christ, whose very Self became the power by which sin was checked and ultimately cast out! And by which virtue was implanted and the new life commenced, nourished and brought to perfection. To have one to teach you who is very dear to you is to make lessons easy.

No child learns better than from a mother qualified to teach, who knows how to make her lessons sweet by crystallizing them in the sugar of her own affection! Then it is pleasure, as well as duty, to learn! But no mother ever won her childs heart, (and there have been tender and affectionate mothers, too), so thoroughly as Jesus won the heart of Mary! Or, I may say, as Jesus has won your heart and mine, if you feel as my heart feels to my Lord. From Him we need no reasons to prove what He says His love is the logic which proves everything to us. With Him we hold no debatewhat He has done for us has answered every question we could raise. If He tells us what we do not understand, we believe it. We ask if we may

understand it and if He tells us, Nowe stay where we are and believe the mystery.

We love Him so that we are as glad not to know as to know, if such should is His will! We believe His silence to be as eloquent as His speech. And that which He conceals to be as kindly intended as that which He reveals. Because we love Him He exercises such an influence over us that, straightway, we prize His teaching and receive it. The more we know Him and the more His inexpressibly delightful influence dominates our nature, the more completely we yield up imagination, thought, reason, everything, to Him! Men may call us fools for it, but we have learned, at Jesus feet, that the world by wisdom knew not God and that unless we are converted and become as little children, we shall in no wise enter the kingdom of Heaven. And therefore we are not upset when the world thinks us childish and credulous.

The world is growing more manly and more foolishand we are growing more childlike and more wise. We reckon that to grow downward into our Lord Jesus is the surest and truest growth! And when we shall have grown clean down to nothingand even lower till we are less than nothingthen we shall be fully grown in the school of Jesus! And then we shall take a high degree in true learning, knowing the love of Christ which passes knowledge. We may well call Him Master who has a masterly mind, a masterly experience and a masterly way of teaching. And, moreover, wields a masterly influence over His pupils, so that they are forever bound, heart and soul, to Him and count Him to be, Himself, His own highest lesson, as well as the chief of all instructors!

Having proved that our beloved Lord is fairly entitled to the name, let me add that He is, by office, the sole and only Master of the Church. There is, in the Christian Church, no authority for a doctrine but Christs Word. The inspired Book which He has left us, charging us never to diminish a letter or add a syllable, is our imperial code, our authorized creed, our settled standard of belief. I hear a great deal said of sundry, bodies of divinity, but my own impression is that there never was but one Body of Divinity and there never will be but oneand that is Jesus Christ in whom dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. To the true Church, her Body of Divinity is Christ. Some Churches refer to other standards, but we know no standard of theology but our Master. I, if I am lifted up, He says, will draw all men unto Me.

We feel no drawings towards any other master! Jesus Christ is the standardUnto Him shall the gathering of the people be. We are not of those who will go no further than Martin Luther. Blessed be God for Mar

tin Luther! God forbid that we should say a word in depreciation of him. But were we baptized unto Martin Luther? Of course not! Some can never budge an inch beyond John Calvin, whom I reverence, first, of all merely mortal men. But still, John Calvin is not our master but only a more advanced pupil in the school of Christ! He teaches, and, as far as he teaches as Christ taught, he is authoritative, but where Calvin goes apart from Jesus, he is no more to be followed than Voltaire, himself!

There are brethren whose one reference for everything is to the utterances of John Wesley. What would Mr. Wesley have said? is a weighty question with them. We think it a small matter what he would have said, or what he did say for the guidance of Christians, now, so many years after his departure! Far better is it to enquire what Jesus says in His Word! One of the grandest of men that ever lived was Wesley, but he is no master of ours. We were not baptized in the name of John Wesley, or John Calvin, or Martin Luther! One is our Master, even Christ. And now the Parliament of our country is about to set apart a learned judge to decide what is right in a so-called Church of Christ! And he is to say, This garment you may wear, and that you shall not; up to here your ritual shall go but no further.

In his person the House of Commons is to be recognized as the creator, lord and master of the Church of England, to whom he will say, Do this, and she will do it, or Refrain, and she will stay her hand. She must crouch and bend, and take her meat like any dog from the hand that patronizes her! And her collar, made of what brass or leather Caesar chooses to ordain, shall bear this motto, His servants you are whom you obey. Why, the poorest minister in the most despised of our Churches, whose poverty is thought to make him contemptible, but whose poverty is his glory if he bears it for Christs sake, would scorn to have any spiritual act of his Church submitted to the judgment of the State! And he would sooner die than be dictated to in the matter of Divine worship!

What has the Church to do with the State? Our Master and Lord has set up a kingdom which acknowledges no other King but Himself. We cannot bow and will not bow before decrees of Parliament and lords and kings in spiritual things. Christs Church has but one Head and that is Christ! The doctrines which the Church has to teach cannot be tested by a Court of Arches, or a bench of bishops, or a synod of ministers, or a presbytery, or a conference. The Lord Jesus Christ has taught us this and if His teaching is contradicted, the contradiction is treason against His crown! Though the whole Church were assembled and that Church the true one, if it should contradict the teaching of Christ, its decrees ought to be no more to a Christian than the whistling of the wind upon the mountain wilds! Christ is Master and none but Christ!

Though an Apostle or an angel from Heaven preach any other doctrine than that of our Lord, let him be accursed! I would God that all Christians stood up for this. Then would

*Sects and names and parties fall,*

*And Jesus Christ be All in All.*   
He is the sole Teacher and the sole Legislator. A Church has a right to execute Christs Laws, but she has no right to make a law. The ministers of Christ are bound to carry out the rules of Christand when they do so, what is bound on earth is bound in Heaven. But if they have acted upon any rules other than those of this Book, their laws are only worthy of contempt! Be they what they may, they bind no Christian heart! The yoke Christ put on us shall be our joy to wear! But the yoke which prelates would thrust upon us shall be our glory to trample on! If the Son make you free, you shall be free, indeed. Stand fast, therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ has made you free and be not entangled, again, with the yoke of bondage.

The Master. That is the name Christ should receive throughout the whole Church and He should be regarded always, and on all occasions, and in reference to all spiritual subjects, as the last Court of Appeal, whose inspired Word is

*The judge that ends the strife   
Where wit and reason fail.*   
Thus much upon the propriety of the title.

II. But now, secondly, let us consider THE PECULIAR RECOGNITION WHICH MARY GAVE TO CHRIST AS THE MASTER. How did she give that recognition? She became His pupilshe sat right reverently at His feet. Beloved, if He is our Master, let us do the same! Let us take every Word of Jesus, weigh it, read it, mark it, learn it, feed on it and inwardly digest it. I am afraid we do not read our Bibles as we should, or attach such importance as we ought to every shade of expression which our Master uses.

I would like to see a picture of Mary sitting at the Masters feet. Great artists have painted the Virgin Mary so often that they might consider a change and sketch this Mary looking up with a deep, fixed gazedrinking all in and treasuring all upsometimes startled by a new thought and a fresh doctrine and then inquiringly waiting till her face beams with unspeakable delight as new light gladdens her heart. Her attentive discipleship proved how truly Jesus was her Master.

Then, mark, she was not only His disciple, but she was a disciple of nobody else. I do not know whether Gamaliel was in fashion, then, but she did not sit at his feet. I dare say there was some Rabbi Ben Simon, or other famous doctors of the periodbut Mary never spent an hour with themfor every moment she could spare was set apart, joyously spent at the feet of a far dearer Rabbi! I wonder whether she was a little deaf and so sat close to the Teacher for fear of losing a word! Perhaps she feared she might be slow of heart and so she got as near the Preacher as others do who have a little deafness in their ears! Any way, her favorite place was close at His feet. That shows us, since we are always dull of hearing in our souls, that it is good to get very close to Jesus when we are hearing Him and commune while we listen. She did not change from Him to someone else for varietys sake. No, The Master, her Master, her only Master, was the Nazarene whom others despised, but whom she called her Lord.

She was a willing scholar , for, Mary has chosen the good part, said Jesus. Nobody sent her to sit at Jesus feet. Jesus drew her and she could not help coming, but she loved to be there. She was a willing and delighted listener. Never was she so happy as when she had her choice that choice being always to learn of Him. Children at school always learn well if they want to learn. If they are forced to attend school, they learn but little, comparativelybut when they want to go, and when they love

the teacherit is quick learning with them and happy is the teacher who has a class that has chosen him to teach them! Mary could well call Him, The Master, for she rendered Him her sole attention, her loving and delighted attention.

And, mark you, in choosing Christ for Master, she perseveringly stuck to Him. Her choice was not taken away from her and she did not give it up. Martha looked very cross one day. How was she to see to the roast and the other dishes at once? How could she be expected to prepare the table and to look to the fire in the kitchen, too? Why could not Mary come? And she scowled, I do not doubt. But it did not matter. Mary still sat there. Perhaps she did not even notice Marthas faceI think she did not, for the saints do not notice other countenances when Christs beauty is to be seenthere is something so absorbing about Him! He takes you all into Himself and bears you right away, drawing not only

all men, but all of men to Himself, when He does draw. And so she sat there and listened.

Those children will learn who stick to their books, who come not sometimes to study, but are always learning. So Mary recognized the Lord Jesus Christs Master-Teachership by giving to Him that persevering attention which such a Master-Teacher had a right to claim. She went humbly to Him, for while she sat at His feet for nearness, she sat there, too, out of deep humiliation of spirit. She felt it her highest honor to be sitting in the lowest place, for lowly was her mind. They shall learn most of Christ who think least of themselves. When a place at His feet seems to be too good for us, or at any rate we are more than content with it, then will His speech distil as the rain and drop as the dewand we shall be as the tender herbs that drink in sweet refreshmentand our souls shall grow!

Blessed were you, O Mary! And blessed is each one of you, if you can call Christ your Master and prove it as she did! You shall have the good part which shall not be taken away from you.

III. Now I come to my third point, which is thisTHE SPECIAL SWEETNESS OF THE NAME TO US. I have shown why it was peculiarly recognized by Mary and now I would show that it has a peculiar sweetness for us, also. The Master, or, My Master, or, My Teacher. I love that name in my own soul, because it is as a Teacher that Jesus Christ is my Savior. The best illustration I can give you is that of one of those poor little boys in the street, an Arab, without father and mother, or with parents worse than none. The poor child is covered with filth and rags. He is well-known to the police and has seen the inside of many a jail. But a teacher of a Ragged School has laid hold of him and instructs himand he is now washed and clothed and happy.

Now, that poor boy does not know the sweetness of, my father, or, my mother. He does not recognize anything in those titles. Perhaps he never knew them, or only knew such a form of them as to disgust him. But with what a zest does he say, My teacher! These little children say, My teacher, with quite as much affection as others speak of their mother! Where there has been a great moral change worked by the influence of a teacher, the name, my teacher, has great sweetness in it.

Now listen to the parable of the ragged boy and his teacher! I was that ragged child! Truly, I did not think myself ragged, for I was foolish enough to think my rags were fine garments and that my filth was my beauty! I knew not what I was. My Teacher saw me. He knew how foul I was and how ragged I was. And He taught me to see myselfand also to believe that He could wash me whiter than snow. Yes, He went further and actually washed me till I was clean before the Lord. My Teacher showed me a wardrobe of snow-white linen garments and clothed me in them. My Teacher has taught me a thousand things and worked innumerable good works upon me! I owe my salvation wholly to my Teacher, my Master, my Lord.

Can you say the same? I know you can if you are, indeed, disciples of Jesus! My Teacher means to you, my Savior, for He saved you by teaching you your disease and your remedyteaching you how wrong you were and making you right by His teaching. The word, Master, or, Teacher, has to us a delightful meaning, for it is by His teaching that we are saved. Let me tell you how, as a preacher, I love that name, my Master. I like to feel that what I said to those people on Sunday was not mine. I preached my Masterand I preached what my Master told me. Some find fault with the doctrine. I do not mind that, because it was none of mine, it was my Masters! If I were a servant and went to the front door with a messageand the gentleman to whom I took it did not like the messageI would say, Do not be vexed with me, Sir. I have told you my masters message to the best of my abilityand I am not responsible for it. It is my masters word, not mine.

When there are no souls converted it is dreary work, and ones heart is heavy, but it is sweet to go and tell your Master. And when souls are converted and your heart is glad, it is a happy and a healthy thing to give all the glory to your Master. It must be an awkward thing to be an ambassador from the English court in some far-off land where there is no telegraph and where the ambassador has to act on his own responsibility. He must feel it a serious burden. But, blessed be God, between every true minister and his Master there is a telegraphic communicationhe need never do anything on his own account. He may imitate the disciples of John, who, when they had taken up the Baptists mangled body, went and told Jesus. That is the thing to do!

There are difficulties in all Churches, troubles in all families and cares in all businessesbut it is good to have a Master to whom you can go as a servant, feeling, He has the responsibility of the whole concernnot I! I have only to do what He bids me. If we once step beyond our Lords commands, the responsibility rests on usand our trouble begins! But if we follow our Lord, we cannot go astray. And is not this a sweet name to quote when you are troubled, dear Friends? Perhaps some of you are in trouble now. How it removes fear when you find out that He who sent the trouble is the Teacher who teaches you by the troublethe Master who has a right to use what form of teaching He likes! In our schools much is learned from the blackboard. And in Christs school much is learned from affliction.

You have heard the story often, but I venture to repeat it again, of the gardener who had preserved with great care a very choice rose. One morning when he went into the garden it was gone. He scolded his fellow servants and felt very grieved, till someone said, I saw the master coming through the garden, this morning, and I believe he took the rose. Oh, then, said the gardener, if the master took it, I am content. Have you lost a dear child, or a wife, or a friend? It was HE that took your flower! It belonged to Him. Would you wish to keep what Jesus wants? We are asked to pray, sometimes, for the lives of good people, and I think we may. But I have not always exercised faith while pleading, because it seemed to me that Christ pulled one way and I pulled the other.

I said, Father, let them be here, and Jesus said, Father, I will that they be with Me where I am. And one could not pull very hard, then! Only feel that Christ is drawing the other way and you directly give up. You say, Let the Master have it. The servant cannot oppose the Master. It is the Lord. Let Him do what seems good to Him. I was dumb with silence. I opened not my mouth because You said it. Our Master learned that lesson, Himself, which He teaches us. That is a very striking expression, Father, I thank You that You have hid these things from the wise and prudent, and have revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight. It pleased God to pass by the wise and prudent and, therefore, it pleased Christ that it should be so.

It is well to have our hearts like that poor shepherd to whom a gentleman said, I wish you a good day. Said he, I never knew a bad day. How is that, my Friend? The days are such as God chooses to make them and, therefore, they are all good. Well, said the other, but some days please you more than others? No, he said, what pleases God pleases me. Well, but have you not a choice? asked the other. Yes, I have a choice, and that is, I choose that God should choose for me. But have you not a choice whether you would live or die? No, he said, for if I am here Christ will be with me. And if I am in Heaven I shall be with Him. But suppose you had to choose? I would ask God to choose for me, he said. Oh, sweet simplicity which leaves everything with God! This is calling Jesus, Master, to perfection

*Pleased with all the Lord provides,   
Weaned from all the world besides.*   
Once again, dear Friends, it is sweet for us to call Jesus, Master, because in so doing we take a position easy to reach and yet most delightful.

To call Him, Bridegroomwhat an honor it is to be so near akin to the Son of God! Friend is a familiar and honorable titleto call Him, Master, however, is often easier and it is quite as sweetfor in His service, if we take no higher place, is pure delight to us! If our hearts are right, to do the Lords bidding is as much as we can ask for! Though we are sons, now, and not slaves, and therefore our service is of a different character from what it ever was before, yet service is delight. What will Heaven be but perpetual service? Here we labor to enter into restthere they enter into rest while they labor! Their rest is the perfect obedience of their fully sanctified spirits.

Are you not panting for it? Will it not be one of your greatest joys in Heaven to feel that you are His servant? The glorified ones are called His servants in Heaven. His servants shall serve Him and they shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads. Rid us of sin and we should be in Heaven now! Earth would be Heaven to us! I want you, dear Brethren in Christ, to go away rolling this sweet word under your tongueMy Master. My Master! You will never hear better music than thatMy Master! My Master! Go and live as servants should live. Mind you, make Him truly your Master, for He says, If I am a Master where is My honor? Speak well of Him, for servants should speak well of a good Master. And no servant ever had so dear a Master as He is.

But there are some of you who cannot say this. I wish you could. Jesus is not your Master. Who is, then? You have a master somewhere, for, his servants you are whom you obey. Now, if you obey the lusts of the flesh, your master is your flesh and the wages will be corruptionfor that is what flesh comes tocorruption, and nothing better! Or your master is the devil, and his wages must be death. Run away from such a master! Mostly, when servants leave their masters they are bound to give notice, but here is a case in which no notice should ever be given. When the prodigal son ran away from feeding the swine, he never stopped to give notice that he was going to leave the pigs. He just took offand I recommend every sinner to run, by the Grace of God, straight away from his sins.

Stopping to give notice is the ruin of many. They mean to be sober, but they must treat their good resolution to another glass or two. They intend to think about Divine things, but they must go to the theater once more. They would gladly serve Christ, but tomorrow, not tonight. If I had such a master as you haveyou who live in sinI would get up and away at once, by the Grace of God, and say, I will have Christ for my Lord. Look at your evil master. Look at his cunning eyes! Can you not see that he is a flatterer? He means your ruin! He will destroy you as he has already destroyed millions! That horrid leer of sin, that painted faceconsider them and abhor them! Serve not a master who, though he gives you fair promises, labors for your destruction! Up and away, you slaves of sin! Eternal Spirit, come and break their chains! Sweet Star of Liberty, guide them to the free country and let them find, in Jesus Christ, their liberty!

My Master rejoices to receive runaways! His door is open to vagrants and vagabonds, to the scum of the earth and the off-scouring of all thingsto men that are dissatisfied with themselvesto wretches who have no joy in their lives and are ready to lie down and die! This Man receives sinners. He is like David who went into Adullam. Every man that was in debt and discontented came to him and he became a captain over them. As Romulus and Remus gathered the first population of new Rome by harboring escaped slaves and robbers, whom they trained into citizens and made to be brave soldiers, so my Master has laid the foundation of the new Jerusalem and He looks for His citizensyes, the noblest of them, over yonder there, where sin and Satan hold them captiveand He bids us sound out the silver trumpet and tell the slaves of sin that if they flee to Him, He will never give them up to their old master! He will emancipate them, make them citizens of His great city, sharers of His bounties, partakers in His triumphs and they shall be His in the day when He

makes up His jewels!

I remember preaching in this strain, once, and an old sea captain told me after the sermon that he had served under the black flag for 50 years, and by the Grace of God he would tear the old rag down and run up the blood red Cross at the masthead. I recommended him not merely to change his flag, but to see that the vessel was repaired. But he wisely replied that repairing would be of no use to such an old water-logged hulk he had better scuttle the old ship and have a new one. I reckon that is the best thing to doto be dead, indeed, unto sin, and made alive in Christ Jesusfor you may do what you will with the old wreck of fallen Nature, you will never keep it afloat.

The old man must be crucified with Christ! It must be dead, buried and sunk fifty thousand fathoms deep, never to be heard of again. In the new vessel which Jesus launches in the day of our regeneration, with the blessed flag of atoning blood above us, we will sail to Heaven convoyed by Irresistible Grace, giving God the glory forever and ever! Amen.

**PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMONJohn 11.** HYMNS FROM OUR OWN HYMN BOOK797, 769, 768.  
Adapted from The C.H. Spurgeon Collection, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307. Sermon #3461 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

THE WELCOME VISITOR   
NO. 3461

A SERMON   
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, JUNE 3, 1915.   
DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,   
THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

***And when she had so said, she went her way, and secretly called Mary, her sister, saying, The Master is come, and calls for you. As soon as she heard that, she arose quickly, and came unto Him. Now Jesus was not yet come into the town, but was in that place where Martha met Him. The Jews who were with her in the house, and comforted her, when***

***they saw Mary, that she rose up hastily and went out, followed her, saying, She goes unto the grave to weep there. Then when Mary was come where Jesus was, and saw Him, she fell down at His feet, saying unto Him, Lord, if You had been here, my brother had not died.   
John 11:28-32.***

IT seems that Martha had heard of Christs coming, and Mary had not. Therefore Martha rose up hastily and went to meet the Master, while Mary sat still in the house. From this we gather that genuine Believers may, through some unexplained cause, be at the same time in very different states of mind. Martha may have heard of the Lord and seen the Lord. And Mary, an equally loving heart, not having known of His Presence, may, therefore, have missed the privilege of fellowship with Him. Who shall say that Martha was better than Mary? Who shall censure the one, or approve the other? Now, Beloved, You may be tonight, yourselves, though true Believers in Jesus, in different conditions. I may have a Martha here whose happiness it is to be in rapt fellowship with Christ. You have already gone to Him and told Him of your griefyou may have heard His answer to your story and you may have been able by faith to sayI believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world. And you may be full of peace and full of joy. On the other hand, sitting near you may be a person equally gracious as yourself who can get no farther than the cry, Oh, that I knew where I might find Him, that I might come even to His seat! Dear Martha, condemn not Mary. Dear Mary, condemn not yourself! Martha, be ready to speak the word of comfort to Mary. Mary, be ready to receive that word of comfort and, in obedience to it, rise up quickly and, in imitation of your sister, go and cast yourself, as she has already done, at the Saviors feet. I must not say, because I have not all the joy my brother has, that I am no true child of God. Children are equally children in your household, though one is little and the other is full grown, and they are equally dear to you, though one is sick and the other in good healththough one is quick at his letters and another is but a dull scholar. The love of Christ is not measured out to us according to our conditions or attainments. He loves us irrespective of all these. Jesus loved Martha, and Mary, and Lazarus. He loves all His own and they must not judge Him by what they feel, nor measure His love by a sense of their own lack of love.

Hoping that the Lord will now bless the word to all of us who are His own people, I shall speak of two thingsa visit from the Mastera visit to the master.

I. HERE IS A VISIT FROM THE MASTER.   
Martha came and said to Mary, The Master is comeor as we might read it truly, The Master is here and calls for you. The Master is come. The Master is here.   
Beloved Friends who are just now without the present fellowship with Christ, which you fondly desire, permit me to whisper this in your ear The Master is here! The Master is here! We cannot come round and whisper it secretly as Martha did, but take the message, each one of you, to yourselfThe Master is here.   
He is here, for He is accustomed to be where His Word is preached with sincerity of heart. He is accustomed to be wherever His saints are gathered together in His name. We have His own dear word for thisthe best pledge we can haveLo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. We have met in His name, we have met for His worship, we have met to preach His Gospeland the Master is here! We are sure He is here, for He always keeps His word. He never fails any of His promises!   
He is here, for some of us feel His Presence. Had Mary said to Martha, How do you know that the Master is come? she would have answered, Why I have spoken with Him and He has spoken to me. Well, there are some among us who can say, He has spoken to us. Did we not hear Him speaking when we were singing that hymn just now? *My God, the spring of all my joys,   
The life of my delights.   
The glory of my brightest days,   
The comfort of my nights.*   
Did not we perceive Him to be near some of us, when we were singing *Oh, see how Jesus trusts Himself   
Unto our childish love,   
As though, by His free ways with us,   
Our earnestness to prove?*   
I, for one, did, if none besides! I can bear good witness to you that are languishing for His companyThe Master is here!   
And mark, He is here none the less surely because you have not, as yet, found it out, for a fact does not depend upon our cognizance of it, though our comfort may be materially affected thereby. The Master was at Bethany, though Mary had not heard an inkling of the good tidings. There she sat, her eyes red with weeping, and her whole soul in the grave with her brother Lazarus. Yet Jesus was there for all that. Make the case your ownthough you may have come here troubled with all the weeks caresthough while you have been sitting here the thought of something that will happen tomorrow has been depressing youthough some bodily weakness has been holding you down when you would lift up your spirit towards God, yet that does not alter the factthe Master is come. The Master is here. Oh, there was Mary sighing, If only Christ had been here! Oh, if only Christ would come. And there He was! And perhaps you are saying, Oh, that He were near me! He is near you right now! You sigh for what you have, and pine for that which is near you! You think not, like Mary Magdalene, that He stands in this garden. You are asking, Where have you laid Him? While your joy and comfort seem to you dead, He, whose absence you mourn, stands present before you! Oh, that He would but open those eyes of yours, or rather that He would open your heart, by saying to you, Mary! Let Him but speak one word right home to you, personally, and you will answer with gladness, Rabboni! The Master is come here, though you as yet have not perceived Him.   
That word, The Master, has a sweet ring about it. He is the Master. He that is come is earths Master. What are your cares? He can relieve them! What are your troubles? He can overcome them and sweep them out of the way! The Master has come. Cast your burden on the Lord: He will sustain you. He is Hells Master. Are you beset with fierce temptations and foul insinuations of the arch-fiend? The Master has come! Oh, lift your head, you captive daughter of Zion, for your bands are broken! The Breaker is come up before them. Their king shall pass before them and the Lord on the head of them. He who has come is no menial servant, but the right royal Master, Himself. The Master is come! What does it matter though your heart now seems cold as a stone and your spirit is cast down within you? What if death has set up its adamantine throne in your breast? The Master has come and His Presence can thaw the ice, dissolve the rock, bring you all the Graces of the Spirit and all the blessings of Heaven that your soul can possibly require! The Master is comedoes not that touch your soul and fire your passions? Whose Master is He but your own? And what a Master! No taskmaster, no slaves master, but such a Master that His absolute Sovereignty inspires you with the sweetest confidence, for He binds you with the bonds of love and draws you with the cords of a man. Master, indeed, is He! Yes, Lord and sole Master of your souls inmost care if you are what you profess to be. The Master whose scepter is the scepter of reed which He carried in His hand when He was made a scorn and scoffing for you! The Master whose crown is the crown of thorns which He wore for your sins when He accomplished your redemption! Your Master! You shall call Him no more Baali, but Ishi shall His name be called! He is only Master in that same sense in which the tender loving husband is the master of the house. Love makes Him supreme, for He is Master in the art of love and, therefore, Master of our loving hearts. How sweetly does, My Master, sound! My Master. Why, if nothing else might bestir us to get up and run to meet Him, it should be the sound of that blessed word, The Master is here: the Master has come.

But Martha addedand it is a very weighty addition (may the Holy Spirit make application of it to your heart)and calls for you. But is that true? asks one, does He call for me? Dear Brother, dear Sister, I know that if I say He does, I shall not speak without His guarantee, for when He comes into a congregation, He calls for all His own! He speaks, and He says to all whom He loves, Rise up, my Love, my Fair One, and come away. I know He does because love always delights in fellowship with the object that is loved! Jesus loved you before the earth was! His delights were with the sons of men from old eternity! He loved you so well that He could not stay in Heaven without you, so He came here to seek you and to save you! And now it gives His heart joy to be near you. He says, Let Me hear your voice. Let Me see your face, for sweet is your voice and your countenance is comely. I tell you it is Christs Heaven to hear the voices of His people! It is that for which He left Heaventhat He might give them voices with which to praise Him. Do you think He loved you so and will live without you? No, He calls for you!   
What is His Word, indeed, all through, but a call to His own Beloved to come to Him? What are Sabbaths but calls in which He says, Come away! Come away, My Beloved, from the noise and turmoil of the city, and come into the quiet places where My sheep lie down and feed? What are your troubles but calls to you in which, with somewhat of harshness as it seems to you, but with an inner depth of love, He says, Away My Beloved, from all earthly delights, to find your All in Me? What is the Communion of the Lords Supper but another call to you, Come unto Me? The bread which you shall eat, and the wine which you shall drinkthese are for yourselfbut the call which is encompassed by them as by symbols, is for each one of you! The Master is here, and calls for youfor each one! Oh, but says Mary, my eyes are bleared with weeping. He calls for you, you red-eyed mourner! Yes, but my heart is heavy with a sad affliction. He calls for you, you burdened sufferer! Yes, but I have been full of levity all the week and have forgotten Him.He calls you that He may cleanse you yet again! Ah, but I have denied Him. What says He but, Go, and tell My disciples, and Peter? He calls for you, that He may forgive you yet again, and may say to you, Simon, son of Jonas, do you love Me? I care not who you are, if you are one of His, the Master is come and calls for you!   
Why, says one, no Christian has spoken to me for a long while. But the Master calls for you! But I seem so solitary in this great metropolis, and though I know my Master, I do not know any of His people. Never mind His people! The Master is come, and calls for you. Yes, but I think if I am one of His, I must be at the very tail end of the catalog, and the last of all. He calls for youfor you. Oh, may that Word now come home and may each one feel, If He calls for me, there is such condescension in that call, such tender memories of my weakness, such consideration for my distance and my forgetfulness, that I will loiter no longer. Is the Master come? Lo, I am ready for Him! Does the Master call? Lo, my spirit answers, Come, Master, my hearts doors are flung wide open! Come and sit on the throne of my heart! Enter in and sup with me and I with You, and make this a gladsome season of intimate fellowship between my soul and her Lord. Turning now to our second part, let us talk awhile of   
II. A VISIT TO THE MASTER.   
It follows on the first as a fit sequence. We never come to Christ till Christ comes to us. Draw meI will run after You. That is the order. It is not, We will run after You, Lorddraw us. When a soul is saying, as we sung in the hymn just now   
*If You have drawn a thousand times,   
Oh, draw me yet again*then, Beloved, He is drawing us! When we are praying to be drawn, we are being drawn all the while!   
In answer to the Lords visit, you will notice the conduct of Mary. She rose up quickly. She bestirred herself. Oh, let each one of our souls now say, Has the Lord called for me? Why, then, should I loiter or linger for a single moment? I will get up this very moment. I will say, My Lord, I have come to You. You have called me, and here I am. Oh, for Grace to shake off the sorrow that makes some hearts sit still! Marys dear brother was newly laid in the tomb, but she rose up quickly to go and meet her Master. Dear Mother, forget for a few minutes that dear unburied child still in the house. Forget awhile, dear Husband, that sick wife of yours towards whom your heart so naturally flies. Forget, Beloved, just now, all that you have suffered, all that you expect to suffer, all that you have lost or may be losing. The Master is come, and calls for you! Rise up quickly! Let not these things constrain you to inactivity of spirit, but rise up, now, and, by His Grace, come away from them! Mary bestirred herself. She put on her best efforts, that she might not tarry when He called. And then she went, we find, just as she was. She rose up quickly, it is said, and she went. She came unto Him. No sooner said than done! She arose and she came. Well, but should she not have washed her face? Tears add but little beauty to the maidens visage. And that hair of hers, I doubt not, all disheveledmight she not have arranged that a little, and prepared her dress, and made herself trim for the Lord? Ah, that is a temptation for the mass of usI cannot expect to have fellowship at the Table because I have not come prepared. Brothers and Sisters, you ought to have come prepared, but, at the same time, if you have not, rise up quickly and come to the Master as you are! The Master had seen Mary with tears, before, for He had felt her tears upon His feet. He had seen her with disheveled hair before, for she had wiped His feet with the hairs of her head! If you are out of order, it is not the first time Christ has seen you so. I do not think a mothers love depends upon seeing her child in its Sunday clothes. She has seen it, I guarantee you, in many a trim in which she would not wish anybody else to see it, but she has loved it none the less!   
Come, then, you unprepared one! Come to Him who knows just what you are and in what state you areHe will not cast you outonly make brave to believe that when Christ calls, His call is a call to come, however unfit we may be! And oh, how promptly she left all other comforters to come to Christ! There were the Jews that came to comfort her. I dare say they did their best, but she did not stay for the Rabbi to finish his fine discourse, nor for the first scholar of the Sanhedrim to complete that dainty parable by which he hoped to charm her ears and reliever her sorrow! She went straight away to the Master, then and there! So would I have you forget that there are other comfortersforget your joys as well as your griefsleave all for Him and let your soul be only taken up with that Great Master of yours who calls for you, for all your faculties, for all your emotions, for all your passions, for your entire self! Come right away, by His help, from everything else that would absorb any part of your being. Rise up and draw near to Him!   
But it seems, Beloved, that when Mary had reached the Masters feet, she had done all she could, for it is said that she fell at His feet. Ah, you remember she had once knelt at His feet when she washed them. She had once sat at His feet when she heard His Words. This time she fell at His feet. She could neither kneel to do Him service, nor sit to pay Him the reverence of a disciple. She fell all but in a swoon, life gone from her. She fell at His feet. Never mind, if you are at His feet, if you do but fall there! Oh, to die thereit were life itself! Once get to Jesus and you may say, like Joab at the altar when Benaiah said, Come away, for Solomon has sent me to slay you. No, said Joab, but I will die hereand there at the horns of the altar he died! And if we must die, we will die there at His feet! Fall down at His feet! Beloved, if you do not feel you have strength for Communion tonight, never mindit does not need any! *Oh, for this no strength have I   
My strength is at His feet to lie.*   
Some of us know what it is to be scarcely able to get together two consecutive thoughtsnot to be able to master a text or lay hold of a promisestill we would say, Though He slays me, yet will I trust in Him. We could lie down at the feet that were pierced and feel how sweet it is to swoon at the Saviors feet. Only get there! Let your will and heart be good to get at Him now, for the Master is here and calls for you! Come, though in the coming you should utterly fail to get enjoyment, come and fall at His feet!   
Do I hear any of you saying, Ah, but I have a heavy thought pressing at my heart, and if I come to Him, there is not much that I can say in His honor. I feel but little love, and gratitude, and joy. I could not pour out sweet spikenard from the broken box of my heart. Be it so, only pour out what you have! For what did Mary do? She saidand the Master did not chide her, though He might haveLord, if You had been here, my brother had not died. Oh, it was half cruel, for she seemed to say, Why were You not here? It was unbelieving in part, and yet there is a deal of faith in ita sweet clinging to Him. Martha had said the same and it shows how often those two sisters had said to one another, Would God the Master was here. When the brother was very sick and near to death, they were saying to one another, Oh, if we could get the Master here! That had been the great thought with them, so they pour it out. Beloved, when you are at Jesus feet, if you have an unbelieving thought, if you have something that half chides Him, pour out your heart like water before the Lord   
*Let us be simple with Him then   
Not backward, stiff, and cold,   
As though our Bethlehem could be   
What Sinai was of old.*   
Tell Him the weakness. Tell Him the suspicion. Tell Him all the sin that has been, and all the sin that is haunting you. Tell it all to Him and at His feet is the place to tell it! You will then be eased of your burden. Beloved, you know how Mary received consolation. It was a great day for her when she got to Christs feet, and then the Master began to do wondrously, and very soon Lazarus was restored! So now, your first business, my Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ, is to get to Jesus! Oh, but Lazarus is dead. Never mind Lazarus! You get to Jesus and

He will see to Lazarus! Oh, but my business fails me. Never mind the business just now! Get to Jesus. Oh, but there is sickness in my house. Leave the sickness for awhile now. The one thing is to get to Jesus and to His feet! Oh, but my own heart is not as it should be. Forget your own heart, too, and remember Jesus! He is to you all that you need! He is made of God, unto you, wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemptioncome to Him quickly, and you shall have all you need! Ah, says one, I cannot bear to think of God, for I do not love Him. Ah, says another, but I can bear to think of Him, for though I did not love Him, He loved me. And now you may say, I cannot bear to think of coming to Jesus, for I do not love Him as I should. Ah, but think of Him, for He loves you! His Grace to you is boundless! Now let yourself be put aside awhile, and remember this faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus has come into the world to save sinners. Come, then, in the strength of that!   
I must close by saying a few words to those here whom I have not addressed. Perhaps there are some here to whom this message has never comeThe Master is come and calls for you. If it were to reach them tonight, it would be the first time they ever heard it. O dear Heart, I pray it may come to you, that this may be the beginning of days with you! The Master has come. This is certain. From the highest Throne in Glory to the Manger, to the Cross and to the grave, the Master has come! That He calls for you, I think this is also certain. Let me give you a text in which, I think, He calls for you. Whoever will, let Him come and take of the water of life freely. Whomever believes on the Lord Jesus Christ shall be saved. Calls He not for you, too, in this text, Let the wicked forsake his ways and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him turn unto the Lord, for He will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon? Calls He not for you in this verse, where He bids all that labor and are heavy-laden come unto Him, that they may rest? Or in that other, Come now, let us reason together, says the Lord. Though your sins are as scarlet, they shall be as wool; though they are red like crimson, their shall be as snow?   
He calls for you! Believe Him! It is certainly matchless Grace, but He is God and none is like He. As high as the heavens are above the earth, so high are His thoughts above your thoughts. But does your heart say, Why, if I thought Jesus called for me, I would come? Then He does call you! That speech of yours, I would come, proves it! It is He that makes you feel willing! Do you long for Him? Oh, He is putting His hand in at the door of your heart and making your heart yearn for Him! Does a tear drop on the floor, and do you say, It cannot be that such an one as I should ever live and be saved, and be Christs? Why, your very admiration at His Grace shows that some of His Grace is at work upon you. Trust in Him! Trust in Jesus whether you sink or swim! Trust that that arm can save! Trust that those pierced hands can grasp you! Trust that that Heart that was gashed with a spear can feel for you! Trust yourself wholly to Him! Go your way, your sins which are many, are forgiven you. If you have trusted Him, you are saved!   
Come and cast yourself at Jesus feet tonight! Is there no young man here to whom this shall be Christs voice? You say you cannot believe and cannot repentand cannot do anything? Then fall like dead at Jesus feet and look up to Himto Him, alone, and you shall have life! Is there no young woman here burdened in heart, to whom the Saviors feet may become a place of refuge from all her fear? I trust there is. And if I speak to someone far advanced in years, who imagines that he, at least, must be given up by mercy, it is not so! You have but a few days more to live, but the Master calls for you! Rise up quickly! May tonight witness your forsaking of your sins and your clinging to His Cross! And one day you shall see His face in Heaven without a veil between!   
The Lord bless you, Beloved, for Christs sake Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON:   
**JOHN 16.**

Verse 1. These things have I spoken unto you, that you should not be offended. That you should not be scandalized when you are put to suffering on My accountthat you should not dread the offense of the Cross and turn aside because of it. How considerate our Master is! It seems as if He might be angry at us if He suspected that we could be offended by anything that He did or suffered, or that we had to suffer for Himbut He knows the weakness of our flesh and, therefore, He speaks with so much elaboration of comfort.

2-4. They shall put you out of the synagogues: yes, the time comes that whoever kills you will think that he does God service. And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father nor Me. But these things have I told you, that when the time shall come, you may remember that I told you of them. When you meet with rebuke, and slander, and jesting, and jeering against you for Christs sake, He has told you of them

*Temptation or painHe has told you no less. The heirs of salvation, you know from His Word Through much tribulation must follow their Lord.*

4. And these things I said not unto you at the beginning, because I was with you. While they had His Presence, He was like a wall of fire round about them. They did not need to be protected, then, from dangers which had not come. And the Lord has not told us yet some of the things which He will reveal to us, by-and-by, because the trial has not come. You feel as if you could not die at peace just now. You dread death. You shall have dying Grace in dying moments! Do not be questioning yourself as to whether you have dying Grace now. You do not need it now. You shall have it when the time comes!

5, 6. But now I go My way to Him that sent Me. And none of you asks Me, Where are You going? But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow has filled your heart. It often happens, that if we were to inquire a little more into the sorrow, it would vanish. They did not ask Him why He went away. They fretted because He was going. Now He tells them to whom He was going.

7. Nevertheless I tell you the truth, it is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you. It is a better thing for us in this world to have the Holy Spirit in us than to have the corporeal Presence of Christ with us. We are better helped by the Holy Spirit than we would have been if Jesus had remained on earth.

8-12. And when He is come, He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they believe not on Me: of righteousness, because I go to My Father, and you see Me no more; of judgment because the prince of this world is judged. I have yet many things to say unto you, but you cannot bear them now. Partly because their sorrow incapacitated them from hearing anymore; partly because their spiritual infancy did not permit them, as yet, to learn the deeper doctrines which are rather meat for men than milk for babes. O you that are teachers of others, imitate the prudence of Jesus! Do not teach people too much at once. Do not try to make a little child understand all that an advanced and experienced saint knows! Say, as your Master did, I have yet many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now.

13, 14. Howbeit when He, the Spirit of Truth, is come, He will guide you into all Truth; for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatever He shall hear, that shall He speak; and He will show you things to come. He shall glorify Me. Now that is a sure mark of the Holy Spirit! If there is any spirit which does not glorify Christ, it is not the Holy Spirit! It is not the Comforter. If you hear any Doctrine which detracts from the dignity of Christs Nature, from the glory of Christs Person, from the perfection and the necessity of Christs Sacrifice, you may depend upon it that it is not the Doctrine of God. Reject it at once! It may poison you. It cannot build you up. He shall glorify Me.

14, 15. For He shall receive of Mine, and shall show it unto you. The things of the Father are Christs. We learn them as Christs. The Spirit brings them to us as Christs and so Christ is glorified and we are comforted.

16-19. A little while, and you shall not see Me: and again, a little while, and you shall see Me, because I go to the Father. Then said some of His disciples among themselves, What is this that He says unto us, A little while, and you shall not see Me: and again, a little while, and you shall see Me: and Because I go to the Father? They said therefore, What is this that He says, A little while? We cannot tell what He says. Now Jesus knew that they were desirous to ask HimAnd that is a very sweet thing. Sometimes we are afraid to pray. Sometimes we feel as if we could not bring ourselves to prayer. But it is so sweet. Now Jesus knew that they were desirous to ask Him. There is the essence of prayer in the desire to pray! There is really a request which Jesus Christ can read in the heart that longs to make a request and scarcely dares do it.

19, 20. And said unto them, Do you inquire among yourselves of that I said, A little while, and you shall not see Me: and again, a little while, and you shall see Me? Verily, verily, I say unto you, That you shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and you shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy. Not merely shall your sorrow be taken away, but it shall be transformed! As the alchemist thought that he turned baser metal into gold, so in very truth by a heavenly alchemy does Christ turn the sorrow of His people, not in this case only, but in many others, into joy.

21-24. A Woman when she is in travail, has sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembers no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world. And you now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man takes from you. And in that day you shall ask Me nothing. Verily, verily I say unto you, Whatever you shall ask the Father in My name, He will give it t o you. Up to now you have asked nothing in My name. They had asked so little that it came to nothing, and they had not yet learned the art of using His name in prayerand a great many Christians have not learned it either! Often they say, and they say very properly, for Jesus Christs sake. That is good, but there is something better! Suppose a person calls at my door and asks me to relieve him, out of love to some friend of mine. That is very well. But suppose he says, I come from that friend of yours, and he told me to use his name, and to put whatever you did for me to his account. Why, that is a stronger plea altogether! Happy are they who know how to use the name, the authority, the claims, the rights of Jesus as an argument with which to back their prayers!

24. Ask, and you shall receive, that your joy may be full. You have got some joy, but there is room for more. Brothers and Sisters, has your joy ever been full? Full? Could not you be more joyous? Oh, there have been times with some of us when we could not be more joyous than we were. We have asked, and we have received, and we have been so glad that we hardly knew how to live under the blessed delirium of gladness. We have seemed to be carried away with an intense delight because God has heard our prayers. That your joy may be full.

25. These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs. In short, parabolic sentences.   
25-27. But the time comes, when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall show you plainly of the Father. At that day you shall ask in My name and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you: For the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came from God. That is a very precious Truth of God! While Jesus does pray the Father for us, yet we are not to look upon that as if Christs prayer made the Father love us. No! Not only is it not Christs prayer that makes the Father love us. It is not even Christs death that makes the Father love us. Often do we repeat that verse   
*Twas not to make the Fathers love   
Towards His people flame,   
That Jesus, from the realms above,   
On the kind errand came.   
Twas not the pangs that He endured,   
Nor all the woes He bore,   
That Gods eternal love procured,   
For God was love before.*   
It is an exposition and display of the Fathers loveand the prayer of Christ, though blessedly useful, does not make the Father love us, or willing to grant the request. For the Father Himself loves you. Notice the blessed condescension of Christ that He should mention His peoples virtues. He says to these men that had been with Him, who really do not seem as if they had loved Him very much, and certainly were not very strong in faith, but were often in such a state of unbelief that He had to say, Where is your faith? Yet He says, The Father Himself loves you because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came from God. 28-31. I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father. His disciples said unto Him, Lo, now you speak plainly, and speak no proverb. Now are we sure that You know all things, and need not that any man should ask You: by this we believe that You came forth from God. Jesus answered them, Do you now believe? Are you at this moment full of faith? Do not trust yourselves. Do not begin to glory in the strength of your faith.  
32. Behold, the hour comes, yes, is now come, that you shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave Me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me. Oh, you that say you believe tonight, beware lest tomorrow you should be scattered in unbelief and fear! Whatever faith we have is Gods giving, and if it remain with us, it will be because God keeps it there! There is not one among us that has any faith to spare. We do not know but that the very hour is come, even now, that will try us and make us ask whether we have any faith at all.   
33. These things I have spoken unto you, that in Me you might have peace. In the world you shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world. There is a blessed word of good cheer for us, everyone!

Adapted from the C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Version 1.0, Ages Software.   
PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #1518 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

BELOVED AND YET AFFLICTED   
NO. 1518

PREACHED BEFORE AN AUDIENCE OF INVALID LADIES AT MENTONE, BY C. H. SPURGEON.   
Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick .   
John 11:3.

THAT disciple whom Jesus loved is not at all backward to record that Jesus loved Lazarus, too. There are no jealousies among those who are chosen by the Well-Beloved. Jesus loved Mary and Martha and Lazarus it is a happy thing when a whole family lives in the love of Jesus! They were a favored trio and yet, as the serpent came into Paradise, so did sorrow enter their quiet household at Bethany. Lazarus was sick. They all felt that if Jesus were there, disease would flee at His Presence. What, then, should they do but let Him know of their trial? Lazarus was near to deaths door and so his tender sisters at once reported the fact to Jesus, saying, Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick. Many a time since then has that same message been sent to our Lord, for in full many a case He has chosen His people in the furnace of affliction. Of the Master it is said, Himself took our infirmities and bore our sicknesses, and it is, therefore, no extraordinary thing for the members to be in this matter conformed to their Head.

I. Notice, first, A FACT mentioned in the textLord, behold, he whom You love is sick. The sisters were somewhat astonished that it should be so, for the word, behold, implies a measure of surprise. We love him and would make him well directly. You love him and yet he remains sick. You can heal him with a word! Why, then, is Your loved one sick? Have not you, dear sick Friend, often wondered how your painful or lingering disease could be consistent with your being chosen and called and made one with Christ? I dare say this has greatly perplexed you and yet in very truth it is by no means strange, but a thing to be expected!

We need not be astonished that the man whom the Lord loves is sick, for he is only a man. The love of Jesus does not separate us from the common necessities and infirmities of human life! Men of God are still men. The Covenant of Grace is not a charter of exemption from consumption, or rheumatism, or asthma. The bodily ills which come upon us because of our flesh will attend us to the tomb, for as Paul says, we that are in this body do groan. Those whom the Lord loves are the more likely to be sick since they are under a peculiar discipline. It is written, Whom the Lord loves He chastens and scourges every son whom He receives. Affliction of some sort is one of the marks of the true-born child of God and it frequently happens that the trial takes the form of illness. Shall we, therefore, wonder that we have to take our turn in the sick chamber?

If Job and David and Hezekiah must, each one, smart, who are we that we should be astonished because we are in ill health? Nor is it remarkable that we are sick if we reflect upon the great benefit which often flows from it to ourselves. I do not know what peculiar improvement may have been worked in Lazarus, but many a disciple of Jesus would have been of small use if he had not been afflicted. Strong men are apt to be harsh, imperious and unsympathetic and, therefore, they need to be put into the furnace and melted down. I have known Christian women who would never have been so gentle, tender, wise, experienced and holy if they had not been mellowed by physical pain. There are fruits in Gods garden as well as in mans which never ripen till they are bruised. Young women who are apt to be volatile, conceited, or talkative, are often trained to be full of sweetness and light by sickness after sickness, by which they are taught to sit at Jesus feet. Many have been able to say with the Psalmist, It is good for me to have been afflicted, that I might learn Your statutes.

For this reason, even such as are highly favored and blessed among women may feel a sword piercing through their hearts. Oftentimes this sickness of the Lords loved ones is for the good of others. Lazarus was permitted to be sick and to diethat by his death and resurrection the Apostles might be benefited. His sickness was for the glory of God. Throughout these 1,900 years which have succeeded Lazarus sickness, all Believers have been getting good out of it and this afternoon we are all the better because he languished and died. The Church and the world may derive immense advantage through the sorrows of good menthe careless may be awakened, the doubting may be convinced, the ungodly may be converted, the mourner may be comforted through our testimony in sicknessand if so, would we wish to avoid pain and weakness? Are we not quite willing that our friends should say of us, also, Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick?

II. Our text, however, not only records a fact, but mentions A REPORT of that factthe sisters sent and told Jesus. Let us keep up a constant correspondence with our Lord about everything

*Sing a hymn to Jesus, when your heart is faint.*

*Tell it all to Jesus, comfort or complaint.* Jesus knows all about us, but it is a great relief to pour out our hearts before Him. When John the Baptists broken-hearted disciples saw their leader beheaded, they took up the body and went and told Jesus. They could not have done better! In all trouble send a message to Jesus and do not keep your misery to yourself. In His case there is no need of reserve, there is no fear of His treating you with cold pride, or heartless indifference, or cruel treachery. He is a Confidant who never can betray usa Friend who never will refuse us. There is this fair hope about telling JesusHe is sure to support us under it.

If you go to Jesus and ask, Most gracious Lord, why am I sick? I thought I was useful while in health and now I can do nothing. Why is this? He may be pleased to show you why, or, if not, He will make you willing to bear His will with patience without knowing why. He can bring His Truth to your mind to cheer you, or strengthen your heart by His Presence, or send you unexpected comforts and give you great joy in your afflictions. You people, pour out your heart before Him: God is a refuge for us. Not in vain did Mary and Martha send to tell Jesus and not in vain do any seek His face. Remember, too, that Jesus may give healing.

It would not be wise to live by a supposed faith and cast off the physician and his medicines any more than to discharge the butcher and the tailor and expect to be fed and clothed by faith! But this would be far better than forgetting the Lord altogether and trusting to man only. Healing for both body and soul must be sought from God! We make use of medicines, but these can do nothing apart from the Lord, who heals all our diseases. We may tell Jesus about our aches and pains and gradual declining and hacking coughs. Some persons are afraid to go to God about their healththey pray for the pardon of

sin, but dare not ask the Lord to remove a headacheand, yet, surely, if the hairs outside our head are all numbered by God, it is not much more of a condescension for Him to relieve throbs and pressures inside the head!

Our big things must be very little to the great God and our little things cannot be much less. It is a proof of the greatness of the mind of God that while ruling the heavens and the earth, He is not so absorbed by these great concerns as to be forgetful of the least pain or need of any one of His poor children. We may go to Him about our failing breath, for He first gave us lungs and life. We may tell Him about the eyes which grow dim and the ears which lose hearing, for He made them both! We may mention the swollen knee and the broken finger, the stiff neck and the sprained foot, for He made all these, our membersHe redeemed them all and will raise them all from the grave! Go at once and say, Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick.

III. Thirdly, let us notice in the case of Lazarus A RESULT which we should not have expected. No doubt when Mary and Martha sent to tell Jesus, they thought to see Lazarus recover as soon as the messenger reached the Master. But they were not gratified. For two days the Lord remained in the same place and, not till He knew that Lazarus was dead did He speak of going to Judea. This teaches us that Jesus may be informed of our trouble and yet may act as if He were indifferent to it. We must not expect, in every case, that prayer for recovery will be answered, for if so, nobody would die who had young or child, friend or acquaintance to pray for him.

In our prayers for the lives of beloved children of God we must not forget that there is one prayer which may be crossing ours, for Jesus prays, Father, I will that they, also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am, that they may behold My Glory. We pray that they may remain with us, but when we recognize that Jesus wants them above, what can we do but admit His larger claim and say, Not as I will, but as You will? In our own case, we may pray the Lord to raise us up and yet, though He loves us, He may permit us to grow worse and worse and at last to die. Hezekiah had 15 years added to his life, but we may not gain the reprieve of a single day! Never set such store by the life of anyone dear to you, or even by your own life as to be rebellious against the Lord. If you hold the life of any dear one with too tight a hand, you are making a rod for your own backand if you love your own earthly life too well, you are making a thorny pillow for your dying bed.

Children are often idols and in such cases their too ardent lovers are idolaters. We might as well make a god of clay and worship it, as the Hindus are said to do, as worship our fellow creatures, for what are they but clay? Shall dust be so dear to us that we quarrel with our God about it? If our Lord leaves us to suffer, let us not repine. He always does that for us which is kindest and best, for He loves us better than we love ourselves! Did I hear you say, Yes, Jesus allowed Lazarus to die, but He raised him up again? I answer, He is the resurrection and the life to us, also! Be comforted concerning the departed, Your Brother shall rise again, and all of us whose hope is in Jesus shall partake in our Lords Resurrection. Not only shall our souls live, but our bodies, too, shall be raised incorruptible! The grave will serve as a refining pot and this vile body shall come forth vile no longer!

Some Christians are greatly cheered by the thought of living till the Lord comes and so escaping death. I confess that I think this no great gain, for so far from having any preference over them that are asleep, those who are alive and remain at His coming will miss one point of fellowshipnot dying and rising like their Lord! Beloved, all things are yours and death is expressly mentioned in the list! Therefore do not dread it, but rather, long for evening to undress, that you may rest with God.

IV. I will close with A QUESTIONJesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarusdoes Jesus, in a special sense, love you? Alas, many sick ones have no evidence of any special love of Jesus towards them, for they have never sought His face nor trusted in Him. Jesus might say to them, I never knew you, for they have turned their backs upon His blood and His Cross. Answer this question dear Friend, to your own heart, Do you love Jesus? If so, you love Him because He first loved you. Are you trusting Him? If so, that faith of yours is the proof that He has loved you from before the foundation of the world, for faith is the token by which He proves His fidelity to His beloved.

If Jesus loves you and you are sick, let all the world see how you glorify God in your sickness! Let friends and nurses see how the beloved of the Lord are cheered and comforted by Him. Let your holy resignation astonish them and set them admiring your Beloved who is so gracious to you that He makes you happy in pain and joyful at the gates of the grave! If your religion is worth anything, it ought to support you now and it will compel unbelievers to see that he whom the Lord loves is in a better case when he is sick than the ungodly when full of health and vigor!

If you do not know that Jesus loves you, you lack the brightest star that can cheer the night of sickness! I hope you will not die as you now are and pass into another world without enjoying the love of Jesusthat would be a terrible calamity, indeed! Seek His face at once and it may be that your present sickness is a part of the way of love by which Jesus would bring you to Himself. Lord, heal all these sick ones in soul and in body. Amen.

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JESUS WEPT   
NO. 2091

**DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, JUNE 23, 1889, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLES NEWINGTON.

**Jesus wept.   
John 11:35.**

A GREAT storm was stirring the mind of Jesus. We find, on looking at the original, that He was indignant and troubled. We have a very literal translation in the margin of the Revised Version. And instead of reading, He groaned in the spirit and was troubled, we find it, He was moved with indignation in the spirit and troubled Himself. What was this indignation? We cannot think that it was caused by the unbelief of His friends, or even by the pretended sympathy of those malicious Jews who hastened to accuse Him to the Pharisees.

But we look further and deeper for the reason of this heat. He now stood face to face with the last enemy, death. He saw what sin had done in destroying life and even in corrupting the fair handiwork of God in the human body. He marked, also, the share which Satan had in all this and His indignation was aroused. Yes, His whole nature was stirred. Some read it, He roused Himself, instead of reading, as we have it in our version, He was troubled. Certainly, there would seem to be an active sense in the expressionit was not so much that He was troubled, as that He troubled Himself.

The waters of His soul were clear as crystal, and therefore when troubled, they were not muddied. Yet they were all stirred. It could be seen that His holy Nature was in a ferment and an inarticulate expression of distress fell from Him. Between indignation at the powers of evil, grief for the family who had been bereaved by death, sorrow over those who stood by in unbelief and a distressing realization of the effects of sin, the Lords heart was evidently in a great storm.

Instead of the thunder of threat and the lightning of a curse, all that was perceptible of the inward tempest was a shower of tears. For Jesus wept. A hurricane rushed through His spirit. All the forces of His soul were disturbed. He shuddered at the sight which was about to be set before Him. He was thrilled from head to foot with emotion. Yet the result of the storm was not a word of terror, nor a glance of judgment but simply a blessed shower of tearsJesus wept. If all our righteous indignation displayed itself in tears of pity, we should have fulfilled the text, Be you angry and sin not.

Jesus wept. I have often felt vexed with the man, whoever he was, who chopped up the New Testament into verses. He seems to have let the hatchet drop indiscriminately here and there. But I forgive him a great deal of blundering for his wisdom in letting these two words make a verse

by themselvesJesus wept. This is a diamond of the first water and it cannot have another gem set with it, for it is unique. Shortest of verses in words but where is there a longer one in sense? Add a word to the verse and it would be out of place. No, let it stand in solitary sublimity and simplicity. You may even put a note of exclamation after it and let it stand in capitals, JESUS WEPT!

There is infinitely more in these two words than any sermonizer, or student of the Word, will ever be able to bring out of them, even though he should apply the microscope of the most attentive consideration. Jesus wept. Instructive factsimple but amazingfull of consolationworthy of our earnest heed. Come, Holy Spirit and help us to discover for ourselves the wealth of meaning contained in these two words!

We read of other men that they wept. Abraham, when he buried Sarah, wept. Jacob had power with the angel, for he wept and prevailed. Of David we are continually reading that he wept. His friend Jonathan and he once wept together and were not unmanned but were the more truly men for weeping. Of Hezekiah we read that he wept sorely and of Josiah that he poured forth tears over the sins of Judah. Jeremiah was a weeping Prophet. And I might continue the list, but if I did, it would not be at all remarkable that the sons of a fallen father should weep. With all the sin and sorrow that surrounds our manhood, it is no marvel that it should be said of any man, He wept.

The earth brings forth thorns and thistles and the heart brings forth sorrow and sighing. Is there a man or woman here who has not wept? Have we not all, sometimes, felt a sweet relief in tears? Looking round upon this great assembly, I could point to you, one by one, and say, He wept and he wept. And she wept and she wept. And none would wonder that such has been the case. The marvel is that the sinless Son of God should, in the days of His flesh, know the meaning of strong crying and tears. The fact worthy to be noticed and recorded is that Jesus wept. On that subject we shall meditate this morning. And may the Lord make our thoughts profitable!

First, I would remind you that Jesus wept, Because He was truly man. Secondly, Jesus wept, for He was not ashamed of His human weakness, but allowed Himself to reveal the fact that He was, in this point also, made like unto His Brethren. Thirdly, Jesus wept, and therein He is our Instructor. Fourthly, He is our Comforter. And lastly, He is our Example. We can only give a little space to each of these five things.

I. First, Jesus wept, for HE IS TRULY MAN. Many facts prove the completeness of our Lords taking up of our nature. Not in phantasm, nor in fiction was Jesus a man. But in reality and truth He became one of us. He was born of a woman, wrapped in swaddling bands, fed from the breast. He grew as a child, was obedient to His parents and increased in stature and in wisdom. In manhood He worked, He walked, He wearied. He ate as we dowe find it mentioned that He fasted and that He hungered.   
After His resurrection He ate a piece of a broiled fish and of a honeycomb, to show that His body was real. His human nature was sustained, as ours is, by supplying it with food. Though on one occasion, sustained by Divine power, He fasted forty days and forty nightsyet as man He ordinarily needed food. He drank also and gave thanks both for food and drink. We find Him sleeping with His head upon a pillow and resting upon the curb of the well of Sychar. He suffered all the innocent infirmities of our nature. He was hungry and was disappointed when, early in the morning, He came to a fig tree seeking fruit but found none.

He was wearyJesus, being wearied with His journey, sat thus on the well. That He thirsted we know, for He said to the Samaritan woman, Give Me to drink. And on the Cross He cried in burning fever, I thirst! In all things He was made like His Brethren. Himself took our infirmities and bore our sicknesses. His humanity was our humanity to the full, although without sin. Sin is not essential to humanityit is a disease of nature. It is not a feature found in humanity, as though it came from the Creators hand. The Man of men, in whom all true humanity is found in perfection, is Christ Jesus.

The fact that Jesus wept is a clear proof of this. He wept, for He had human friendships. Friendship is natural to man. Scarcely is He a man who never had a friend to love. Men in going through the world make many acquaintances but out of these they have a few special objects of esteem whom they call friends. If they think to have many friends, they are, probably, misusing the name. All wise and good men have about them choice spirits with whom their communion is more free and in whom their trust is more confident than in all others.

Jesus delighted to find retirement in the quiet home at Bethany. And we read that, Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. Alas, my Brethren, every friendship opens a fresh door for grief. For friends are no more immortal than ourselves. Jesus wept at the grave of His friend just as you and I have done and must do again. Behold your Lord, like David, weeping for His Jonathan, and see how human He is in His friendships.

Jesus wept, for He was truly human in His sympathies. He did not merely walk about among us and look like a man but at a thousand points He came into contact with us. Jesus was always in touch with sorrow. Happy are they that are in touch with Him! Our Lord saw Mary and Martha weeping and the Jews that were with her weeping and He caught the contagion of their griefJesus wept. His sympathies were with sorrowing ones and for this reason, among others, He was Himself, a Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with grief.

He loved first His Father in Heaven, whose glory was His main object. But He loved intensely His chosen and His sympathy with them knew no bounds. In all their afflictions He was afflicted. Jesus was far more tender towards humanity than any other man has ever been. He was the great Philanthropist. Alas, man is often the most cruel foe of man. None more unkind to man than men. Not the elements in their fury, nor wild beasts in their rage, nor diseases in their terror, have made such havoc

among men as men drunk with the war spirit.

When has there been such cruel hate on the part of the most savage monster towards man as has aged in the hearts of blood-thirsty warriors? To this hate our Lord was a perfect stranger. There was no flint in His heart. He was love and only love. And through His love He descended into the depths of grief with the beloved ones whose lot was sorrowful. And He carried out to the full that sacred precept, Weep with them that weep. Jesus was no unsuffering seraph, no cherub incapable of grief, but He was bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh. And therefore Jesus wept.

He was a man, dear Friends, for He was stirred with human emotion. Every emotion that ever thrilled through your bosom, so far as it is not sinful, has had its like in the bosom of the Lord Jesus Christ. He could be angrywe read in one place that, He looked round about on them with anger. He could be pitiful. When was He not so? He could be moved with compassion for a fainting crowd, or with scorn of a crafty ruler. Did He not speak with great indignation of the scribes and Pharisees? Yet, was He not tender as a nurse with a child, when cheering the penitent?

He would not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax. Yet He uttered faithful warnings and made terrible exposures of hypocrisy. Our Savior, at the moment described in our text, felt indignation, pity, love, desire and other emotions. He who is all heart of tenderness, was stirred from head to foot. He was troubled and He troubled himself. As when water is shaken in a vial, so was His whole nature shaken with a mighty emotion, as He stood at the grave of Lazarus, confronting death and him that has the power of it.

Our Lord proved Himself a man when it was said that Jesus wept. Note, too, that His pure body and His sinless soul were originally constituted as ours are. When His body was formed according to that Scripture, A body have You prepared Me, that holy thing had in it the full apparatus of griefthe tear gland was in His eyes. Where there is no sin, one would say there should be no sorrow. But in the formation of that blessed body, all the arrangements for the expression of grief were as fully prepared as in the case of any one of us. His eyes were made to be fountains of tears, even as are ours. He had about His soul, also, all the capacity for mental grief.

As I said before, so I say again, it would seem that there should be no tears where there are no transgressions. And yet the Saviors heart was made to hold sorrow, even as an amphora was made for wine. Yes, more, His heart was made capacious enough to be a reservoir wherein should be gathered up great floods of grief. See how the sorrow bursts forth in a mighty flood! Mark the record of that flood in these amazing words, Jesus wept.

Beloved, have a clear faith in the humanity of Him whom you rightly worship as your Lord and your God. Holding His Divinity without doubt, hold His manhood without mistake. Realize the actual manhood of Jesus in all lights. Three times we read He wept. Doubtless He sorrowed full often when He was not seen. But thrice He was known to weep. The instance in our text was the weeping of a Friend over the grave of a friend. A little further on, after a day of triumph, our Lord beheld the city and wept over itthat was the weeping of a Prophet concerning judgments which He foresaw.

It is not recorded by any Evangelist, but Paul tells us, in the Epistle to Hebrews, that with strong crying and tears, He made appeal to Him that was able to save Him from death and was heard in that He feared. This third record sets forth the weeping of our Substitute, a sacrificial weeping, a pouring out of Himself as an oblation before God. Treasure up in your mind these three memories, the weeping of the Friend in sympathy with bereavement, the weeping of the Judge lamenting the sentence which He must deliver and the weeping of the Surety as He smarts for us, bearing griefs which were not His own, for sins in which He had no share. Thus thrice was it true that Jesus wept.

II. Now, let us change the line of our thought a little, while we say, Jesus wept, that is, HE WAS NOT ASHAMED OF HIS HUMAN WEAKNESS. He could have repressed His tearsmany men do so habitually. I do not doubt that there may be great sorrow, very great sorrow, where there is no open expression of it. In fact, most of you must have felt times when grief has struck you such a stunning blow that you could not weep, you could not recover yourself sufficiently to shed tearsthe heart was all on fire with anguish and the eyes refused the cooling drops.

The Savior could doubtless, if so He had wished, have hidden His grief. But He did not choose to do so, for He was never unnatural. As the holy Child Jesus, He was free from pride and wore His heart where men could see it.

For, first, remember His talk when He spoke to His disciples. He never concealed His poverty. There is an idea abroad that respectability is maintained by the pretense of riches, whereby real need is hidden. It is thought disreputable to seem to be poor, even when you are so. There may be something in the affectation but our Lord did not countenance such a course. For He said, Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests. But the Son of Man has not where to lay His head. Though He was rich, yet for our sakes He became poor and He was never ashamed to let it be known that He was poor.

So, too, He was despised and rejected of men, and He did not pretend to be unaware of it. He did not try to make out that He was exceedingly popular and that nobody had a word to say against Him. But He owned that they had called the Master of the house Beelzebub. He knew what they had called Him and He was not ashamed of being made the butt of ridicule and the target of reproach. When they ascribed His miracles to the power of Satan He met the charges with an overwhelming reply. But He was not ashamed that slander had befallen Him as well as poverty.

As for His sufferings and death, how frequently do we find Him talking to His disciples about it, till Peter would have stopped Him if he could!

Our Lord spoke of His being betrayed into the hand of sinners and despitefully entreated and spat upon. He spoke openly of His being lifted up. He even dwelt upon the minute items of His coming passionHe had no wish to deny the fate which He knew awaited Him. Why not die and say nothing about it, if so it must be? Not so the Savior. He has become a man and He is not ashamed at that which necessarily follows as a part of His humiliation. Being found in fashion as a man He becomes obedient to all that is required of His manhood and before all observers He takes His place in the ranks. Jesus wept.

Jesus wept on this occasion, although it might have been misunderstood and misrepresented. Do you not think that the Jews who stood there would sneeringly say, See, He weeps! The miracle worker weeps! He calls Himself the Son of God and yet He stands weeping there like any ordinary man! Here was opportunity for scorn at His manifest weakness and even for blasphemy at the evident token of it. But our Lord did not act upon policy. He allowed His true feelings to be seen. He did not, like the stoic, claim respect for His manhood by holding Himself within Himself and refusing to let men see that He was of like feelings with them. No, Jesus wept.

Tears may not be thought manly but they are natural to man and Jesus will not be unnatural. The enemies may say what they please, and even blaspheme both Him and His God. But He will not act a part in the hope of silencing them. He acts the truth, only, and weeps as His kind heart suggests. He thinks more of Mary and of Martha and the comfort His sympathy may yield them, than of the sneering language of unbelievers, which may forge an excuse for itself out of the loving weakness of His humanity.

Jesus wept, and thereby He revealed His love to Lazarus, so that others saw it and cried, Behold how He loved him! This is one proof that our Lord does not hesitate to declare His love to His people. When He sojourned upon earth He was not ashamed to find friends among ordinary mortals. Our glorious Lord, now that He is enthroned, is not ashamed to call us Brethren. He is not ashamed to be written down in the same heavenly register as His poor people. His cheeks were bedewed with tears such as those which drop from our eyes, and by those tears all knew what manner of love He had towards His chosen.

Blessed be His name! Many a great man might be willing to befriend a poor man with money but not with tearful love. But here the blessed Master, in the midst of the assembled multitude, owns dead and rotting Lazarus as His friend and seals the covenant of His love with tears. Jesus weptHe was not ashamed to own the affliction which sin caused to His holy soulnor the gash which the sight of death made in His heart. He could not bear to see the grave and its corruption. May we never think of the sin and misery of our race without sorrow!

I confess I can never go through this huge city without feeling unhappy. I never pass from end to end of London without feeling a black and dark cloud, hanging like a pall over my spirit. How my heart breaks for you, O sinful city of London! Is it not so with you, my Brethren? Think of its slums, its sins, its poverty, its ungodliness, its drunkenness, its vice! These may well go through a mans heart like sharp swords. How Jesus would have wept in London! He could not stand in the front of a lone grave, about to look upon a single corpse, without weeping.

He saw in that one death the representation of what sin has done on so enormous a scale, that it is impossible to compute the devastation. And therefore He wept. What have you not done, O Sin! You have slain all these, O Death! What a field of blood has Satan made this earth! The Savior could not stand unmoved in the presence of the Destroyer, nor approach the gate of deaths palace without deep emotion. Of this He was by no means ashamed. And therefore He did not hold back His tearsJesus wept.

Brethren, holy emotion is not a weakness to be ashamed of. If at any time, in the midst of the worlds wickedness and gaiety, you weep, do not hide those tears! Let the thoughtless see that there is one, at least, who fears God and trembles when the Holy One is provoked.

Jesus wept, though He was about to work a wonderful miracle. The glory of His Godhead did not make Him ashamed of His manhood. Singular thing, too, that He should weep just before the joy of raising the dead to life. He is God, for He is about to call Lazarus out of the grave. But He is man just as much as ever and therefore He weeps.

Our Lord was as much man when He raised the dead as when He worked in the carpenters shop at Nazareth. He was not ashamed to own His real manhood while He proved Himself the Resurrection and the Life. This day in the glory of Heaven He wears His scars, to show that, though God, He is not ashamed to be recognized as man. He makes this one of His glorious namesI am He that lives and was dead. And, behold, I am alive forevermore. Therein He describes His connection with our manhood in life and in death. Beloved, Jesus wept, to show that He did not disdain the feebleness of that nature which He had taken up, that He might redeem it unto God.

Remember that our Lord Jesus exercised three years of ministry and each year was signalized by a resurrection. He began by raising the little daughter of Jairus, upon whose unmarred countenance death had scarcely set his seal. Then He went on to raise the young man at the gates of Nain, who was being carried out to his burial, dead but not yet corrupt. And now He consummates His Glory by raising this Lazarus, who had been dead four days already. Yet, when He came to this crowning marvel and thus displayed the perfection of His Godhead, He did not disdain to stand before all and weep. Jesus is the Resurrection and the Life, yet Jesus wept.

III. Thirdly, OUR LORD JESUS IS OUR INSTRUCTOR IN WEEPING. This is the most practical part of our discourse. Be sure that you receive it by the teaching of the Holy Spirit.

Observe why Jesus wept and learn a lesson from it. He wept because this was His method of prayer on this occasion. A great miracle was to be worked and great power was needed from on highas man, the Lord Jesus cries to God with intense earnestness and finds the most fit embodiment for His prayer in weeping. No prayer will ever prevail with God more surely than a liquid petition, which, being distilled from the heart, trickles from the eye and waters the cheek. Then is God won when He hears the voice of your weeping.

The angel at Peniel will slip from your dry hands. But moisten them with tears and you will hold him fast. Before the Lord Jesus puts forth the power which raises Lazarus from the grave, He appeals to God with strong crying and tears. The Father appears for His weeping Son. And you, dear Friends, if you want to win in prayer, must weep in prayer. Let your soul arouse itself to eager desire and trouble itself to anguish, and then you will prevail. Jesus wept to teach us how to baptize our prayers unto God in a wave of heart grief.

Jesus wept again, because before He would arouse the dead He would be Himself aroused. A word of His could have worked the wonderyes, His mere volition would have been enough. But for our instruction He did not make it so. There was a kind of evil which went not out but with prayer and fasting and here was a kind of death which would not yield unless the Savior groaned and wept. Without great exertion of the life of Jesus, the death in Lazarus could not be subdued. Therefore the Lord aroused Himself and stirred up all His strength, troubling all His being for the struggle on which He entered.

Learn, therefore, my Brothers and Sisters, that if you think to do any great good in saving sinners, you must not be half-asleep yourselfyou must be troubled even to tears. Perhaps the most difficult thing in winning souls is to get ourselves into a fit state. The dead may bury the dead but they cannot raise the dead. Until a mans whole soul is moved, he will not move his fellow. He might, possibly, succeed with those who are willing to be impressed. But the careless will be unmoved by any man who is unmoved himself. Tears storm a passage for warnings. If Christs whole Self must be stirred before Lazarus is raised, we must be thrilled before we can win a soul.

The fingers of decay are unwinding the goodly fabric which once was worn by the soul of Lazarus and no voice can effectually command them to pause but one which sounds forth from a bursting heart. That stinking, of which Martha spoke, can only be turned into the sweet odors of grateful life by the salt tears of infinite love. It is still more so in our case. We must feel, if others are to feel. Come, my dear Sister, you that are going to the Sunday school class this afternoon, because you must goyou must not go in that spirit. You, my Brothers, who are going to preach or talk to your classes and have as yet only one eye open. This will never do.

Your Lord was all alive and all sensitive and you must be the same. How can you expect to see His power exercised on others if you do not feel His emotion in yourselves? You must be quickened into tenderness as He was, or you will not receive His life-giving power. When I am weak, then am I strong. Jesus wept when He raised dead Lazarus.

Jesus wept in full knowledge of several things which might have prevented His weeping. You have sometimes thought to yourself when weeping at the grave of a dear child, or wife, or husband, that you have been wrong in so doing. But this may not be the case. Our Savior wept, though He knew that Lazarus was safe enough. I do not know what had happened to the soul of Lazaruswhere Scripture is silent it is not mine to speak. But, wherever He was, He was perfectly safe. And yet Jesus wept.

Moreover, Jesus knew that He was going to raise Lazarus to lifehis resurrection was close at hand. And yet Jesus wept. Sometimes we are told that if we really believed that our friends would rise again and that they are safe and happy even now, we would not weep. Why not? Jesus did. There cannot be any error in following where Jesus leads the way. Jesus knew, moreover, that the death of Lazarus was for the Glory of God He had said, This sickness is not unto death but for the Glory of God. And yet He wept! Have we not thought, Surely it must be wicked to weep when you know that the bereavement will glorify God?

Not so, or else Jesus would not have wept under similar circumstances. Learn instructiontears which else we might have regarded as contraband have now free admission into the realm of holiness, since Jesus wept. Sister, you may weep, for Jesus wept. He wept, with full knowledge of the happiness of Lazarus, with full expectation of his resurrection and with the firm assurance that God was glorified even by his deathwe may not, therefore, condemn what Christ allows.

Jesus wept, but He did not sin. There was not even a particle of evil in any one of the Redeemers tears. Salt there may have been but not fault. Beloved, we can weep without sin. I do not suppose we have ever done so, but it is possible. It is not a sin to weep for those whom God has taken away from us, nor for those who are suffering. I will tell you why there was no sin in Christs weepingit was because He wept in His Fathers presence. When He spoke in His sorrow, the first word was, FatherHe said, Father, I thank You. If you can weep in such a way that all the while you feel God to be your Father and can thank Him and know that you are in His Presence, your weeping is not blameworthy but healthful.

Let such floods flow on, for Jesus wept and said, Father, I thank You. Brethren, we sin when we either laugh or weep behind Gods back. Absence from God is the element of sin. When you cannot smile nor weep except by forgetting God and His Law, then are you offending. But if you can get up to your great Fathers bosom and bury your head there, you may sob away without shame. For that which He permits is evidently no offense.

Jesus wept, but He never murmured. Jesus wept, but He never found fault with Gods dispensations. Jesus wept sweetly in submission, not bitterly in rebellion. I think this is good instruction heremay the Holy Spirit teach it to us! May the Lord write it on every weepers heart.

You, Hannah, a woman of a sorrowful spiritdid Eli accuse you? Come to Elis Master, the great High Priest. For He will not blame you but He will tell you that you may weep, for He also wept.

IV. I must be brief upon my fourth point. Jesus weptIN THIS HE IS OUR COMFORTER.   
Let me speak to those who are of heavy heart. Jesus weptherein is our honor. You weep, my Friend, in good company. For Jesus wept. Let no man censure you lest they not only blame you but Jesus also. Jesus weptherein is our sonship vindicated. You say, Can I be the child of God and yet go weeping? Was not Jesus the well-beloved Son? And yet He wept. Ah, the question lies another wayWhat son is he whom the father chastens not? What child did God ever have that did not weep? He had one Son without sin. But He never had a son without sorrow. He had a Son that never deserved a stroke of the rod and yet against that Son the sword was awakened.   
Mourner, you are one of The Worshipful Company of Weepers, of whom Jesus is the Worthy Master. He is at the head of the Clan of Mournersyou may well wear the plaid with the black and red crosses upon it, for your Chieftain wore the same. See now the real sympathy of Christ with His people, for herein is comfort. His sympathy lies not alone in words, not even wholly in deedsit is more tender than these can be. Only His heart could express His tender sympathy and then it was by tearstears which were brought up like gold from the heart, minted in the eyes and then put in circulation as current coin of the merchant, each one bearing the Kings image and superscription.   
Jesus is our fellow-sufferer. And this should be our greatest solace. Oh, if we had a High Priest that knew not what it is to suffer as we do, it would be a most unhappy thing for us! If we fled to Him for refuge and found that He had known no grief and consequently could not understand us, it would be killing to a broken heart. I saw a young bird yesterday fly where he thought he saw ready entrance. But, alas for him! There was an invisible barrier. He dashed against the glass and stunned himself and I was sad when I saw him lie dead outside my window.   
If in my grief I fled to Jesus and there was about Him a secret inability to sympathize, an incapacity to admit me to His heartpure as crystal though that barrier might beI should dash myself against it and die in despair. A Jesus who never wept could never wipe away my tears. That were a grief I could not bear, if He could not have fellowship with me and could not understand my woe.   
Beloved, think how bravely our Lord enduredherein is confidence. Tears did not drown the Saviors hope in God. He lived. He triumphed, notwithstanding all His sorrow. And because He lives, we shall live also. He says, Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world. Though our Hero had to weep in the fight, yet He was not beaten. He came, He wept, He conquered. You and I must not be afraid to imitate Jesuswe share the tears of His eyes and we shall share the diamonds of His crown. Wear the crown of thorns here and you shall wear the crown of glory hereafter.   
Let this comfort you, too, that, though He wept, He weeps no more herein is Heaven begun below. Death has no more dominion over Him in any sense or degree. He has done with weeping. So shall it be with us before long. How I love that promiseNeither shall there be any more pain! Heaven is without a temple, for it is all devotion. And so is it without a hospital, for it is all health and love. The inhabitant shall no more say, I am sick. Oh, for the no more weeping! It will come to us before long, for it has come to Jesus.   
The Lord God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes. We shall soon have no cause for sorrow and no possibility of grief. For as He is, such shall we be. And as He is perfectly blessed, we shall be beatified in Him. Jesus wept. But His weeping is all over. Jesus wept. But His sorrow is now a thing of the past and so shall ours be before long.   
V. Fifthly and lastly, Jesus weptIN THIS HE IS OUR EXAMPLE. We should weep, for Jesus wept. Jesus wept for others. I know not that He ever wept for Himself. His were sympathetic tears. He embodied that command, Weep with them that weep. He has a narrow soul who can hold it all within the compass of his ribs. A true soul, a Christly soul, lives in other mens souls and bodies as well as in its own. A perfectly Christly soul finds all the world too narrow for its abode, for it lives and loves. It lives by loving and loves because it lives.   
Think of other weepers and have pity upon the children of grief. Today I want to touch your heart strings, and move you to pity the pains and the agonies of the many now lying within the wards of our hospitals and the even greater miseries of those who pine for want of medicine and care because they cannot get into the hospitals but have to wear themselves out in hopeless disease. How must those suffer who have bad nursing and little food and in the winter are pinched with cold! You and I may never suffer as they do but at least let us grieve on their account and stand ready to succor them to the best of our ability.   
In another matter our Lord is our examplelearn from Him that our indignation against evil will best show itself in compassion for sinners. Ah, my dear Friend! I heard you declaiming tremendously against drunkenness. I am glad to hear youyou cannot say anything too hard or too heavy about that degrading vice. But, I pray you, wind up your denunciation with weeping over the poor drunkard. I heard you speak, my other Friend, on behalf of the League of Purity and you smote the monsters of lasciviousness with all your force. I wish more strength to your arm! But when you have done, sit down and weep that such filthiness should defile men and women, who are your fellow creatures.   
Appeal to Parliament, if you wish, for the putting down of vice. But Parliament itself first needs correcting and purifying. A flood of tears before the thrice Holy God will do far more than the largest rolls of petition to our senators. Jesus wept. And His tears were mighty weapons against sin and death. You feel indignant at the lazy, idle, loafing vagabonds whose very illness is produced by their own viceI cannot condemn your virtuous wrath. But if you would in all things imitate Jesus, please note that it is not written that Jesus thundered, but that Jesus wept.   
Let indignation have pity mixed with it. I like not lightning without rain, nor indignation without tears. I know what you will say about the lack of thrift among the poor, about the absence of sobriety, the want of industry and so forth. Admit all this sorrowfullychide it tenderly. And then weep. You will do more good to the offenders and more good to yourself and more good to the best of causes, if pity moistens all. You may, if you will, beat the terrible drum and sound the war trumpet. But the noise will rather deafen than soften. The voice of your weeping will be heard deep down in the soul and work more wonders than thunders of denunciation.   
Lastly, when you have wept, imitate your Saviordo something! If the chapter before us had finished with Jesus wept, it would have been a poor one. Suppose, after they had come to the grave, we had read, Jesus wept and went about His daily business. I should have felt small comfort in the passage. If nothing had come of it but tears, it would have been a great failing off from the usual ways of our blessed Lord. Tears? What are they alone? Salt water. A cup of them would be of little worth to anybody.   
But, Beloved, Jesus wept, and then He commanded, Roll away the stone. He cried, Lazarus, come forth! When Lazarus struggled out of the tomb, Jesus said, Loose him and let him go. Some of you are full of pity for the sick. But I hope we shall not end in mere sentiment. Do not let us say, We were moved to sympathize with the sick but we gave an awfully bad collection! I should be ashamed to think of this mornings meditation if it ended so.   
No, no! If you cannot raise the dead, give something towards rolling away the stone which shuts the poor out of the hospital. If you cannot restore them to health, at least do something towards removing their maladies. Loose them from this crowded city and send them into the country to a Convalescent Home. Brethren, we can thus practically prove the truth of our sympathy. Therefore, pass the boxes round!

**Portions Of Scripture Read Before Sermon John 11:17-46; Hebrews 2:6-18.**   
HYMNS FROM OUR OWN HYMN BOOK912, 265, 327.

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OH, HOW HE LOVES!   
NO. 3228

A SERMON   
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, DECEMBER 15, 1910.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, JULY 7, 1872.

**Then said the Jews, Behold how He loved him!   
John 11:36.**

IT was at the grave of Lazarus that Jesus wept and His grief was so manifest to the onlookers that they said, Behold how He loved him! Most of us here, I trust, are not mere onlookers, but we have a share in the special love of Jesus. We see evidences of that love, not in His tears, but in the precious blood that He so freely shed for usand so we ought to see further into His heart than they didand to know more of Him than they could in the brief interval in which they had become acquainted with Him. When we think of His love to us, we may well cry, Behold how He has loved us!

These Jews expressed their wonder at the love that Jesus had for His friend, Lazarus. They did not keep that wonder to themselves, but they said, Behold how He loved him! In these days, we are too apt to repress our emotions. I cannot say that I greatly admire the way in which some enthusiastic folk shout, Glory! Hallelujah! Amen, and so on, in the midst of sermons and prayers. Yet I would sooner have a measure of that enthusiastic noise than have you constantly stifling your natural emotions and checking yourself from giving utterance to your hearts truer feelings. If we were in a right state of mind and heart, we would often say to one another, How wondrous has the love of Jesus been to us! Our conversation with one another as Brothers and Sisters in Chris, would often be upon this blessed subject. We waste far too much of our time upon triflesit would be well if the love of Jesus so engrossed our thoughts that it engrossed our conversation, too! I fear that many who profess to be Christians go for a whole year, or even longer, without telling to others what they are supposed to have experienced of the love of Jesus. Yet this ought not to be the case. If we were as we should be, one would frequently say to another, How great is Christs love to me, my Brother! Do you also say that it is great to you? Such talk as that between the saints on earth would help us to anticipate the time when we shall need no other theme for conversation in the land beyond the river!

I am going to remind you of some very simple Truths of God in order to excite the hearts of those of you who are coming to the Communion Table. My objective is to increase your love to the dear Lord and Savior who has loved you so intensely as to die for you. And first, Beloved, let us think of what the love of Christ has done for us. Secondly, of what His love has done to us. And then, thirdly, I need to say that I am afraid our love to Christ will never cause any wonder except on account of the littleness of it.

I. So first, let us quietly think over WHAT THE LOVE OF CHRIST HAS DONE FOR US.   
When did Christs love begin to work for us? It was long before we were bornlong before the world was created! Far, far back in eternity, our Savior gave the first proof of His love to us by espousing our cause. By His Divine foresight, He looked upon human nature as a palace that had been plundered, broken down and in its ruins He perceived the owl, the bittern, the dragon and all manner of unclean things. Who was there to undertake the great work of restoring that ruined palace? No one but the Word, who was with God, and who was God. He saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor. Therefore His own arm brought salvation unto him, and His righteousness, it sustained him. Before the angels began to sing, or the sun, moon and stars threw their first beams across primeval darkness, Christ espoused the cause of His people and resolved not only to restore to them all the blessings that He foresaw that they would lose, but also to add to them richer favors than could ever have been theirs except through Him. Even from eternity His delights were with the sons of men! And when I think of Him in that far-distant past of which we can form so slight a conception, becoming the Head over all things to the Church which then existed only in the mind of God, my very soul cries out in a rapture of delight, Behold how He loved us!   
Remember, too, that in that eternal secret council, the Lord Jesus Christ became the Representative and Surety of His chosen people. There was to be in what was then the far remote future, a Covenant between God and man. But who was there who was both able and willing to sign that Covenant on mans behalf and to give a guarantee that mens part of that Covenant should be fulfilled? Then it was that the Son of God, well knowing all that such a Suretyship would involve, undertook to be the Surety for His people to fulfill the Covenant on their behalf, and to meet all its demands which He foresaw that they would be unable to meet! Then the Eternal Father gave into Christs charge, the souls that He had chosen unto eternal life though ages, of which we can have so faint an idea, were to elapse before those souls were to be created! And the Eternal Son covenanted to redeem all those souls after they had fallen through sinto keep them by His Grace and to present them faultless before the Presence of His Father with exceeding joy! Thus, as Jacob became accountable to Laban for the whole flock committed to his charge, Jesus Christ, that Great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the Everlasting Covenant, undertook to redeem and guard the whole flock entrusted to His care, so that when, at the last great muster, they should pass under the hand of Him that counts them, not one of them would be missing and the blessed Shepherd-Son would be able to say to His Father, Those that You gave Me I have kept, and not one of them is lost. It was in the Everlasting Covenant that our Lord Jesus Christ became our Representative and Surety, and engaged on our behalf to fulfill all His Fathers will! And as we think of this great mystery of mercy, surely all of us who are truly His must exclaim with grateful adoration, Behold how He loved us!   
I have been speaking of very ancient tidings, but let us now come to matters that we can more clearly comprehend. In the fullness of time, our Lord Jesus Christ left the glories of Heaven and took upon Him our nature. We know so little of what the word, Heaven, means that we cannot adequately appreciate the tremendous sacrifice that the Son of God must have made in order to become the Son of Mary. The holy angels could understand far better than we can what their Lord and ours gave up when He renounced the royalties of Heaven and all the honor and glory which rightly belonged to Him as the Son of the Highestand left His Throne and Crown above to be born as the Babe of an earthly motheryet even to the angels there were mysteries about His Incarnation which they could not fathom. And as they followed the footprints of the Son of Man on His wondrous way from the manger to the Cross and to the tomb, they must often have been in that most suggestive attitude of which Peter wrote, which things the angels desire to look into. To us, the Incarnation of Christ is one of the greatest marvels in the history of the universe, and we say with Paul, Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness. God was manifest in the flesh. The Omnipotent Creator took the nature of a creature into indissoluble union with His Divine Nature and, marvel of marvels, that creature was man! He took not on Him the nature of angels, but He took on Him the seed of Abraham. For an angel to become an ant, if that were possible, would be nothing at all in comparison with the condescension of Christ in becoming the Babe of Bethlehem! For, after all, angels and ants are only creatures formed by Christ working as one of the Persons of the ever-blessed Trinity, for John, writing under the Inspiration of the Holy Spirit, expressly says, All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made. O glorious Bridegroom of our hearts, there never was any other love like Yours! That the Eternal Son of God should leave His Fathers side and stoop so low as to become one with His chosen people, so that Paul could truly write, We are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones, is such a wonder of condescending Grace and mercy that we can only exclaim again and again, Behold how He loved us!  
Then, being found in fashion as a Man, He took upon Himself human sickness and suffering. All our infirmities that were not sinful, Jesus Christ enduredthe weary feet, the aching head, and the palpitating heartthat it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the Prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bore our sicknesses. This was a wondrous proof of lovethat the ever-blessed Son of God, who needed not to suffer, should have been willing to be compassed with infirmity just like any other man is. We have not a High Priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.   
But if you want to see the love of Jesus at the highest point it ever reached, you must, by faith, gaze upon Him when He took upon Himself the sins of all His people, as Peter writes, who His own Self bore our sins in His own body on the tree. Oh, how could One who was so pure, so absolutely perfect, ever bear so foul a load? Yet He did bear it and the transfer of His peoples sin from them to Him was so complete that the Inspired Prophet wrote, The Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all, and the Inspired Apostle wrote, He has made Him who knew no sin, to be sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. When a man marries a woman who is deeply in debt, knowing well the burden that he is taking upon himselfeven though it is enough to crush him all his lifewe may well say, Behold how he loves her! That was what Christ did for His Church when He took her into an eternal marriage union with Himself although she had incurred such liabilities as could not have been discharged if she had spent all eternity in Hell! He took all her debts upon Himself and then paid then unto the utter most farthing. For we must never forget that when Christ bore His peoples sins, He also bore the full punishment of them! In fulfillment of the great Eternal Covenant and in prospect of all the glory and blessings that would follow from Christs atoning Sacrifice, it pleased the Lord to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief. We cannot have the slightest conception of what that bruising and that grief must have been! We do not know what our Lords physical and mental agonies must have been, yet they were only the shell of His sufferingsHis

soul-agony was the kerneland it was that which made Him cry, My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? Then it was that the precious corn of wheat fell into the ground and died. And dying, brought forth much fruit of which Heaven and eternity, alone, can tell the full tale! I cannot speak of this wondrous mystery as I would like to do, but you who know even in part what it means must join me in saying, Behold how He loved us!   
Further than that, Christ has so completely given Himself to us that all that He has is ours. He is the glorious Husband and His Church is His bride, the Lambs wife. And there is nothing that He has which is not also hers even now, and which He will not share with her forever! By a marriage bond which cannot be broken, for He hates putting away, He has espoused her unto Himself in righteousness and truth, and she shall be one with Him throughout eternity! He has gone up to His Fathers house to take possession of the many mansions there, not for Himself, but for His people. And His constant prayer is, Father, I will that they, also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am; that they may behold My Glory, which You have given Me: for You loved Me before the foundation of the world. Jesus has an ever-flowing fountain of joy in His heart, but He desires that His joy may be in you if you belong to Him and that your joy may be full! And everything else that He has is yours as much as it is His, so surely you will again join with me in saying, Behold how He loved us!   
II. Now, secondly, let us consider WHAT CHRIST HAS DONE TO US, for each of His acts of love should cause us to exclaim, Behold how He loved us!   
Think, dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ, how the Lord dealt with us in the days of our unregeneracy. He called us again and again, but we would not go to Him. And the more lovingly He called us, the more resolutely we hardened our hearts and refused to accept His gracious invitation. With some of us, this refusal lasted for yearsand we now wonder why the lord waited for us so long. If a rich man invites a pauper to a feast and the poor man is indifferent to the invitation, or positively refuses to accept it, he gets no second invitation, for man does not press his charity upon the needy. But when we even scoffed at our Lords call and made all manner of excuses for not coming to the Gospel banquet, He would not take our, No, for an answer, but called, and calledagain and againuntil at last we could hold out no longer and had to yield to the sweet compulsion of His Grace! Do you not remember, Beloved, how you received pardon, justification, adoption and the indwelling of the Spiritand how the many exceeding great and precious promises were brought to you like the various courses at a royal festival served upon golden dishes adorned with priceless gems? Oh, that blessed, blessed day in which you first came and sat among the guests at the great Kings table! As you look back upon it, your heart glows in grateful remembrance of Christs mercy to youand you cannot help saying, Behold how He loved us!  
Many days have passed since then, and I ask you, now, to remember what Christ has done to us since we first trusted in Him. Has His love for you cooled in the slightest degree? We have, all of us, tried that love by our wandering and waywardness, but we have not quenched itand its fire still burns just as vehemently as at the first! We have, sometimes, fallen so low that our hearts have been like adamant, incapable of emotion, yet Jesus has loved us all the while and softened our hard hearts as the glorious sun melts the icebergs of the sea! We were like the insensible grass which calls not for the dew, yet the dew of His love gently fell upon us. And though we had not sought it, our hearts were refreshed by it. Our Lord has, indeed, proved how He loved us by the gracious way in which He has borne with our many provocations. And think, too, Beloved, with what gifts He has enriched us, with what comforts He has sustained us, with what Divine energy He has renewed our failing strength and with what blessed guidance He has led and is still leading us! Take your pencil and paper and try to set down in figures or in words your total indebtedness to His lovewhere will you begin and when you have begun, where will you finish? If you were to record only one out of a million of His love-gifts to you, would the whole world be able to contain the books that might be written concerning them? No! All you can say is, Behold how He has loved us!   
There have been timesof which I will not say much just now, for some here would not understand what I meanwhen we have seemed to stand in the very suburbs of Heaven! Where we could hear the bells pealing forth celestial music from the invisible belfries and our hearts were ravished with the sound of the heavenly harpers harping with their harps and the ten thousand times ten thousand white-robed choristers singing the Song of Moses and of the Lamb. No, more than thatthe King Himself has brought us into His banqueting house and His banner over us has been love! He has not only permitted us to sit at His feet, as Mary did, but He has allowed us to pillow our head on His bosom, as John did, and even condescended to let us put our finger into the print of the nails in our rapturous familiar fellowship with Him who is not ashamed to call us His brethren! I must not continue in this strainnot for lack of matter, but for lack of time in which to speak concerning Him, so I must again say, Behold how He loved us!   
I must, however, mention one more proof of Christs love, and that is thisHe has made us long for Heaven and given us at least a measure of preparation for it. We are expecting that one of these days, if the chariot and horses of fire do not stop at our door, our dear Lord and Savior will fulfill to us His promise, if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto Myself, that where I am, there you may be also. To a true Believer in Jesus, the thought of departing from this world and going to be forever with the Lord, has nothing of gloom associated with it! This earth is the place of our banishment and exileHeaven is our home! We are like the loving wife who is separated by thousands of miles of sea and land from her dear husbandand we are longing for the great reunion with our Beloved Lord, from whom we shall, then, never again be separated! I cannot hope to depict the scene when He shall introduce us to the principalities and powers in heavenly places and bid us sit with Him on His throne, even as He sits with His Father on His Throne. Surely, then, the holy angels who have never sinned will unite in exclaiming, Behold, how He loved them! It is a most blessed thought to my mind, that we may be up there before the second hand of that clock completes another round! But if not as soon as that, it will not be long before all of us who love the Lord will be with Him where He isand then the least among us shall know more of His love than the greatest of us can ever know while here below! Meanwhile, we have much of the joy of Heaven even while we are upon this earth, for, as Paul wrote to the Ephesians, God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, has quickened us together with Christ, (by Grace you are saved), and has raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.   
III. The closing portion of my sermon is to be very practical. Did anybody ever say of anyone of us here, Behold how He loves Christ? If someone did say that of you, my Brother or Sister, was it true? I think I hear your answer, Oh, I do love Him! He knows all things and He knows that I love Him. But do you love Him so fervently that strangers or even your more intimate acquaintances would say of your love to Jesus what the Jews said of His love to Lazarus, Behold how He loved him! I wish, says one, I could do so. Then listen for a minute or two while I tell you of WHAT SOME SAINTS HAVE DONE TO SHOW HOW THEY LOVED THEIR LORD.   
There have been those who have suffered for Christs sake. They have lain in damp dungeons and have refused to accept liberty at the price of treachery to their Lord and His Truths. They have been stretched upon the rack, yet no torture could make them yield up their fidelity to God! If you have read Foxes Book of Martyrs, you know how hundreds of brave men, women and children, too, stood at the stake, gloriously calm, and often triumphantly happyand were burnt to death for Christs sake, while many of those who looked on learned to imitate their noble example. And others who heard their dying testimonies and their expiring songs, (not groans), could not help exclaiming, Behold how these martyrs love their Master!   
There have been others who have shown their love to their Lord by untiring and self-sacrificing service. They have labored for Himat times under great privations and amid many perilssome as missionaries in foreign lands and others with equal zeal in this country. Their hearts were all aglow with love for their dear Lord and Savior. And they spent their whole time and strength in seeking to win souls for Him, so that those who knew them could not help saying, Behold how they love their Lord! Some of us can never hope to wear the ruby crown of martyrdom, yet we may be honored by receiving the richly-jeweled crown from the hand of Christ as He says to each of His true laborers, Well done, good and faithful servant...enter into the joy of your Lord.   
Then we have known some saints who showed their love to their Lord by weeping over sinners and praying for their conversion. There have been gracious men and women who could not sleep at night because of their anxiety about the eternal welfare of their relatives and friends, or even of lost ones who were personally unknown to themand they have risen from their beds to agonize in prayer for sinners who were either calmly sleeping and not even dreaming of their doom, or else at that very hour were adding to their many previous transgressions! There have been others who could not hear a blasphemous word, as they passed along the street, without feeling a holy indignation at the injury that was being done to their best Friend! And at the same time their eyes filled with tears of pity for the poor blasphemers and their hearts poured out a stream of supplication for those who were thus ignorantly or wantonly sinning against the Most High! They have been like Jeremiah weeping over the lost and like Moses and Paul ready to sacrifice their own souls for the sake of others, until men have been compelled to say, Behold how these weeping and pleading saints love their Lord and love lost sinners for His sake!

Others have proven their love to their Lord by the way in which they have given of their substance to His cause. They have not only given a tithe of all they had to the great Melchizedek, but they have counted it a high privilege to lay all that they had upon His altar, counting that their gold was never so golden as when it was all Christs and that their lands were never so valuable to them as when they were gladly surrendered to Him! Alas, that there should be so few, even in the Church of Christ, who thus imitate their Lord who freely gave Himself and all He had that He might save His people! Blessed will the Church be when she gets back to the Pentecostal consecration which was the fitting culmination of the Pentecostal blessingall who believed were together, and had all things common; and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need.   
Another most admirable way of proving our love to Christ is by being scrupulously careful to please Him in little things as well as in the more important matters. One of the worst signs of this present evil age is that so little is thought of even the great things of ChristHis atoning Sacrifice, His high priestly Character and work, His kingly rule and so on while the little things of Christ, those that are less by comparison with these, are often utterly despised! There was a time, in Scotland, when men of God signed the Solemn League and Covenant with their blood how many would do that today? One jewel in Christs crown, that priceless Koh-I-Noor of the crown rights of the King of kings, was sufficient to call into the battlefield the noblest of Scotlands sons. But today, the very Crown of Christ, itself, is kicked about like a football by some of His professed servants, for they set up their own fallible judgments against His Infallible Revelation and practically say, We will not have this Man to reign over us! In this land, in the most glorious days that England has ever seen, our Puritan forefathers were so scrupulous that men called them strait-laced, sour-faced, bigoted and I know not what! But nowadays many of the Truths of God for which they contended and for which many of them resisted even unto blood, are said to be unimportant or of no account whatever! The special Truth of God which distinguishes us as a denomination is regarded by many with supreme contempt! Not long ago a professedly Christian minister said that he did not care a penny about baptism! If he belongs to Christ, he will have to answer to his Master for that saying! But I could not utter such sentence as that without putting my very soul in peril! He who really loves His Lord will not trifle with the least jot or tittle of His Lords will. Love is one of the most jealous things in the universe. God is a jealous God, because God is Love. The wife who truly loves her husband will not harbor even a wanton imaginationher fidelity to him must not be stained even by an unchaste thoughtand so must it be with every true lover of the Lord Jesus Christ! God grant that we, beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ, may do our Lords will so scrupulously in great things and little thingsand in all things alikethat those who see us in our daily life may be compelled to say, Behold how these Christians love Jesus Christ, their Lord and Savior!   
But, Beloved, remember that when our love has reached its climax, it can only be like a solitary dewdrop trembling on a leaf compared with the copious showers of love that pour continually from the heart of our dear Lord and Master! Put all our loves together and they will not fill a tiny cup! And there before us flows the fathomless, limitless, shoreless ocean of the love of Jesus Christ! Yet let us have all the love for Him that we can. May the Holy Spirit fill our souls to the brim with love to Jesus for His dear names sake! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON:   
**MARK 1:28-45; 2:1-12,**

Mark 1:28. And immediately His fame spread abroad throughout all the region round about Galilee. Immediately. That is, as soon as Jesus had healed the man with an unclean spirit His fame spread like wildfire. The miracle was reported from mouth to mouth till everybody in that region knew of it. It was said that the words and writings of Martin Luther were carried as by the wings of angels, so speedily was everything that he said and wrote made known far and wide. On this occasion, it was so with our Lords wondrous deed of mercy and powerImmediately His fame spread abroad throughout all the region round about Galilee.

29. And forthwith, when they were come out of the synagogue, they entered into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. Forthwith, or again, immediately. Simon and Andrew and James and John were intimately connectedwe are told that they were partners in their fishing business. James and John, the sons of Zebedee, seem to have been in a good position in lifewe read that their father had hired servants employed in the boats. So James and John went with Simon and Andrew into their partners house when Christ went there after performing that notable miracle in the synagogue.

30. But Simons wifes mother lay sick of a fever, and soon they told Him of her. There were at least four of Christs followers in the house, yet the mother of the wife of one of them lay sick of a fever. Divine Grace does not prevent suffering in the bodythere will still be physical diseases even though in the soul there is spiritual health.

31. And He came and took her by the hand, and lifted her up. And immediately the fever left her, and she ministered unto them. [See Sermon #2980,   
Volume 52A LIFT FOR THE PROSTRATERead/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at

http://www.spurgeongems.org.] Jesus was very calm. He was not afraid of catching the fever. See how deliberately and with what solemn, kindly dignity He deals with this sick woman. He came and took her by the hand. I think I see Him doing it, and lifted her up. He gently raises her and she yields to His tender uplifting handand suddenly finds herself cooled of the burning fever and perfectly restored to health and strength! So she rises from her bed and the first thing she does is to minister to them. I am sure that whenever the Lord helps any of His people out of their temporal or spiritual distresses, they feel at once that they must say, What shall we render unto the Lord for all His benefits toward us? Her ministering unto them proved that the fever was quite goneand gone in a way in which it does not ordinarily go, for as you all know, fever usually leaves behind it extreme weakness. It seems to burn up the strength that is in oneand after it is gone, one is not fit even to wait at table for a long while! But Peters wifes mother, the fever having immediately left her, rose and ministered unto them. Christs cures are always complete! If He saves us from the burning fever, He saves us from the weakness that follows it! And when He deals with soul maladies, His cures are equally completethere are no aftereffects to the soul as there are in many diseases that afflict the body. When the Great Physician restores the soul, He restores it completely.

32. And at evening, when the sun did set, they brought unto Him all that were diseased and them that were possessed with devils. It was the Sabbath and they would not bring out their sick until the Day of Rest was over. The Jewish Sabbath ended at the setting of the sun, so these people were all watching and waiting until the sun dipped below the horizon and then, straightaway, they brought their suffering ones to Jesus! What a mass of misery filled the streets of Capernaum that memorable night! The whole city was turned into a hospital.

33. And all the city was gathered together at the door. It seemed as if everybody had come either to be healed or to witness the healing of othersAll the city was gathered together at the door. Oh, when shall we see our places of worship thronged in this fashion with the spiritually sick? When will this great city of London begin to turn towards the Lord Jesus Christ? Will any of us live to see all our fellow citizens gathered together around the Savior to be healed by Him of all the wounds that sin has made?

34. And He healed many that were sick of divers diseases, and cast out many devils; and allowed not the devils to speak because they knew Him. They would persist in acknowledging Himperhaps with the design of injuring His cause, for nothing hurts the cause of Christ more than to have it praised by bad men or evil spirits! I do not know that an outrageous sinner, if he will not repent, can do Christ a better turn than to abuse Him, for then he is speaking after his own natural mannerbut when the devil or his servants go into the pulpit and begin to speak in praise of Christ, then is Christs cause in an evil case, indeedso He allowed not the devils to speak, because they knew Him. Or, as the margin puts it, even to say that they knew Him.

35. And in the morning, rising up a great while before day. While it was yet dark, He stole away even from His favored disciples that He might be alone with His Father.

35-37. He went out and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed. And Simon and they that were with Him followed after Him. And   
when they had found Him, [See Sermon #1769, Volume 30BEFORE DAYBREAK WITH CHRISTRead/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.] For

He had endeavored to conceal Himself in the loneliest spot that He could find. Possibly, the disciples overheard His groans, His cries, His supplications as He poured out His very soul in prayer to His Fatherwhen they had found Him

37, 38. They said unto Him, All men seek for You. And He said to them, Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there, also, for therefore came I forth. Jesus Christ came forth from God the Father that He might proclaim throughout the land the message of redeeming Grace and dying love!

39, 40.

And He preached in their synagogues throughout all Galilee, and cast out devils. And there came a leper to Him, beseeching Him, and kneeling down before Him, and saying unto Him, If You will, You can make

me clean. [See Sermon #2008, Volume 34THE LORD AND THE LEPERRead/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.] It is a pity that he could not

go further than to say to Christ. If You will, but it is a great mercy that he could go as far as that. So if you, dear Friend, cannot pray a prayer that is full of faith, pray one that has at least some faith in it! If you cannot go as far as some do, go as far as you can! I have often told you to bless God for moonlight, and then He will give you sunlight, but for anyone to say, I will not pray at all because I cannot pray as I would like to pray, is a very foolish thing! Say what you can, even as this poor leper said to Jesus, If You will, You can make me clean.

41. And Jesus, moved with compassion. This is a wonderful expression, moved with compassion. The face of Jesus and His whole Person showed that His very soul was stirred by an intense feeling for this poor leper! Jesus, moved with compassion

41. Put forth His hand and touched him, and said unto him, I will. Be you clean. If you or I were to touch a leper, his uncleanliness would at once be communicated to us, but when Christ touches a leper, His cleanliness is communicated to the leper! Oh, how high our blessed Lord stands above us! When we have to deal with certain peculiarly sad cases, we ought to go to the work with much earnest prayer that we ourselves may not be contaminated by contact with gross sinners, but Christ has such virtue in Himself that He can even touch the fevered and the leprous and yet sustain no injury!

42. And as soon as He had spoken, immediately the leprosy departed from him, and he was cleansed. This was another very wonderful miracle. All that dryness of the skin, that peeling, that inward foulness that eats into the bones and pollutes the very current of the bloodall this was quite gonethe Lord Jesus Christ made this foul, unclean leper perfectly clean and whole in a single moment!

43, 44. And He at once charged him, and forthwith sent him away; and said unto him, See you say nothing to any man: but go your way, show yourself to the priest, and offer for your cleansing those thing which Moses commanded for a testimony unto them. That was all he was to doto go and show himself to the priest so that it might be officially known and certified that he was clean. And he was not to tell anyone else of his cure. He was disobedient to Christperhaps you will think that he was very naturally and excusably sobut we must never make excuses for doing what Christ tells us not to do! Our duty is not to judge whether suchand-such a course will be profitable or beneficial, but to consider whether such-and-such a course is in accordance with the Word of the Lord! This man ought to have held his tongue, for Christ had told him to do so. I have no doubt that he said within himself, The more I talk about this miracle, the more good I shall do and the more famous Christs name will become. But He had no business to think thathis business was to obey Christs command!

45. But he went out and began to publish it much, and to blaze abroad the matter, insomuch that Jesus could no more openly enter the city. There were such crowds that He could not work His miracles of healing. The disobedient man was no doubt moved by gratitude, which seems a very proper motive, yet his disobedience caused Christ serious inconvenience and hindered His work. And I have no doubt that there are many things done in the Church of God today of which many say, They are very proper and very niceyes, but are they Scriptural? Did the Master command them? If not, they will cause Him and His Kingdom serious inconvenience and loss at some time or other. We cannot too fully realize that as Christs disciples, we are to obey Him implicitlyand the best proof of our gratitude is to do exactly as Christ bids us. This man blazed abroad the news of his cure so that, Jesus could no more openly enter into the city   
45. But was outside in deserted places: and they came to Him from every

quarter. [See Sermon #129, Volume 22GATHERING TO THE CENTERRead/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.]

Mark 2:1, 2. And again He entered into Capernaum after some days; and it was heard that He was in the house. And straightway many were gathered together, inasmuch that there was no room to receive them, no, not so even near the door: and He preached the Word unto them. He could not be hiddenthe healed leper had made His name so famous that men crowded to see Himand He took advantage of their curiosity and, preached the Word unto them.

3-5. And they came unto Him, bringing one sick of the palsy, which was borne of four. And when they could not come near unto Him for the crowd, they uncovered the roof where He was and when they had broken it up, they let down the bed wherein the sick of the palsy lay. When Jesus saw their faith, He said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, your sins are forgiven you. Those who brought this man to Jesus believed that He could and would heal Himand Christ delighted to honor their faith and, perhaps, also the faith of the palsied man himself.

6-9. But there were certain of the scribes sitting there and reasoning in their hearts, Why does this Man thus speak blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God only? And immediately when Jesus perceived in His spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, He said to them, Why reason you these things in your hearts? Which is easier to say to the sick of the palsy, Your sins are forgiven you? Or to say, Arise and take up your bed and walk? It was just as easy to say either the one or the other.

10-12. But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins, (He said to the sick of the palsy), I say unto you, Arise, and take up your bed, and go your way into your house. And immediately he arose, took up the bed and went forth before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fa

shion! [See Sermon #1269, Volume 21THE NEW FASHIONRead/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.]  
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MIGHT HAVE BEEN, OR MAY BE   
NO. 1944

**A SERMON INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS-DAY, JANUARY 30, 1887. DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**And some of them said, Could not this Man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died?   
John 11:37.**

JESUS WEPT. It does not mean that He shed a tear or two, but that His tears flowed freely. Such is to be gathered from the original word. He wept copiously and continuously till He became the observed of all observers. He was deeply affected and His tears were the fit expression of His intense emotion. Love made Him weepnothing else ever compelled Him to tears. I do not find that all the pains He endured, even when scourged or when fastened to the cruel Cross, fetched a single tear from Himbut for loves sakeJesus wept. At first I feel inclined to say, Behold, how He wept! And then I check myself and, borrowing my language from the bystanders, I cry, Behold, how He loved him! The Jews recognized, even with their unfriendly eyes, that His tears were drawn from Him by love alone! From this Rock of our salvation no rod but that of love could bring forth floods of tears!

So when we have noticed the tears and the power of love which brought forth the tears, let us observe how, being such as we are, tears are towards us a fit expression of His love. When you look upon your children with love, your eyes flash joy. When they are in health and strength, your love expresses itself fitly in delight in them. But love in Christ towards us most fitly shows itself in tears. When He thinks of what we are and how we have become subject to deathand how sin has brought us under this bondagesince He loves us, He must weep. No, He must die, for even His tears cannot suffice to manifest His love! Jesus must pour out His soul, not only unto tears, but unto death, that all may see how deeply He loves us!

I should like to begin my sermon with that thought deeply fixed upon our spirits, if we are, indeed, the people of Godthat Jesus loves us loves us unto tears! Inasmuch as He loved Lazarus when Lazarus was dead and in the tomb, let us herein behold how He loved us when we were dead in trespasses and sins. See how He loves us though, perhaps, our spirits may be dull and deadand how He will love us even when we come to die. Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints. He loves us so that He will love us when we die, even as He loved Lazarus at the graves mouth.

Let us turn away from our preface, which we have found in the context, to look at the text itself. While there were some who thought only of the love of Christ when they beheld His tears, there were others standing by more full of reasoning, who argued, Could not this Man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died?

Placing my text in various lights, I see, first, a vain argument. Secondly a vile argument. Thirdly, a fair argument and, fourthly, if read in connection with the verses which succeed it, a full and faithful argument.

I. But, first, I see in the text A VAIN ARGUMENT. It is an argument about what might have been if such-and-such a thing had been. It is a very common thing to hear people thus talkIf so-and-so, then so andso. Such talk is always vain, because it leads to no practical result. What was the use of saying, If Jesus had been here, then Lazarus would not have died, when Lazarus was already dead? The thing is done and cannot be undonewhat is the use of asking about what once might have been but now cannot be? Yet have I seen strange sorrows wrung out of these suppositions! Perhaps the most bitter griefs that men know come not from

facts, but from things which might have been, as they imagine. That is to say, they dig wells of supposition and drink the brackish waters of regret!

The sisters of Lazarus did this. Each said, Lord, if You had been here, my brother had not died. In a more unbelieving way the Jews did it and said, Could not this Man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died? Yes and so you say, Now, if I had gone to so-and-so, this would not have happened. And then the other might have happened and a third thing probably would have occurred. And then how different it would have been from what it is now! You blame yourself for steps which were not only innocent, but wise and rightand now that you see the consequences of them, you begin to imagine that they were not innocent, not wise and not right! And you fret to think that you took such steps.

I have known some go a great deal further than vainly accusing themselvesthey have even accused God. They say, Why was moral evil admitted into the world? Why were men and women constituted as they are? Could not God, who is Omnipotent, have so arranged things that there should have been no sin and no sorrow? What a fine mess we get into when once we begin arguing over those points and conjecturing what might have been under other circumstances! You see, dear Friends, these things will not be and cannot be and, therefore, what is the good of our worrying over what is not and cannot be? I will plow, but if there is no field, excuse me, I shall not plow the sea, or the mist! I will get to work on anything that is practical, but I will not break my heart over fancies!

If it is to be done and it is right to do it, let us go at it at once. But if it cannot now be done, but is only a thing that might have been, let us leave it. You may go to the might have beens, I have better work to do. This was Davids method about his child, as it should be yours about all your sick ones and those that have already departed. David fasts, prays and cries to God as long as his child is alive, but when his child is dead, he washes his face and eats bread because, he says, Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me. It is done and cannot be undonewhat is the use of fretting over it now? Oh, that you would have Grace to leave this foolish chopping of logic with yourself and Providenceand use your reason for something better! Lazarus is dead what is the use of saying that he might not have died if Jesus had interposed?

I call this a vain argument, in the next place, because even though we raise the question about what might have been and we push it until we begin to think that it ought to have been, still, unbelief will never get an explanation of it from the Lord. In the chapter there is no explanation given to the Jews of why Jesus, being able to open the eyes of the blind man and able to keep this person from dying, yet did not keep him from dying. An explanation was given by the Lord to His disciples by His assurance that it was for the glory of God. That explanation you will get. You have received it already. If you are Gods child and He has denied you what you think He might as well have given you. If He has permitted you to suffer under a calamity which you think He might have averted, He will give you no other explanation than this which He gives you now without any pressure at all, namely, that it is for His Glory!

If it is for His Glory, is it not for your advantage? What can more advantage a servant than the glory of his master? What can more profit our loving hearts than to see God glorified? If you are not satisfied with that answer, do not expect any other. Why have I been bereaved of my children? Why have I been ill so many years? Why did I fail when I hoped to reach wealth? Why did I break down in the examination when I might have obtained a degree? It is an idle piece of business to demand the reasons of unavoidable trials! It is mere dreaming to guess what would have been if such another thing had been. What you know not now, you shall know hereafter. Let that content you.

Once again, I call this a vain argument because it cannot benefit you to pry into this thing which the Lord has hidden from you. You are fostering self-conceit in calling Gods Providence to your bar. You are practically sitting upon a throne and making God to be the prisoner at your bar! You are weighing over again what He has already weighed in the scale of wisdom. This will never do! A child-like spirit is infinitely healthier as it is infinitely holier than the spirit of questioning. Brothers and Sisters, we should not even thirst to know all the things that are, for if it is the Glory of God to conceal a thing, let it be concealedand as for the things that might have beenwhat have we to do with them?

If we begin lifting up these curtains, we cannot tell what we may one day see. I have known persons intrude into this sphere until at last they have stumbled on a horror which they were never intended to see and which, indeed, they never would have seen if their own unhallowed imaginations had not created it for themselves! They were ambitious to alter Providence and change the times and seasons which God had ordained and at last they fell into such a morbid condition that if they were not positively mad, they might have been happier if they had beenfor there is a state of mind, bordering on insanity, which has still a guilt about it and is, therefore, worse than if responsibility had been destroyed.

I shall beg you, therefore, Brethren, to forbear from prying into those secret things which belong only to God. Your profit lies in the direction of abstaining from such speculations. Do not talk about what might have been, or should have been, interfering with the good which God has given you by pining after what He has denied. Oh, could you know as He knows and then love as He loves, you would act as He acts! Believe in Him and sit still at His feet! Talk no more about what He could have done, or might have done, or what you fancy He should have done, lest evil come of it.

II. Secondly, as I have spoken upon a vain argument, I will now speak of A VILE ARGUMENT, for I believe these Jews intended a piece of evil argument against the Christ of God. They put it thusThis Man says that He opened the eyes of the blind and all the people think that He did, but if He did so, why did He not prevent His friend, whom He evidently loved, from dying? Either He has a lack of power which will prove that He did not open the eyes of the blind, after all, but that it was an imposture, or else, if He has such power and does not use it for His friend, He does not love Him and these tears are a mere pretence! He could have saved this mans life and now He stands here and weeps because he is dead.

Thus the adversary would put the believer in our Lord upon the horns of a dilemma. We are not gored by either horn, for we know a way of escape. Still, you see the drift, and this is often the drift of Satans arguments. Your brother, your mother, your child, your friendthese are dead. You sent to Jesus. You cried to God. You importuned for the precious life and yet they are dead. Well, then, there must have been a lack of power on the part of God to save life! Perhaps that conversion of yours, in which you have rejoiced and of which you have said, One thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I seeperhaps, after all, that was not a work of Divine power, but a delusion! For He that saved your soul could have saved the life of your beloved and, as He did not do so, has He any power at all? And have you ever been the subject of that power?

You see the drift of the specious reasoningis it not a vile argument? Let us unveil the falsehood of it. Suppose that Jesus is willing to open the eyes of the blind and does open themis He, therefore, bound to raise this particular dead man? If He does not see fit to do so, does that prove that He has not the power? If He lets Lazarus die, is it proven, therefore, that He could not have saved His life? May there not be some other reason? Does Omnipotence always exert its power? Does it ever exert all its power? May there not be some great reason why Christ should open the eyes of the blind and yet should not step in to prevent the death of Lazarus? We can see that there may be many such reasons, but it is easy, when you wish to argue against Christ and the Gospel, to forget a good deal! You can shut your eyes where it is inconvenient to see and then you can rush on blindly like a mad bull!

On the other hand, if they say, If Christ can prevent Lazarus dying and He does not do so, there is a lack of love in Him! Is it so? Is that a fair argument? It is not true, as a matter of factnor will it be thought to be true by our faith. It may be Infinite Love that wounds, that chastens, that afflicts. There is as much love in the Father when He wields the rod as when He gives the kissas much love in the Savior when He permits Lazarus to die as when He raises Lazarus from the grave! Yes, and it is possible that the less pleasing deed may be the more greatly charged with love! The greatest blessings come to us in the guise of sorrows. I should not wonder if the death of Lazarus was the passing of Lazarus into a higher state of spiritual life than he had ever enjoyed. I doubt not that he was a converted man before his death, but, certainly, that wonderful passing into the region of death-shade, (which I will not picture because the Bible does not picture it), and that coming back, again, must have given him such a vivid consciousness of the power of Christ that the spiritual life that was within him must have become more strong, more clear, more supreme than ever it had been before!

I should have liked to meet that man after he had been raised from the dead by Him who said, I am the resurrection and the life. I think he could have preached from that text very wonderfully! He would have understood it by an experience unknown to us. I should think that Lazarus rose into the higher life in the very highest degreeand so it was Christs love to Lazarus that let Lazarus die! And it was altogether a lie that he died because Jesus had a lack of love towards him. It is Christs love that has let some of you be ill and poor. It is Christs love that has suffered you to be despised and down-trodden. It is Christs love that has let you remain in affliction, because the Divine benefit that has come of it is more to your profit than the thing itself could ever be to your loss! So the vile argument may well be driven away, whatever shape it takes in our minds.

There is no justification for our distrust as to what God has done for us in the way of Divine Graceit has been real and no dream. And there is no justification for any doubt as to what God can do for us and will do for us in the future. He that has helped us so far will help us to the end. He that has done so much for us will withhold no good thing from us, but bestow all that is necessary for this life and godlinessand for the life to come and Glory!

III. We shall now proceed very briefly to notice what is A VERY FAIR ARGUMENT. If you take the text and press the malice out of it, it is true. Could not this Man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died? Yes, it is true. Jesus Christ, by what He has done, has proved His power to do anything. I need not enlarge upon the point, but I will put it before you. There is not a life which He cannot preserve! You may cry to Him about your sick ones. You are permitted to do so. Even if they are given over by the physician, I counsel you to go to Jesus about them, though it is far better to go to Jesus before you consult the physician. We often make a mistake about the use of medicines by using medicine first. We should first go to the Lord, that we may be guided as to what medicine shall be used, what means shall be employedand trust in God to bless the means made use of for restoration. We may make idols out of physicians as much as the heathen make idols out of blocks of wood.

Medicines are right enough in their place for healing, even as bread is right for nourishment, but as men live not by bread, only, so are they not healed by medicine, only. Before we eat bread, we ask Gods blessing on that breadlet us seek a blessing on medicines whenever we use them. We are not healed by the physician, but by God who works according to His own will and pleasure! Let us, then, believe that the Christ, who has done this and that for other sick folk, can do the same for those whom we bring to Himand let us leave their cases in His hands.

But take the text spiritually. I want you to believe that Christ can preserve us spiritually from death. Are we forced by our employments into the society of the ungodly? Does Providence call some of you working men to toil side by side, or even at the same bench, with infidels? The Lord Jesus can cause that you shall not be injured by them. He can give you spiritual health and strength even when you seem to be under the most deadly influences. He that opened your eyes, when you were blind, can keep you alive, now that you can see! Trust in Him for your final perseverance with the same unquestioning faith with which you trusted in Him for the pardon of your sins. I say again, He that opened your eyes, when you were in darkness, can cause that you should not die even though the deadliest influences from the world, the flesh and the devil should be set in operation against you. Because He lives, you shall also live. Fly to Him in the time of your temptation! Cry to Him in the hour of your need and He will help you and deliver you! You shall not die, but live and declare the works of the Lord.

Beloved, what a mercy it is that we can look back upon Christs having opened the blind mans eyes and see the same thing in ourselves! Here is a blind man whose eyes Christ opened. It is yourself! He was able to give you sight and can you not transfer the argument to others? If the Lord Jesus Christ could give you sight, He can give others sight. If He opened your blind eyes, He can open the blind eyes of your children, of your unconverted father, your unsaved brothers, your unsaved sisters. Believe about your friends and cry to God about them! Take the text at once and read it soCould not this Man, who opened my blind eyes, open the blind eyes of those about whom my heart is heavy? Remember that the man who was blind, whose eyes Christ opened, was born blind. Christ can deal with original sin and constitutional sin! Some seem to have inherited a nature more wild than commontheir heart does not appear to be a heart of flesh, but a heart of stoneyet Jesus, who dealt with this strangely blind manblind from his birthcan deal with those strange sinners, those sinners of a scarlet hue who develop in their lives more of desperate viciousness than you see in others! Christ can deal with the vilest of the vile! Take them to Him, believe on account of themand be fully convinced that no case is beyond the power of the living Savior!

For my part, I never can or will despair of the salvation of one of my fellow creatures, now that I am, myself, saved. I know that there were certain traits in my character and certain elements in my disposition which made my conversion to Christ more remarkable than that of the conversion of anybody elseand so I shall have hope concerning the most blasphemous, the most obstinate, the most unbelieving! This glorious Man who, in the days of His flesh, opened the eyes of one born blindwhich thing had never been known beforecan come and deal with the very chief of sinners! Yes, with sinners that are dead in sinwith sinners that lie rotting in their lusts! He can make them to be saints! This is a fair argument. I am sure it is.   
IV. But, now, lastly, they had never thought of THE FULL AND FAITHFUL ARGUMENT from the text. All they said wasThis Man, who has opened the eyes of one born blind, could have prevented Lazarus from dying. That was a fair argument, but it was not a full argument. It never occurred to them to go further and enquire, Now that Lazarus is dead, cannot this Man raise him from the dead? The first piece of argument did not go far enough to yield any comfort because it only dealt with what might have been and what could not be!

I fear a great deal of our religion is of that kind. But what a mercy it would be if God would give some Christians six-penny-worth of commonsense! Oh, if some people could but believe what I am sure is truethat true religion is sanctified commonsensethat there is about the religion of Jesus Christ that which is just as practical as if our life were to be spent in keeping shop! True, it is spiritual and Divine, celestial and sublime, but it is as accurate as if we were to be nothing but mathematicians calculating and estimating through all our days! There is a mathematical truthfulness about our holy faith as well as a lofty, eagle-winged aspiration! So then, they should have argued thusJesus Christ, who opened this blind mans eyes, has come to a corpse in its grave and He is able to make it live.

Friend, is there laid upon your mind at this time some poor sinner who is dead in trespasses and sins? You cannot get at him. You do not know how to make him feel or think. There does not seem to be a vital spark anywhere about him and you know not how to deal with him. Believe that the Gospel is meant for such a case as this and that the living God, in Jesus Christ, by the Holy Spirit, can meet with this clay-cold dead heart! Oh, it is worse than that, you say, it is worse than that! The person I am thinking of is put out of society and is too corrupt to be spoken with. Yes, I know what you mean. Perhaps you speak of a fallen woman. We are always more eager to bury the fallen women than the fallen men. A man, of whom we must say with Martha, By this time he stinks, may still be tolerated in society. But if it happens to be a woman that sins, they cry, Bury her out of sight! Roll the stone to the mouth of the tomb! We never speak to her, or mention her! If you have an anxiety on your soul about a person who is thus shut out from society, I want you to believe that Jesus can bring out the buried and corrupt.

Oh, you say, but it is not merely that the person I think of is buried away, but the case is really one which may not be described. He has been dead four days. He has gone so far that his crime is unmentionable. I know the case. Yet you may mention it before the Lordin His Presence no harm will come of it. I do not read in the Gospel narrative of anybody being distressed by the odor when the sepulcher of Lazarus was opened. When Jesus said, Take away the stone, He knew that He had Divine disinfectants ready at hand. He knew what He did. When you seek after gross sinners, prudent people say, Well, if you go after such people as that, your own character will be injured before long. The Lord will prevent any harm coming from it, for He can speak to the most corrupt sinner and say, Live, and he shall live and then the corruption is no more!

Therefore let us drive out of our minds the notion that any sinner is too far gone for Christ to save him! I used to hear in my youth about a day of Grace, and about persons having passed that day of Grace. But I do not believe it. As long as you are in this world I am bid to preach to you, for the Gospel message is to be proclaimed to every creature and I dare not draw vain distinctions about a day of Grace. If you have a disease about you that will carry you off before the clock strikes 12 tonight, I still bid you believe in the Christ of God and live! If you are so bad in your own esteem that there never lived a worse man or a worse woman out of Hell, yet still believe in Jesus Christ! My Lord loves to save great sinners, even as He delighted to bring from the grave the long-dead Lazarus, that he might be received into the bosom of his family, to be the joy of the house and the glory of Christ!

I have not gone too far. I am sure that I have not. No, I could not go too far. The shoreless, bottomless love of my great LordI wish I had the tongues of men and angels to tell of it! You have not sinned beyond His power to save you! He is a great Savior, a mighty Savior! And His precious blood can remove all your death and corruption! When I think of those whom He has saved, I argue, Could not my Lord Jesus, who opened the eyes of the blind, make these dead sinners live?

I will tell you something else. If you yourself, tonight, are that dead sinner, I say to you, in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, Thus says the Lord, believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved. I cannot, says one, I am dead. I know that you are, but if the Lord speaks to you, you will live

and He does speak to you by this voice of mine. I speak to you in His name! You careless sinner, in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, consider your ways! You dead sinner, in the name of Jesus, live! His Spirit has gone with the word which I have spoken! The thing is done in some who have heard me and will be done in others who will read these words. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, forever and ever! Amen.

**PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMONJohn 11.** HYMNS FROM OUR OWN HYMN BOOK319, 844, 631.  
Adapted from The C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307 Sermon #3420 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

COULD HE NOT? AH! BUT HE WOULD NOT   
NO. 3420

A SERMON   
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, AUGUST 20, 1914. DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**And some of them saidCould not this Man, who opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died?   
John 11:37.**

HERE was very good reasoning. Jesus Christ had opened the eyes of the blindcould He not, therefore, have healed Lazarus of the disease which proved fatal? Of course He could! He who can avert one evil can avert another. It could have been no more difficult for Christ to have turned aside the fever, or whatever it may have been which afflicted Lazarus, than to have opened the eyes of a man who was born blind. The first was impossible, but that achieved, no difficulties remained. Impossible is a word which does not fall into language when you have to deal with Christ and, therefore, when He has once proved, by a miracle, that He is truly the Christ, then it is clear that, ever afterwards, nothing is difficult or impossible for Him.

The same Truth of God, in another shape, holds good, namely, that when Christ has conferred one blessing, He can also confer another. He is not as we are, who, with one gift, have exhausted our stock and who can only bestow good wishes afterwards because we have no more means. But Jesus Christ is just as full of power as if He had never exerted that power. And after a thousand miracles, He is just as willing and as able to bestow further favors! One evil averted is a good argument that another can beone good received is a good argument that another may be received from the same Divine hand!

Stop a minute, therefore, and encourage your hearts with such reasoning as this. The Lord that delivered you out of six troubles, can He not also deliver you out of the seventh? The Lord, who has been with you these 40 years in the wilderness, shall He leave you in this 45th or 50th year? He that has brought you thus far and bestowed upon you early tokens of His faithfulness, is it a hard thing for you to believe that He will continue to do the same? You have been preserved out of many dangerswhy not out of another? You have been provided in necessities why not be provided for again? You have been raised up when most are cast downwhy not raised up again? You have found a way out of the very depths, when the pains of Hell got hold upon you and the snares of the devil surrounded youwhy can there not be a way found for another rescue? The Lord that has done, can do, and is doing! That He has done so in the past is a guarantee that He will do so in the present and in the future! He has already made an investmentif I may so speakof His love and of His Grace and of His faithfulness upon you and He will not lose what He has already spent, but He will carry on the good work to perfection, till He shall bring you to Himself in everlasting Glory! Comfort yourself, then, Christian, with this blessed remembrance of your past experience and rest assured that this Man, who opened your eyes when you were blind, can keep your life from spiritual death! Yes, and were you dead, yet should you live by His strength, for He is able to do exceeding abundantly above what you ask, or even think!

The same encouragement may be suggested to any here who are anxious about their souls. The salvation of anyone ought to be an encouragement to any other. If God has saved one sinner, why not another? If the precious blood of Jesus has made one drunk sober, why not another? And if among the white-robed hosts there are some who had defiled their garments with the foulest stains, why should not I yet be there by the same blood-washing and the same mercy of my gracious God? He that opened the eyes of one blind man can open the eyes of all blind men if so it pleases Himand He that gives perfect pardon and acceptance to one, can give to another the same, wherever He chooses to bestow them! Let no man despair! There are examples of great sinners saved on purpose to encourage others to trust in Christ. I care not how aggravated your sins may have been, I am quite sure they have been already paralleled in some other casesin some other cases, too, where salvation has ultimately come! You are not beyond the Divine range. You have not sinned yourself yet into Hell. Mercy yet can reach you! The blood can yet cleanse you! The Divine bosom can yet receive you and even the Heaven of God can yet find room for you, though you are the chief of sinners! This is good argument, we saythis which was used by Jesus. What has been done can be done. If Christ does one form of good, He can do another. If He opens the eyes of the blind man, He can cause that the sick shall not die!

But now, after that encouragement, there comes up a great difficulty. It is certain that if Christ had willed it, Lazarus need not have died. Then Mary need not have sat still in the house weeping. Then Martha need not have said, with sorrow and with a broken heart, Lord, if You had been here, my brother had not died. There was no need that Lazarus should suffer all that pain, all that languishing and pass through the gates of the graveno absolute need for it! Christ could, if He had chosen, have prevented that man from dying and, what is more, if Christ willed it, He could prevent all your troubles and all mine. If He chose, none of His people need ever have so much as a headache, or a pins prick of the finger! They need not, one of them, ever be poor, or have any losses or any crosses. They need, none of them, ever be tempted, for He could chain up the devil. They need, none of them die, for He could take them up to Heaven, like Elijah, or translate them, like Enoch. It stands proof positive, if He could open the eyes of the blind, He could, if He would, prevent any of His people from sickness, from death and from all other ills! It were possible for Christ, if He so willed it, to avert all our sufferings and all our losses from us. Then why does He not do it? Behold how He loved him! said the Jews, and yet the next thing they said was, Well, but if He opened the eyes of the blind, could He not, if He had willed it, have prevented this mans dying? Yet He did not do itand Lazarus died.

Now, I am quite sure, Brothers and Sisters, if you had a dear one at home that was sick, and I came in to see you, and I could, with a word, raise your sick friend, I dare not go out of your room without doing it! You would feel very grieved with me if I did. You would think it very unkind and, moreover, I am sure I could not find it in my heart not to do it. Speak a word? Why, I would speak any number of words, if I could raise your sick ones from being sick, and keep them from dying! You would think me very unkind if I did not, and so these Jews could not comprehend it. They said of Christ that He burst into tears at the thought of Lazarus being dead! They said, as they saw Him in that genuine burst of sacred passion, Behold how He loved him! And they could not comprehend it, that with a power which could open the eyes of the blind, and which must be sufficient to prevent the death of Lazarus, yet He did not prevent it, but the loving Christ allowed His friend, Lazarus, to sleep till he was laid four days in the grave and His body began to stink with corruption!

Brothers and Sisters, we are now about to look the question in the faceand what shall we say about it? The first thing we shall say about it is this, that

I. IT IS NOT ALWAYS RIGHT FOR US TO MAKE ENQUIRIES AS TO THE LOVE AND THE WISDOM OF OUR LORD.  
It may seem a very strange thing to us that He does not prevent the afflictions which are so grievous, and that He does not give us some of those mercies which we think would make us so comfortable. But we have no right to ask questions. A servant must not be always asking his master, Why do you do this? Or, Why do you do that? And the scholar is not expected to understand all the doings of the professor at whose feet he sits. A master-builder would soon discharge the carpenter on the work who should always be saying, Why should that piece of timber be of that shape, or, Why must those stones be placed in such a position? The architect is supposed to know the plan, not the Irish laborer! It is enough for the architect to know, without every small body on the work understanding everything that is to be done. We are not, therefore, to be always asking questions. There is another spirit that ought to rule us, rather than the spirit of captious criticism. A man goes and takes stones, and he puts some of them into the earth, deep down. Some of them He places higher up, one upon another. Some he daubs with mortar, some he places where they cannot be seen and some he polishes and puts into the corners. Are the stones to say to the builder, Why do you place me here? Or, Why do you place me there? The potter takes his lumps of clay and puts them on his kneesand one vessel is made to dishonor and another is made a graceful form to honorbut shall the thing formed say to him who formed it, Why do you make me thus? It is not for the thing that is created to begin to question its Creator, for then the Creator might well reply, Who are you and where were you when I made the Heaven and the earth? When I balanced the clouds and laid the foundations of the earth? Declare now, if you can answer Me! That wonderful sermon from the mouth of God Himself, at the close of the book of Job rolls like crashes of thunder over our heads and makes us cower down conscious of our insignificance! And when we dare to lift up our heads once more, we find upon our lips words like those which came from the mouth of Job, I have heard of You by the hearing of ear, but now my eye sees You. Therefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes. For you and for me to think to understand God is as though some tiny insect, whose whole life was comprehended in an hour, should expect to understand the marches of the heavens and to comprehend the revolutions of the spheres! The child by your side, taking up a shell full of water, has no idea of what the sea is, and you, when you look at Gods ways, see no more of Gods ways than that little shell full, as it were, compared with the sea! Stand still and see that He is God! Let Him be exalted in the earth! Yes, let Him be exalted in the heavens! He gives no account of His matters. He does as He wills in the armies of Heaven and among the inhabitants of this lower earth. Ah, Lord, it is better for us to lie passive in Your hands than to be attempting to sit upon Your Throne, holding the balance and judging Your work! What if He does not make me rich, but lets me pine in poverty? What if He does not heal me, but allows me to linger out a life of sorrow? What if He does not bless my undertaking, but He permits heavy trials to overcome me? I will not ask Him why! I was dumb with silence. I opened not my mouth because You did itthat is the spirit in which we may look at this question. One thing more I want you to remember, and that is this

II. THAT WHATEVER GOD MAY DO OR MAY NOT DO WITH US, IT IS ALWAYS THE CHRISTIANS WISDOM TO STAND TO THISTHAT CHRIST IS ALWAYS LOVE.  
The Jews said, Behold how He loved him! They could see that by His tears, though He let him die. Now, there were good reasons, though the Jews might not see the reasons and, Brothers and Sisters, there are good reasons why God withholds that right hand of His which is so full of bounty and why at other times He does stretch it outand good reasons why He lifts that left hand of His which is so heavy to smite, and brings it down upon you, the chosen child of His heart! But do not think that Christ can be otherwise than kind? If you have trusted in Him, never believe that He can hate or forget you. Never think that He can suspend His affection towards you. No, never once will He deal with you according to any other rule than that of lovenever once! The dispensation may be very dark, but judge not by appearances. Your conscience may be very guilty, but He is greater than your guilt. Your heart may condemn you, yet can He absolve you and His love is not measured by even your consciousness of His Presence. He has forgiven you and He will not visit you in wrath for sin! No, though Satan tells you that repeated strokes must argue an angry God, he is the father of lies from the beginningbelieve not that which he suggests! It cannot be possible that God is unkind! The camels are destroyed, the oxen are stolen, the children have perished, the body is covered with sore boils, but, Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him, says the triumphant Patriarch. Shall we receive good from the hand of the Lord and shall we not receive evil? The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away, and blessed be the name of the Lord. Be then as Job was and as David was when, being about to describe the uneasiness of his mind on account of the affliction of the righteous, and the prosperity of the wicked, he began the Psalm by saying, Truly God is good to Israel, as if he started with that and nothing could ever drive him from it! Though the wicked prospered and the righteous were chastened every morning, yet God was good to His own Covenant people in the most supreme and emphatic sense! But now let us come to this question, again, for it still looks difficult. If faith makes no enquiries and resignation shall be content, still   
III. THERE IS DIFFICULTY.   
Let us see now. If Christ had prevented Lazaruss death, what would have happened? He might have done, if He had liked, but, in the first place, Christ would not have been glorified by raising Lazarus from the dead. If Lazarus does not die, he cannot be raised, and that manifestation of miraculous power could not be evinced. You will let Lazarus die, thenyou all agree to thatthat Christ may have an opportunity of raising him again. See, then, if you do not have a troubleand Christ can prevent it if He willsbut if you are not brought into trouble, you cannot have the deliverance, Christ cannot put out His hand of love to save you, if there is nothing to save you from! Oh, then, be quite content to bear trouble, in order that your blessed Lord Jesus may make Himself illustrious as He comes to you in the very nick of time and delivers you out of the depth of your distress!  
In the next place, if Lazarus had not died, Lazarus himself would not have been so honored. Everybody said afterwards, That is Lazarus whom Christ raised from the dead. He was a marked man and I am sure if you were Lazarus, you would say, Ah, well, it is worthwhile to die to be raised again to have the honor of such a favor. Now, Beloved, if you are not tried and troubled, you cannot become one of the experienced saints! It cannot be said of you by your Brothers and Sisters, That man has passed through six troubles and through seven, and yet the Lords faithfulness has been proved in them all. You will miss great pleasure if you miss great affliction! Depend upon it, you will be more a loser by missing trouble than you have ever imagined!  
In the next place, Mary and Martha would not have had such a sweet lesson from Christ. Their poor eyes were red, I doubt not with their four days weeping, and the previous days watching and nursing. But then, oh what joy they had when they saw their dear brother restored again! Such a meeting did make amends for all the grief of parting! And though they had heard the Lord Jesus talk about the resurrection and the life, they heard that dear powerful voice cry, Lazarus, come forth. Why, it was for their education, their spiritual profit and benefit that the Lord allows Lazarus to die! He might have prevented it, but they were such gainers by the affliction that it proved His love that He did not deny them the benefit of the trial!  
Mark, again, if Lazarus had not died, then those few would not have been converted because they saw Lazarus rise from the deadand it is said, Therefore, many of the Jews believed on Him. Well they might! It was a wonderful sermon to see a dead man come forth bound in his grave clothes! But how could he have thus come forth if he had not died? It was for the benefit of those spectators that the trial was allowed to come. Oh, you do not know, some of you, how many precious souls may have their destinyspeaking after the manner of menwrapped up in your affliction! There is a necessity, for the good of others, that through your testimony others may believethat you should be brought into the very depths and made to be sad, that afterwards God may interpose for your rescue!  
Yet again, the result of the resurrection of Lazarus was that our Lord rode in triumph through the streets of Jerusalem. There seems to me to be a connection between these two things. If you read the next Chapter, you find our Lord taken in triumph through the streets, with palm branches and great shouts. And probably that which moved the multitude to do it, the immediate cause, was this marvelous miracle which Christ had worked. Oh, Beloved, Christ often gets great triumph among the rolls of men from the deep trials of His people, out of which He does rescue them and shall not you and I be well content that He should stand back and hide His face and even seem to be an enemy to us, if, out of all this, His glory shall spring? If He shall get hosannas and shouting, and the waving of palm branchesand if men on earth and angels in Heaven shall do Him extraordinary homage because of the work He works in usoh, shall we not be content that our choicest joys shall wither and our best comforts for a while shall die?   
In the case of Lazarus, you can all see that though he need not have diedin one respect Christ could have kept him aliveyet it was a great proof of love on Christs part that Lazarus did die. Now, I believe that everything else that has happened in the world, if we had light enough to see it, would turn out to be the same. I know it is a difficult question, sometimes, to make out why God permits certain evils. When people say, as the Negro did, Well, now, God is greater than de devil, why dont He kill de devil? I am sure I cannot answer the question, but I am very well persuaded that if, on the whole, it would be the best thing to do, to kill the devil, He would do it! And it is, after all, in a most mysterious way, the best thing for His people, and the most glorious thing for Himself, that the devil should be permitted. The Fallwhat a mysterious thing that is! It might have been prevented. I cannot hold any limit to the Omnipotence of Godif He had willed it, there need not have been a Fall. Then why did He permit it? I reply to that in the same spirit. I do not know, and I do not want to knowbut I think I can see such a display of Divine Mercy, and Love and Grace, and every other attribute, in the redemption of our Lord Jesus Christ, that the Fall, terrible thing as it was, seems to be a grand platform on which the Glory of God could be displayed!   
When the Lord brought His people out of Egypt, they might have gone right straight to Canaan. Why did He not take them there at once? Why did He make them go round by the Red Sea and come to that difficult place? Whywhy did He not, indeed? They would not have had half the fears, nor half the terrors. No, but then remember, there would not have been so many Egyptians drowned. And there would not have been such grand shouts, nor such sweet clashing of Miriams cymbals, nor such beating of timbrels, nor such dancing of nimble feet. And they would not have said, Sing unto the Lord, for He has triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider, He has cast into the sea! All the difficulty only led to a greater triumph! God was glorified! His enemies were put to confusion and His peoples memories were stored with thoughts of the mighty works of God which might stimulate their faith as long as the world should stand. It is best as it is. God orders all things right, after all, and though He might prevent this, and does not, and He might give us that, and does not, we believe it is all for the best and bow our heads, and wait till the light shines, that we may understand more of the reason why.   
Now, Beloved, the point I want to come to is thisdepend upon it, that as I have proved in the case of Lazarus, it was the best thing that the worst thing should happenso it is in your case! You are in trouble tonight. Now, Christ could have prevented it, could have carried you to Heaven on a featherbed if He had chosen. He could have made you ride to Heaven all the way in a chariot that never joltedon a paved road right straight up to Paradise, without a single rut, or any stones on it but He chose not to do so. Now   
IV. LET US SEE IF WE CANNOT FIND A REASON.   
If we cannot, it will not matter if you believe it is right. Still we will try. The roughness of the road that you are travailing now, may it not be necessary to wean you from this world? Oh, but the goods of this world are like bird lime to birdsthey stick to our feet and keep us from mounting towards Heaven. Ah, said one, as he looked abroad on his gardens and house and park, these are the things that make it hard to die. Yes, and these are the things that make it hard to live near to God! When a mans heart begins to be content with the things of this world. When he finds his satisfaction

here, he is not inclined to look up to his God. Now, perhaps you are one of that kind that could not bear too much prosperity. Every gardener will tell you that there are some of his flowers that he cannot put in the glare of the sun, for they would never do there. So with youyou grow better in the shade. Your nearness to Heaven and your souls health require this affliction.   
Besides, may it not be that this affliction is sent on purpose to try your faith because it is weak? What? you say, Try my faith because it is weak? I thought you would have said not try it because it is weak. Ah, but faith grows by trial. When faith is weak, a too heavy trial would crush it, but a suitable trial is ruled by God for the strengthening of it. You mustyou must grow! The Lord would not have His children be stunted and dwarfedand this trial is sent that you may be made to grow.   
Further, you may not only be made to grow in faith this way, but also in close communion with your God. I have read lately one old Puritan whose opinion is that we never grow, except in affliction. I could not endorse that, but I am afraid there is a great deal of truth in it, for almost all the sunshiny days we have, we waste, and when God is very gracious to us in temporals, we generally find that these lean cattle of our ingratitude will eat up the fat cattle of Gods mercies! We grow best, depend upon it, when the wind blows us away from our natural havens to the great Port of Peace which is found in communion with God in Christ Jesus! When our soul has nowhere else to fly to for shelter, she flies to Christ. When she sees all her crutches and all her props broken away, and all her foundations made to reel, then she casts her arms about her own dear Lord and there she hangs in rapture and simple child-like love and confidence! And she is brought nearer to God than she ever was by the strength of her trialsand that is always a Divine result, a Divinely valuable result. It is a great mercy, if nothing else should come of ita great mercy to have troubles if they should have this result!   
Brothers and Sisters, if Christ would, He could prevent our having affliction, but He will not prevent them because He wants to make something of us. For instance, He wants to make some of us to be comforters to others, but how can you comfort others in trouble when you have never experienced the like? Oh, what poor hands some of us make in trying to comfort some of Gods saints who have been in much deeper water than we have ever sailed on! Why, we find they look upon us as mere boys and wonder how we have the impertinence to bring consolation to them! But when we can say, I have just experienced the very trial you are now passing throughand the Lord sanctified it and supported me under it. then the mourner opens wide his ears and the soul receives our comfort as though it were honey dropping from the comb!   
My dear Brothers and Sisters, you will never be qualified to understand and explains some of the promises without trials. Some of Gods promises cannot be read except by the firelight of affliction. There is a kind of invisible ink that people sometimes use, which does not show till you hold it to the fireand some of the promises seem to be written in that kind of ink. You do not understand them until you get a trial, but in the trial you find out that God has fitted every word of the consolation to the Providence in which He has placed you. But, indeed, my Brothers and Sisters, when I consider the infinite variety of blessings which come to us drawn by the team of black horses that our Father always keeps for this purpose. When I consider how God is glorified by the endurance of the saints and by the Divine Graces which they receive in consequence of tribulation. When I consider how their joy will be swollen at the last, when they come to their rest, by the remembrance of their pilgrimage here below, I can but think that it is a fine mark of special mercy that God does not allow His people to go into the fat fields of unbroken prosperity, but into the fields of trial and of troublethat they may be enriched and that their souls may be established.  
Come then, let every murmuring thought be gone! Let every dark suspicion be discarded. Let us kiss the hand that smites us, and look up to our Fathers face, even when He chastens us! And in this way we shall soon find the trial turn to joy, the bitter cup will become sweet and resignation will sweeten all!   
If these words shall have ministered any consolation to Gods suffering ones, my heart shall be glad. I sometimes need such thoughts, myself, and there are times when if I could have them spoken to me by somebody else, they would be to me like the paths of God which drop with fatness. Now there may be some of youI know you are tried and troubledto whom this will be just the very word. If so, do not let Satan take it away from you. Do lay hold of it by faith and feed upon it with joy and comfort. Yes. Comfort you, comfort you, My people, says your God. Speak comfortably unto Jerusalem. So I would that you may be happy and a rejoicing people in the midst of all your troubles.   
But, alas, this does not belong to all of you. It is only comfort to those who belong to Christsome of you do not belong to Him and have never trusted Him. The Lord bring you this very night to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ! Those about to be baptized say to you tonight, We avow ourselves to be Believers in Jesus! We are buried in water to show that we desire to be dead to all the world and buried in the death of Christ. We rise out of it to show that we desire to live in newness of life by the quickening power of the Resurrection of Christ.   
You will have no right to this ordinance until you have trusted the Savior. When you have trusted Him. When you have relied fully upon Him. When He becomes All-in-All to you, then may you take the sign, because the thing signified is yours!   
May the Lord bless you, for Jesus sake.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **PSALM 119:25-40.**

By the help of Gods Holy Spirit, this Psalm may serve for the purposes of self-examination, for we may ask ourselves as we read, Do I feel that way? Are my prayers like those of this good man? Is my experience like his? We may often ask ourselves, Am I as watchful, as careful and as fond of Gods Word as he was? Such questions will do us good.

Verse 25. My soul cleaves unto the dust: quicken You me according to Your Word. He does not like to feel the cleaving of his soul to the dust. There are some that feel it, and they seem content to continue in that condition. But no sooner does David feel it than he cries Quicken You me. A sense of sin is of small value unless it leads us to desire to escape out of it. Quicken You me. I lie as dead as if it were dust to dust. My soul seems cleaving to it, as if it had come to its own, and meant to rest there! But, Lord, give me life. Your Word promises me life. You have ways laid down in Your Word for giving life. Quicken You me according to Your Word.

26. I have declared my ways, and You heard me: teach me Your statues. I have told you all about myself. Now tell me about Yourself. Teach me Your statutes.

27. Make me to understand the way of Your precepts: so shall I talk of Your wondrous works. It is a bad thing to talk of what we do not understand. And he who shall preach what he has never experienced is very likely to do so. Yet Beloved, there is no understanding Gods precepts except He shall teach them to us. We are void of understanding. He must enlighten. He must instruct. Make me to understand the way of Your precepts. Some are very anxious to understand the doctrines, and some to understand the prophecies. All well and good, but, Make me to understand the way of Your precepts. Give me practical godliness. Help me to live to Your praise, so shall I talk of Your wondrous works. I will not talk till You have taught me. But when You have taught me, then my subject shall be Your wondrous works. The wondrous work of making me to understandYou shall be something to speak about! And all the wondrous works of Nature, Providence and Grace shall be the subject of my continual conversation.

28. My soul melts for heavinessFor the best of men sometimes suffer the sharpest sorrows. Hearts of stone are not likely to be so sensitive as hearts of flesh. My soul melts for heaviness.

28. Strengthen You me according unto Your Word. He wants strength, but he does not want to obtain it in any way but the way of Gods appointment. According unto Your Word. Somewhat like our hymn, which says

*He that suffered in my stead,   
Shall my physician be.   
I will not be comforted   
Till Jesus comforts me.*

Strengthen You me, but let it be according to Your Word. 29. Remove from me the way of lying: and grant me Your Law gracious  
ly. Let me not lie. Let me not be tempted to lie. Let me not be pestered  
with the lies of others. Remove the way of lying far from me and oh, by  
Your Grace, give me to know the Law. That is a remarkable combination  
of words. Grant me Your Law graciously. Has Law anything to do with   
Grace? Yes, such a Law as he speaks ofthe Law in the heartthe Law   
in the hand of Christthe Law written in the life of the Believernot the   
law of merit and of Salvation by works, but, grant me Your Law graciously.

30. I have chosen the way of truth: Your judgments have I laid before me. As a seaman spreads out the chart before him, that he may follow the right channel and not miss his trackas a traveler spreads out his map that he may keep to the right way. I have chosen the way of truth. Your judgments have I laid before me.

31. I have stuck unto Your testimonies. As if I were glued to them sealed to them. They said I was very old-fashioned. They said I did not keep pace with the times. They said I was not a man of thought. I did not care about that. I have stuck unto Your testimonies.

31. O LORD, put me not to shame. And He never will! If we stick to Him, we may be quite sure that we shall come forth out of every difficulty and every opposition triumphantly!. Put me not to shame. And although he thus spoke, yet you perceive the activity of his soul.

32. I will run the way of Your commandments, when You shall enlarge my heart. Give my heart freedom. Knock off my fetters. Take away my heaviness. Remove from me my ignorance. Give my soul room and she will run, but it will be in the ways of Your commandments.

33. Teach me, O LORD, the way of Your statutes, and I shall keep them unto the end. Here is the art of finally persevering. Here is the way of continuing to the endand the same shall be saved. We must begin with a teachable spirit. He that is not willing to learn, has not begun a right. We ought to disciple all nations, but he who will not learn is not yet discipled. Teach me. But the teaching we must have must come from God. Teach me, O Lord. I am not content to have the Word secondhand. Be You my schoolmaster. Teach me, O Lord. I shall never learn unless You teach me. You who did make me. You who did give me a new heart. You must write that Law upon my heart, or it will never be written there. Teach me, O Lord. Teach me the way of Your statutes. Teach me practical godliness. So teach it to me that I stall learn it and put it into practice. And if I am taught of You, then I shall keep it unto the end.

34. Give me understanding and I shall keep Your Law: yes, I shall observe it with my whole heart. A want of understanding is a very great lack. There is little wonder that men turn aside from an outward religion which has never taken possession of their thoughts and minds. If they only subscribe to the creed which they have never studied. If they only carry out a lifethe mere shell of a lifethe inward principles of which they do not know, they will soon turn aside. Give me understanding and I shall keep Your Law.

35. Make me go in the path of Your commandments; for therein do I delight. Not only teach me the way, but make me go in it! Take hold of me as a mother does her little child, and teach me how to walk and help me in the walking. Make me go. It is a feeble worda most expressive prayer. Make me go, for therein do I delight. When a man delights in Gods way, he will be sure to be made to go in it.

36. Incline my heart unto Your testimonies. Bend it that wayincline it.   
36. And not to covetousness. For, naturally, my heart would go after the world and cleave to its riches, its treasures, and begin to covet! But, Lord, bend it the other way. If you do not love Gods testimonies, the tendency will be to become a lover of the world. Incline my heart unto Your testimonies and not to covetousness.   
37. Turn away my eyes from beholding vanity. Or, make my eyes to pass from beholding vanity. I am a runner in the race. Do not let me stop to look at anything, but may my eyes pass by vanity. Let me not be like she in the fable who paused to gather the golden apples in the race and so lost it and was deceived. If the worlds golden apples are thrown in my way, make my eyes to pass from beholding vanity.   
37. And quicken You me in Your way. More life towards You will deaden me to the world. The more I follow after God, the less shall I care to follow after the world.   
38. Establish Your Word unto Your servant. Make it fast, firm, sure.   
38. Who is devoted to Your fear. I am established in You. Establish the Word in me. You have bound me fast to Your altar. Oh, give me the fast blessings and sure mercies of David!  
39. Turn away my reproach which I fear: for Your judgments are good. I fear lest I bring a reproach upon You, and then upon myself. Oh, suffer me not to do so! I am not afraid of the reproach of the world. I count the reproach of Christ greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt. But, oh, let them never have to charge me with sin and let me not fall into such pecuniary difficulties or other troubles, that men will be able to make a charge against me out of them. Help me to provide things honest in the sight of all men. Take away my reproach, which I fear, for Your judgments are good.   
40. Behold, I have longed after Your precepts: quicken me in Your righteousness.

Adapted from the C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Version 1.0, Ages Software.   
PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #1052 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

THE SPHERE OF INSTRUMENTALITY   
NO. 1052

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, MAY 26, 1872, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**Jesus said, Take away the stone.   
John 11:39.   
Jesus said to them, Loose him, and let him go.   
John 11:44.**

THERE lay Lazarus in the grave, dead. His restoration to life was utterly hopeless upon any ordinary principles. Certainly Lazarus could not raise himself! His affectionate sisters could not, with all their weeping, give him a resurrection nor could the disciples call back the departed spirit and reanimate the decaying corpse. If was a hopeless case, for who could revive a dead man who had lain in the grave so long that he had begun to stink?

This is a parallel case with that of every unconverted sinner in the world. He is dead in trespasses and sinsnot a little sick or somewhat wounded, or in a swooning fitbut spiritual death reigns over him. The sinner never gives life to himself. The thing is inconceivable. There are persons who imagine that the natural will of man sometimes inclines towards good, but, alas, this flattering supposition is far from the fact. Jesus said, You will not come unto Me, that you might have life. Neither will they come, now, any more than they did then! Until we see dead men raising themselves, we do not expect to meet with sinners who have spontaneously and without Divine assistance turned themselves towards righteousness.

Neither can relatives or friends regenerate the soul in which they take an interest, nor can the most earnest ministers bestow the quickening spirit. Those whom God has blessed in other instances are yet quite powerless in any fresh case unless the same power shall again be put forth through them. Death is a terrible picture of our natural state, but it is by no means an exaggerated one. The whole world lies before us as a valley of dry bones, according to Ezekiels vision, and if ever the dry bones are to live, it will not be through an energy innate within themselves nor through a power resident in the most zealous of men, nor through any might which even a Prophet could exert apart from God.

Education cannot develop life out of death. Persuasion cannot excite it. Reasoning cannot infuse itthe Divine arm must be revealed, or the case is past hope. Jesus must come to the tomb of Lazarus and His voice must cry, Lazarus, come forth, or else the corpse shall remain inanimate and increase in putrefaction. All that can be done by mortal man may be done, but nothing will be effected unless Jesus, who is the Resurrection and the Life, shall speak the quickening word! In His Omnipotent voice lies the power, but only there.

Now, let this be taken as a plain statement of our belief as to the Lords work in salvation, and taken without any mitigation or dilution. We believe that in every case, salvation is of the Lord alone and altogether! Regeneration is a supernatural work. Man must be bornagain from aboveany power short of that from Heaven will be ineffectual. The new creation is as much and entirely the work of God as the old creation

*Can anything beneath a power Divine   
The stubborn will subdue?   
Tis Your Eternal Spirit, Yours*

*To form the heart anew.   
To chase the shades of death away,   
And bid the sinner live!   
A beam of Heaven, a vital ray   
Tis Yours alone to give.*

And, having said this, we proceed to bear witness that what can be done by us ought to be done, since what can be done by man will not be done by Christ. It is a rule with our Lord never to work needless miracles. Indeed, He only begins the miraculous when the ordinary means can go no further. He follows the ordinary up to its verge, and then the extraordinary comes in. If a multitude are to be fed, so long as there are barley loaves and fishes to be had, Jesus will use them. He will multiply them and make them go further than they naturally could, but He will use them as far as they will go. Had there been neither loaf nor fish I do not doubt He would have commenced with an act of creation, but as it was, since there were a few loaves and fishes, He does not ignore them, but makes them the basis of a work of multiplication.

What a man can do for himself God will not do for him, and what Christian people can do for sinners they must not expect the Lord to do they must work themselves according to the ability God has given them up to the point of possibilityand then they may look for Divine interposition. Observe in this instance that there was a stone before the mouth of the cave in which Lazarus was interred. Could not our Lord have removed that stone with a word? Could not He have said, Be you removed, O stone, and it would have been done?

Yes, He could have consumed the stone with a glance if He had so minded. But He did not choose to do so, because the bystanders were quite competent to take away the stone. Therefore He said to them, Take away the stone. And when Lazarus was raised, when he had come forth from the niche in which his friends had laid him, he was enshrouded with the cerements of the tomb. Rolls of linen were about his body, and a napkin wrapped around his headand Jesus did not, by Divine power, remove the vestments of the grave.

It would have been, if miracles may be compared, a smaller miracle to loose the living with a word than it was to quicken the dead, but since it could be done without a miracle, it must be done without a miracle. And Jesus said to those who stood by, Loose him, and let him go. The analogy teaches us that there are some things which we can do for the unconverted, and we are bound to do themand there are certain other things in which we can aid those who are newly convertedand these we should hasten to perform. While we look alone to the life-giving Lord to quicken the soul, we do not fold our arms in indifference or excuse ourselves from all effort upon the ground of inabilitywe are on the watch to see where instrumentality is applicable, and ready at all times to be made useful wherever we can be.

We cannot turn the dry bones into living men, but we can prophesy to them, and, blessed be God, we can also prophesy to the four winds and so, by our means, the dead may live! The sphere of human action in connection with regeneration is my subject this morning. Help us, O Divine Spirit! First, there are some things which we can do for the unconverted before they are quickened. He said, Take away the stone. Secondly, there are some things which we can do for them after they have been quickened. He said, Loose him, and let him go.

I. First, then, dear Brethren, THERE ARE SOME THINGS WHICH WE CAN DO FOR THE UNCONVERTED BEFORE THEIR QUICKENING. I am sure, if our hearts are right, all that can be done we are most anxious to do. Jesus Christ is our Model, and observe how He labored in the work of blessing the sons of men! In this case He took a long journey. He wept. He groaned. He was troubled in spirit. He prayed and then He spoke with a loud voice. True picture of what every Christian should be, and especially every Christian minister. We should journey after souls! We should weep over their ruined estate! We should groan for them and be troubled at heart on their account! We should be incessant in our prayers and when God speaks through us to the awaking of the dead, it should not be with unearnest tones, but with a voice tender with love and vehement with zeal.

We are to be imitators of Christ in this. We ought to throw our whole heart into the blessed work which He honors us to do in His name. Brethren, all of us can do for the ungodly what the sisters did for their brother. Mary and Martha called in the Master to minister to their sorrow. Being well-assured when their brother was ill that they had no more sympathizing or able Friend in all the world than the Master whom they loved, they sent a message to Jesus. And though they did not send another afterwards, yet I doubt not they felt that the one sufficed. So you and I ought, in the case of all the unconverted over whom our spirit yearns, to call the Savior to the rescue. Let us send a message to Him about them.

You may word it in some such terms as theseO Lord, I grieve to tell you that my dear child is still unsaved. Or thusLord, You know Your servants heart breaks because my wife, or my husband, is still unconverted. Or, you may put it thusO Savior, You know that in my Sunday school class the children are not yet brought to You. Or, I may send it as my messageMy God, You know I have preached to many of these people for many years, and yet they still remain unmoved and abide strangers to You. We must earnestly intercede with the Lord for souls! Jesus is the Wonder-Worker. He is the Resurrection and the Life, and our wisdom is to lay hold upon His strength and beseech Him to reveal His saving might!

In addition to this we must, then, express our confident faith in Jesus, that even now whatever He will ask of God, God will give it to Him. We must believe that He is able to raise the spiritually dead. We must never allow ourselves to despair of any person, since the matter is in the hands of an Almighty Savior. Though the sinner by this time stinks and has become immoral, as well as unholy, yet it is not too late to ask the Lord Jesus to work. We ought never to say of any person, It would be vain for us to labor for his conversion, he is so vicious as to be incapable of Divine Grace. We are not thus to forestall mans condemnation, but rather to obey the Masters message and go into all the world with good news for every creature, for the Gospel is without limitation when it declares, He that believes and is baptized shall be saved. Beloved, have faith in the Lord Jesus! Tell Him how desperate the case is for you, but say to Him, Lord, it is not impossible with You. Assure Him that while you feel yourself to have no power, you are sure that one single word from Him will accomplish all that your soul desires. Now, every Believer can do thisGod helping us we can repair by faith to the Lord Jesus.

But our first text indicates yet more clearly the line of our capacity. Jesus employed others in the rolling away of the stone. You cannot make the dead live, but you can take the stone away from the mouth of their sepulcher. Let us speak of certain stones which we should, with all diligence, remove. The first is the stone of ignorance. This heavy weight lies at the mouth of many a spiritual grave at this day. I think we take for granted too high an attainment of knowledge among the people at this present time. I am sure that many sermons are preached to people as though they perfectly understood the plan of salvation, whereas, if the preacher did but know his hearers better, he would discover that even upon the elements of the Gospel of Christ many of them are deplorably ignorant.

In fact, I fear that the elementary truths of Christianity are not preached sufficiently often because too much is taken for granted. It is to be feared that the alphabet of the Gospel is unknown to thousands whose teachers are trying to instruct them in the classics of theologya waste of effort and a dangerous experiment. Why, in this city of London you shall find persons who frequent Protestant places of worship who yet believe in salvation by their own works and are horrified at justification by faith! You shall discover, if you go among the masses, an indifference to salvation so great as to be appalling, and this originates largely in ignorance. Salvation? Why thousands do not know what you mean by the term, and here, in this century of light and advancement as we boastfully call it, gross darkness covers the minds of a large proportion of our countrymen!

Brethren, the time has not come for you to cease distributing the most plain tracts. The time has not arrived for you to be silent at the street corners even upon the first principles of the faith. You must still proclaim Atonement by the sacrifice of Christ, and the simple doctrine of Justification by Faith. Possibly there may come an age when it will be wise to expatiate mainly upon the deep things of God, but for this present distress we may wisely give our whole strength to telling out the foundation factthat Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. Our sermons must repeat times out of number the story of the Cross.

The hymns most commonly sung should be of the same order as Rock of ages, cleft for me. Jesus, lover of my Soul. Come, you sinners, poor and wretched. and Just as I am, without one plea. We have even need of such simple ditties asI do believe, I will believe, that Jesus died for me. For upon that point ignorance and unbelief still cloud the mass of the people among whom we dwell. Let not the people be destroyed for lack of knowledge! Let none go down to Hell because they know not of a Savior. Let me say here that even with those who have heard the Gospel well preached, this ignorance may still remainas it did in my own case.

I believe if I had known that all I had to do was to look to Christ and I should live. If I had really understood that there was nothing for me to be, nor feel, nor dobut I had only to rest in a finished work and take from Gods mercy that which Christ had completedI think if I had known that Truth of God, I should have found peace with God much earlier. But I did not understand the Gospel, and therefore remained in distress of mind. Do, then, tell everybody about Jesus! Tell them of the Son of God made flesh! Tell them about Substitution! Speak the word plainly. Tell them

*He bore that we might never bear   
His Fathers righteous ire.*

Assure them that whoever believes in Him is not condemned, and that to believe is to trust. Open up that word, for even plain and simple words get to be technical and men dream that there is some other meaning in them than that which they ordinarily have. You cannot put the Gospel too plainly, but anyway, put it before them, and then roll away this stone from the mouth of the sepulcher.

Alas, a second stone is often there, namely that of absolute error. The mind without knowledge is not good, for if we sow not wheat, weeds will assuredly spring up. Men ignorant of Gods righteousness always go about to establish their own righteousness in some way or other. Thousands think that if they are sober, honest, upright, and so on, they have done all that is required of them. They assume at least a little spice of attendance at Church or Chapel, and just a little addition of religious ceremonies may eke out any deficiencies of their practice. And, certainly, to call in a clergyman or minister when they shall lie dying, and to have prayers said or read to them will complete the structure which they have themselves begun.

Brothers and Sisters, this great stone covers many an Englishmans grave! Seek to roll it away! Bear your own personal protest against the idea that the Law of God will ever be satisfied by an imperfect obedience. Teach men that Gods commandments are exceedingly broad, that they deal with the thoughts and intents of the heart as well as with mens outward actions. And when they see this, perhaps they will perceive the impossibility of ever keeping the Law of God and they will leave off attempting to work out salvation by an obedience of their own. Show them plainly, lovingly, tenderlybut honestlythat by the works of the Law there shall no flesh be justified, for by the Law is the knowledge of sin.

You know well, my Brethren, that there are attempts made continually to place a huge stone of error over mens minds in the form of Sacramentarianism. Regeneration, to what do they degrade it? They make it a ceremony in which drops of water effect marvels! Feeding upon Christ, what is that with these men? It is nothing but the eating of bread and drinking of wine. They put ceremonial foolishnesses into the place of spiritual truths! They steal the substance, and, as a substitute they do not even give us so fair a shadow as that of the days of Moses! They give a mere smokea shade of a shade, rather blinding to the eyes than suggestive to the mindand yet myriads of our fellow men are quite content with such vanities! They suppose that there is some mystic efficacy in outward rites. Tell them, oh, tell them, that

*Not all the outward forms of earth,   
Nor rites that God has given, or will of man, Nor blood, nor birth,   
Can raise a soul to Heaven.*

Declare the need of Divine Grace and the uselessness of outward show. Point out the spirituality of acceptable worship and the childishness of ritualism. You will have done good service if you roll away this huge obstruction.

Very frequently the sepulcher of mens souls is closed up by the stone of prejudice. Men cannot really find anything faulty in Christ Jesus, or in His Gospel, but still they will persist in stumbling at this stumbling stone. They invent reasons for declining the Gospel invitation. They prejudge the Revelation of God and make up their minds that it is unworthy of their acceptation. They shut their eyes and then are obstinate in their assertion that there is no light. For instance, how common is the notion that religion is associated with melancholy? In every sphere of life you will find a number of persons who fight shy of understanding religion because they believe it to be the mother of mental miseries. They quote someone who went insane and took to Biblical speculationsand another who is morose, and yet is a great stickler for devotion.

They infer that religion is the science of making long faces, the art of being gloomy. Therefore men refuse to be soured by crabbed divinity, and decline to imitate the morose and melancholy Puritans. An amazing mistake, that, about the Puritans, for there is evidence enough, and more than enough, to show that they were among the most happy of men with a robust joy to which the Cavaliers noisy mirth was mere froth. At this present moment if you desired to find a happy people, I would advise you to search in the Church of God for them! It were a strange thing if to have ones sins forgiven would make one unhappy! It were a very odd thing if being at peace with God caused a man to be wretched! It were a very turning of the world upside down if the possession of a good hope of Heaven should be the source of gloom in the soul!

And it is not so. Brethren, by your continual happiness and manifest cheerfulness, roll away this stone, and especially remove it from the minds of young people. Make them see, in the brightness of your countenance, the practical answer to the common calumny. Convince them that you have an inward joy which they do not understand. Tempt them, as it were, to Christ, by telling them of the sweetness which you experience in Him. Many have the notion, too, that true religion makes a man unmanly and effeminate. Perhaps certain professors have lent a color to this charge by affectation of manners and absence of common sense. Certain religionists are always dwelling upon the must nots of religion, as if godliness was a set of negatives, a garden enclosed with thorns!

The manufacture of new commandments is a very fascinating occupation for some people. You must not do this, and that, and the other, till one feels like a baby in leading strings. I find ten commandments are more than I can keep without a great deal of Grace, and I do not mean to pay the slightest regard to any beyond. Liberty is the genius of our faith, nor do we mean to barter it away for the esteem of modern Pharisees. They say to us, You shall not laugh on Sunday. You shall never create a smile in the House of God. You shall walk to public service as though you were going to the whipping post, and you shall take care when you preach that you always make your discourse as dull as it can possibly be.

We do not reverence these precepts! Anything which is of God we honor, but not the sickening decrees of cant. We are men, and not slaves. Our manhood is not annihilated by Grace. We think, and speak, and act for ourselves and are not the serfs of custom and fashion. We speak our minds even when propriety is shocked and respectability is enraged. I would always give to young men this piece of adviceQuit yourselves like men, let nobody have to say that your religion is mamby-pamby, and your conversation affected. Do not be always sugaring every person you speak of as, Dear this, and, Dear that, for this savors of nauseous hypocrisy! Do not whine or turn up your eyes, or affect to be very devout. Be holy, but not showytrue, but not obtrusive. Be men, be manly, be Christians, be like Christ! He was the very highest type of man! You never see anything stilted or unnatural in Him. He is always Himself, transparent, outspoken, brave, honest, true, and manly. Redeem religion from the reproach of stiltedness and so roll away one of the stones from the sepulcher.

Some, we know, have a notion that religion is a mere sentiment. They think that it is only about being affected about your dead children and your parents in Heavenin weeping over death-bed scenes. In fact, it is best seen in excited meetings and their consequent emotions. Religion is judged by worldlings to consist in womanly feeling, to have no truth, no facts, no philosophy at its back. Oh, but it is not so! We can give as good a reason for the hope that is in us as though our religion never brought a tear to our eye and never stirred the emotion of joy within our souls. I venture to say it, that our religion is as much based on facts as astronomy or geologyI mean indisputable historical facts! And I assert that the doctrines of Revelation are Truths of God as certain as the demonstrations of mathematics!

The Gospel reveals certainties and they are worthy of the contemplation of men of the most enlarged minds. Our Gospel is not mere platitude and baby talkthere is a depth in it which no intellect can fathom. Titanic intellects have found their match in the things of God. The genius of Newton and Locke did not complain of need of room in the wondrous Truths of Godto them they were waters to swim in. There is room for all the high culture, and all the thought and all the training that this world shall ever see! Room for it, yes, and at its utmost it shall only stand upon the shore of the main ocean of Divine Truth and cry, O the depths of the wisdom of the Lord! By intelligently setting forth the great matters of the Gospel, let us roll this stone away, for to some it has been a crushing obstruction.

Very commonly among our working classes another stone lies over their graves, namely, the opinion that the Gospel is not for the likes of them. I have frequently heard it expressed by them that it is very proper, indeed, for ladies and gentlemenpersons of money and leisure, to be religiousbut it is quite out of the question for a man who has to earn his living and tuck up his shirt sleeves to hard work. Why, they say, what have dockyard laborers, cabdrivers, and costermongers to do with religion?

Now, of all the strange prejudices in existence, this is one of the strangest because from time immemorial it has been the boast of the Gospel that, the poor have the Gospel preached to them. If there is one class of the population to whom the Gospel is gladder tidings than to any other, it is to them that labor and are heavy laden! Why, dear Friends, if you have little in this life, that is the more reason why you should seek the boundless treasures of the life to come! And if you have much trouble and sorrow here, the more reason why you should seek Christ to be the balm of all your wounds and the cordial of your cares! Christianity drew its Apostles from the working classes, and from the same source it has gathered numberless martyrs. Though the Lord has had a remnant in the upper ranks, yet it has still been true, that, not many great men after the flesh, not many mighty are chosen.

The great mass of Christian discipleship has been taken from among the poor and the working men. Besides, Christ is the peoples Christ. What a grand sentence is that of the Psalm, I have exalted One chosen out of the people. Jesus is the peoples Man by birth, by education, and by sympathy! He was ordained of God to be a Leader and Commander for the people. Jesus Christ is just such a Friend as the people need! Tell the people thisespecially you who belong to them and know it! Make your houses preaching places to your fellow workmen, and make your conduct a constant sermon upon the adaptation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to their needs! So much for the stone of prejudice. I must pass on.

Frequently, over the graves of spiritually dead persons, there lies a stone of solitariness. They feel as if no man cared for their soul. I have known that happen in this Tabernacle. Persons have come in for months and nobody has spoken to them because they were strangersand therefore the Gospel did not enter into their hearts because they said, The Church of God does not care for uswe are unknown and unvalued. Half a word from some kind Christian sitting near them has been the means of melting them down, and the very next sermon they have heard has been in Gods hands the means of bringing them to Christ!

In this city a man may lose himself more effectually than he could in the desert of Sahara. You may get away into one of our streets, yes, and work in one of our factories, and nobody will interest himself about you. While happily few pry into their neighbors affairs, unhappily few have any sympathy for their neighbors griefs. Hearts may be breaking around us and we may be as merry as May. Children of God, I charge you in the name of the quickening Savior, never let this stone lie two Sundays together over the grave of a single attendant of this house! Prove to those who sit with you here that you have a loving care for their souls!

Another stone that can be rolled away is that of degradation. Some bring themselves into the ditch by their sins. They break the rules of society, they become dangerous, and, at length are treated as outcasts. When a person feels himself outlawed, there is little hope of raising him. Many sink themselves to poverty by their vices and extravagances, and thousands degrade themselves by abominable drunkenness. The Christian Church does well when it rises its utmost power to deliver the drunkard from his besetting sin. Temperance will not suffice

instead of godliness, but it may put men in the way of Gospel influences. God forbid we should stop short in any reforms, for these will only roll away the stone from the grave, but yet, let no stone remain!

Many a man has first been delivered from the habit of intoxication and then his ears have been opened to listen to the Truth as it is in Jesus. The poor harlot, too, when Christian love has followed her and spoken to her of our Father who is in Heaven who bids the wandering return to Himhow often have her feelings of degradation been overcome and she has fled to Christ for mercy! Brothers and Sisters, none are outcasts to us! If the world says to the fallen, Get out of here, you are not good enough for us, let the Church of God open her door and invite the outcasts in! The Church is the true Hospital for incurables, among whom Jesus delights to work! Those whom the world calls lepers and drives away into contempt, it is our glory to restore! Come here, you chief of sinners, for Jesus waits to receive you! Do not tarry, for you, and such as you He came to save! The Pharisees repel you, but this Man receives sinners and eats with them!

We will mention one more stone, and that is despair. Some men are not only spiritually dead, but they are buried fathoms deep in despair. They have signed their own death warrants, though the Lord has not yet written them out. You people of God, look out for those who think themselves beyond all hopeand when you meet with them argue the point with them! Tell them that you were once in the same plight as they are and show them what Grace did for you. Point them to the promises of God which are so suitable to their condition. Above all, tell them of the precious Savior who does not quench the smoking flax, and who is able to save to the uttermost them that come unto God by Him. You will have done good service if in any case you roll away the stone of despair.

I exhort you, dear fellow laborers in Christ, yourselves saved, to do all that lies in you to take away every one of these hindrances from sinners souls, and then pray the Lord to speak the quickening Word!

II. But my time goes too swiftly, and therefore I must come to my second point with brevity. AFTER A MAN IS CONVERTED he labors under many disabilities, and Christian love should help him. When lambs are born the shepherd takes care of them. Christs word is, Feed My lambs. When plants are put into the ground they must be watered. It is not enough that the child is bornit needs a mothers care. Take this child and nurse it for me, and I will give you your wages, is Gods word to His people whenever a new convert is born into the Church.

Lazarus is alive, but he is encumbered with grave clothes and it is the business of those who are his friends to loose him and let him go. New converts need loosing for the sake of their own comfort. It was a very uncomfortable thing for Lazarus to be tied up in his winding-sheetsfor his own ease they must be taken off. When a man is saved, perhaps he does not grasp all that is involved in salvation. He thinks, I am a Christian, but I may fall from Grace. Unwrap that band at once and let him know that the Lord does not cast away His people whom He did foreknow.

The new Christian, I say, thinks that he is pardoned, but that some sin may still remain upon him. Unwind that cerement! Let him know that the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. Perhaps he fancies, when he feels a strife within him, that he cannot be a child of God. Tear off that bandage and tell him that all the children of God experience an inward strife and feel a battle raging between life and death within their souls! You will find young converts apt to be the victims of doubts and fearsperplexing themselves about this, and fretting themselves about that! And you who are instructed in the faith must lay out yourselves to loose them, and let them go! They need, also, loosing for their own freedom. Lazarus might as well be in the cave as be in bonds. Men may be converted and yet be far from enjoying the full liberty of the children of God.

Perhaps the saved one is fettered by bad habits and he does not know that they are bad. Tell him gently, but let him know that these things are not consistent with Christian life. I know at this time some real Christians who are going about with relics of their grave clothes upon them, and they appear very unseemly. Those grave clothes stick to all of us more or lessand I suppose till we enter Heaven the loosing operation will need to be continued! But let us help our Brethren in this by example and by precept. Let us take away from them that which hinders them from the liberty of holiness.

Moreover, Lazarus wanted loosing for the sake of fellowship. He could not talk with Mary and Martha yet, for he had a napkin about his head he could scarcely move or speak. So many of our dear converts do not like to join the Church just yet. They say they are not perfect. Poor souls, if they were we should not need them in our churches! Being all imperfect ourselves, they would be out of place if they joined with us! They plead that they are not fit to come, imagining that something of fitness is needed beyond believing in Christas if that which Jesus laid down as the Gospel of salvation was not also a sufficient basis for fellowship with saints on earth! Still, the timid hold back and do not like to communicate to others what the Lord has done for them.

Encourage them, compel them to come in! Do not let them wander in solitude, but introduce them to the fellowship of the saints. We have known cases in which the liberty was needed to enable them to bear testimony. Lazarus could not even say, I live and blessed be the name of God, for the napkin was about his head. He must be loosed that he may tell what God had done! Oh, what amazing testimonies the Church might have if saints were but encouraged to deliver them! But there are some who carry wet blankets about with them, and the moment a young Christian talks about Christ, because he does not speak exactly according to orthodoxy, they try to silence him. Let it never be so among us! Let us encourage the babes to cry, that by-and by they may learn to speak! Let us encourage them to prattle, for perhaps before long they shall correctly speak the language of the kingdom.

As for testimony, so for service, help is needed. Paul was converted on the road to Damascus, but he did not know what God meant to do with himand he was not fit for God to use till Ananias had instructed him. So with Apollos. He was a true Christian, but he needed further teachinghe needed loosing and being let go, and therefore Aquila and Priscilla became the instruments thereof. There was the eunuch on his way to Ethiopiahe needed to learn more about the Scripturesto have the meaning of the Prophet Isaiah opened up to him and to be baptized on profession of his faith in Christ. Do not suffer any of Gods dear living ones to be waiting, bound up and captive, because we are so devoid of brotherly love that we will not do for them the necessary offices of heavenly charity! The Lord help us, Brothers and Sisters, to be earnest about this!

Once more, after Lazarus was unbound, we read that he sat at the table with Jesusso he needed loosing for the enjoyment of communion with Christ! The trembling convert thinks himself as yet unwarranted to lay hold upon the nearer, dearer, and sweeter joys which surround the Person of Christ. He dreams that these are reserved for old saints, that these wines on the lees well refined are for men who have fought the good fight and almost finished their course. But, indeed, he errs and deprives himself of joy! The songs of Zion are for the early morning as well as for the shades of evening. Go and tell young Christians so! Encourage them to commune with Jesus! Tell them He loves all His people with an equal love and is ready to manifest Himself to them as He does not unto the world. In this respect you will loose them and let them go.

I will not prolong my talk, but finish with two inquiries which I desire to put very plainly. The first is thisDear Brethren, I have told you what can be done for sinners before conversion. I have told you what can be done for them afterwards. I beg to inquire how many of you are doing either the one or the other? I will not take the writers inkhorn and make a list of the diligent among you, but I will ask each mans conscience to officiate as a scribe and to put down his name if he is really serving Christ. For, mark you, Beloved, it is idle to talk about our dutythe thing is to be daily and constantly doing it!

Time is gliding away, men are dying, Hell is filling, Christs name is being dishonored! There are but 12 hours in the dayare we walking while we have the light, and working for God while we have the opportunity? If every one of us will give an honest answer to that question it will do us good, even if we have to confess that we have been sluggards. It may lead to shame, and that to confessionand that to prayer, and that to a renovation of life! If we are, indeed, the Lords, let us live while we live! Much of professing life nowadays is a thing to be ashamed ofit is cold, weak, narrow, and timid. I see enthusiasm everywhere, except in the Church! I see stir and push and vigor in business! I see the world girdled that men may send the messages of commerce with lightning speedwhile the message of the Gospel lags! I see the mountains bored, I know not next but the seas deep bed may be tunneled! Earth for earth can do anything, but for Heaven how little will earth perform? May God quicken us that we may be a living, earnest people.

The other inquiry is this, how far is the Lord Jesus working in our families, and among our connections in the matter of raising the spiritually dead? Are your children saved? Are your servants regenerated? Brothers and Sisters, are they saved? Husbands and wiveshas God quickened them? Come, let us pass the question round. The angel said to Lot, have you here any beside? A very weighty question. Oh, that God may grant that you and I may be like Noah who had all his sons, and his sons wives, and his own wife in the ark with him! May we never leave off praying till it is so! If there is but one unconverted one in any way linked with us, let us pray day and night till that soul is saved and then let us take up the

neighborhood in which we dwell, and the streets where we reside!

This great city, this perishing cityGod help it, and in mercy visit it! I believe He will if He finds us willing to do the work of rolling away the stone, and equally willing to unloose the bands. God will not send children to us if we cannot nurse them! He will not send lambs to us if we will not shepherd them! God is not so unkind to new-born souls as to send them among a people that do not care for them. He will make us travail in birth before children shall be born to God here, because soul travail is the means by which love is worked in us towards them, and so we are taught to handle them affectionately, cherish them carefully, and bring them up for the Lord.

O Church beloved, over whom Christ rejoices, I charge you serve the Lord Jesus with diligence in this Divine service of doing good to the sons of men. God bless you, Beloved, for Christs sake. Amen.

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FAITH SEEING GODS GLORY   
NO. 3342

A SERMON   
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 1913. DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**Jesus said unto her, Said I not unto you that if you would believe, you would see the Glory of God?   
John 11:40.**

IT is not every man whose deed is as good as his word, but of the Son of Man, Christ Jesus, it may be said that whatever His lips have promised, His hands perform. He can, after the fact has transpired, turn to His disciples and say, Said I not unto you, such-and-such, and is it not even as I said? Seeking Sinner, Christ has said that you shall have peace if you believe on Him and He will not run back from that word! If you cast yourself upon Him, you shall have peace right nowyou shall have happiness evermore, you shall have Heaven at the lastfor there is no promise which Christ has made which He is not prepared to keep! There is no blessing which He presents to the hand of our faith which is either unreal, a sham, or a mockery! You shall find that Christs gold is not mere tinsel, but true, and that His silver is silver tried in the furnacegood spending money, both for time and for eternity!

I shall hope to use the text tonightmay God, too, use itfirst, with regard to the case of our fellow men, about whom many of us are much concerned. And then, in the second place, with regard to our own case.

Dear Friends, I know that I touch a sympathetic chord in your hearts when I speak   
I. WITH REGARD TO OUR CARE FOR OTHERS SOULS.   
I bless God that so many of you love your fellow creatures and fellow sinners and earnestly desire to promote their highest interests by bringing them to Christ!   
You have tasted and known the sweetness of true religion for yourselves and you are not selfishly satisfied merely to rejoice in this, but long that others, too, may taste and see, as you have done, that the Lord is good! Now, I know that if you are really in earnest about the matter, you will often meet with cases which will stagger your faith, will throw you back entirely upon your God and compel you to make your passionate appeal to His Omnipotence. Well, the text addresses itself especially to those who meet with such cases. Poor Martha, when she saw the stone rolled away from the tomb of her dead brother, was shocked with what would meet the eyes and nostrils of her Lord, and so, in deep solicitude and almost alarm she declared, Lord, by this time he stinks. The spectacle was too revolting, for he had been dead nearly four daysand in an Oriental climate that signified much that was repulsive. Terrible havoc would already have been worked on the body and she could not bear, I say, that the Savior should be exposed to such a spectacle! Now, how often do we meet with men and women, young and old persons, whose case is a very terrible one! We do not like to speak of it. It is getting among the putrid things, for it is a shame even to speak of the things which are done of them in secret. There are some cases which are shocking, terrible, fearful! We may well wish that a stone may cover the cave so that they may not be seen, that they may be left unobserved as cases too vile for the ordinary gazer to look upon. Have you never met with such? I am sure, my dear Friends, if you are City Missionaries, or lovers of City Missionary work, you must meet in this great city with some of the most revolting instances of immorality, debauchery, dishonesty and everything that is dreadfuland you are very apt to think that these are cases in which the Gospel will be out of place and the publishing of the news of pardoning love will be like throwing pearls before swine! The text, however, tells you something which may comfort you concerning such cases.   
Perhaps I shall be addressing some tonight who have been laboring of late in connection with cases which appear hopeless to them, not so much from any gross immorality as from a hardness of heart which has come over the people. There may be a mother here tonight who is much concerned about her daughterthat daughter was once here, frequently here, but where she is at this moment the weeping mother does not know, nor does her anxious fatherand it is with deep concern and sad hearts that some of us have asked, Where can she have gone?   
While some thus actually leave the parental home and, we fear, plunge into sin and excess, there are others who cause great anxiety in another way. They do not want to hear the Gospel which once greatly moved themthey have wearied of itthey contrive to stay away from the public worship and now the mothers admonitions have become positively irksome. The girl feels herself too big to yield to a fathers counsels and entreaties. Perhaps even worse than this is the case you have been praying forthe case of one who actually denies and flouts the religion of Jesus Christ, who declares it is all a sham, a mere form got up that priests of all sects may get a living by it. Perhaps even blasphemy has taken the place of attention to the Word. You feel, as you think of such an one, who is the object of your love, that you would give up your very heart if you could but have a hope of his ultimate salvationbut he seems to have gone too far. Now, you cannot get him to listen to the Word. He is tonightyes, good woman, your own husbandwhere is he? He is possibly in the gin palace, or even worse. You fear that at the very moment when you are sitting here, some for whom you have been pleading night and day are plunging deeper and deeper into sin and that when you reach home, the cross you will have to endure will be to hear hard things and bitter against the Savior whom you love, and to see and hear those dear to you thus penetrating further and further into the lairs of wickedness! Now, you see, you have a desperate case before you, and I want, if God shall help me, just to push the text home. Christ says, Said I not unto you that if you would believe you should see the Glory of God? This death, this burial, this stinking of Lazarusto use the expressive word of Marthaall this is only a platform for the Divine Glory to display itself! This horrible sin, this hardness of heart, this rejection of the Word of Godall this is only a stage upon which the Grace of God, in answer to your prayerful faith, shall come and do its wonders!   
Let me tell you what you will yet see if your faith is able to lay hold upon Christ. You will see the conversion of these lost ones and then you will see the Glory of God, for you will say, Could God have given His only-begotten Son instead of such sinners as these? Did it never strike you as strange that there should be twoone, the perfectly holy Christ, the beloved Son of God and, on the other hand, a reeling, cursing, blaspheming drunkand that God would sooner smite His Son than smite that drunk? That He should even grieve His Son and make Him smart, rather than that that blasphemer should smart? Truly, when the Jews made the choice of a robber rather than Christ, it was a strange choice and only to be understood by their wicked infatuation. But here, such is the power of Gods love that when one out of two must suffer, He chooses that the innocent Christ should suffer and that the drunken, blaspheming sinner should go free! Truly God commends His love towards us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us.   
Look at it again. There is this great sinner whom we have been describingis it not marvelous that Jesus Christ could really give Himself for such an one? He has been in prison, perhaps, two or three times, and he has done everything that is bad, and yet, oh, wonder of wondersthe Lord Jesus Christ gives Himself for him! Now, scarcely for a righteous man would one die: perhaps for a good man one would even dare to die, but God commends His love towards us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. What? Did Christ shed His blood for thieves, harlots, and drunks? Yes, Sir, as much as for the self-righteous and even more so, for while the self-righteous miss Heaven by reason of their pride and refusal of His salvation, some of these, coming humbly to the Cross, find pardon through the precious blood!   
But it is a great wonderand when a soul of this kind is converted you do see the Glory of God! You do not understand the miracle of love it expresses, in that Christ could die for such a mass of spiritual corruption, as some of His creatures have really made themselves to be before they had been helped by Sovereign Grace to trust in Christ. As the Glory of Christs power was seen in Lazarus coming out of the grave, though He had been four days dead and was corrupt, so the same Glory is seen in the conversion of every great sinner!   
What? Does the former swearer pray? Yes, and prays better than half of us and much more earnestly! Oh, what depth of feeling, what groaning that cannot be uttered, comes welling up from his grateful, adoring heart. Does the woman who was a sinner love the Savior? Yes, and she washes His feet with her tears and wipes them with the hair of her head, thus doing more for Christ than Simon did, whose guest He was, though he thought he had done so much. Ah, yes, Grace can make bright saints out of black sinners, can take the very scum and dregs of Satans dominions and make them into sparkling jewels to glitter in the crown of Divine Grace forever! It is wondrous what the Grace of God can do! My dear Hearer, if you should happen to feel yourself to be degraded by sin, do not give up! Do not think that Christ cannot save you! Do not let Satan tell you tonight that Christ can never save you! Look upon this case of LazarusBy this time he stinks, for he has been dead four days, and yet where the worm had been, where corruption had been, life came back at the Saviors word! And so shall it be with you. He can save you. He can save you now! He can save you from the blackest of your sins and make you sing His praises! The Glory of God, then, is seen in the conversion of every sinner, but most conspicuously in the conversion of the chief of sinners!

And this Glory is also seen in the fact that these sinners, when saved, hold on and continue to the end. I have sometimes heard it said of such an one, Ah, he will never hold out! I bless God that there have been so many whom God has blessed in this house who have held out year after year! Look over our Church recordssee the names of very nearly 3,600 souls associated here in Church fellowship, and in a year how many are excommunicated for their sins? Why, enough to make us grieve, but so few that they make us wonder at the Grace of God which keeps them! Many of them have been brought in while young and they have been exposed to many temptationssome plucked from the depths of sinand yet they are an honor to the Christian Church of which they are members! And I can speak of them in every company into which I move and say that they honor Christ and prove the power of the Gospel and the reality of conversion! Brothers and Sisters, we see the Glory of God, not only in the regenerating of those who were once great sinners, but even more remarkably displayed when we see that they do not go back to their old sins, but they have become such new creations that it is impossible for them to return to the old evil life and its evil loves and longings! So, then, it appears from the text that if we are praying for our friends, their present condition ought not to stagger us and, however bad their state may be, we should only hear the Savior telling us that He is making herein larger room for the display of His matchless Grace! So we should be encouraged to pray more earnestly for suchrather than even for a moment to give them up as though such case were hopeless!   
Now, who is it that sees the Glory of God in the conversion of a soul? When a man has produced some masterpiece of art or other genius, he likes others to see it. Who are they who see great sinners when they are converted? Who are they? We read of one stone upon which were seven eyes. When such a sinner is saved, all eyes are set upon him. Why, his neighbors see him. Some of them hate the change, but they cannot help seeing it. When a great sinner is converted, beloved Friends, his wife knows of it, his children know of it, his relatives know of it and it is a matter of wonder to them all! Oh, they say, So-and-So has become a Christian. Very likely they say he has become a Methodist, or a Spurgeonite, or some such ugly name. They are sure to call him by the name of the minister whom God has blessed to him. And then they talk of it in the workshop and he gets jeered at for it, but they say, Ah, what is this? Here is a kind of religion come among us which really has power over people to alter their lives, which takes them out of the old ruts in which they were known to run and puts them on a new highway, and turns their minds in another direction! What is it? So that friends and relatives see it and enemies see it, too, and, what is still more remarkable, it becomes a theme of wonder in other worlds! Devils see it and they do not like itand they resolve to overthrow the manbut all the devils in Hell cannot destroy a true child of God! You know Topladys saying about the Grace of God. He says it is like leavenif you once get it into the cake you may boil it, you may fry it, you may bake itbut you cannot get it out! And so, once get the Grace of God into a mans heart and you cannot get it out again! God does what the devil cannot undo when He makes a new creature in Christ Jesus. And then the angels see it. We have Gods Word for that, for we are told that they rejoice over one sinner that repents. A poor woman upstairs in an attic found the Savior and her finding the Savior affected three worlds in one moment! It made earth glad. It made Hell howl with indignation and it set Heaven in a blaze of extraordinary joy! Do not the harps of the angels thrill with super-celestial harmonies when they hear of sinners being eternally saved? Do they not lift up a new paean, and yet more exalted praise unto Him who trod the wine-press alone, and of whose victory these souls are the reward?   
Yes, earth, Heaven and Hell, all know of it! We know it for the text says, Said I not unto you, that if you would believe, you should see the Glory of God? It is a very great comfort in ones labors to see those who are truly converted. Of course, we ought to be able to work on and to believe in success even if we cannot yet see it, but it is a great delight to be privileged to see the sheaves cut and then carry them to the Great Husbandman and say, That is a sheaf You gave me. I have heard of Mr. Matthew Wilks, the famous but eccentric preacher, being waited on by some of his very excellent and very proper members to reprove him for some of his quaint sayings. Well, said Mr. Wilks, if you will wait just a little, I will answer you. Going upstairs, he brought down a long roll which contained the names of those whom God had blessed and saved through his ministry. Now, he said, all these precious souls have been brought to God by these sermons which you feel moved to criticize. By the Grace of God I will preach yet more of them! And so may every minister say when God gives him success, for it strengthens him in his work! You dear Sunday School teachers who teach in your classes. You who distribute tracts. You who preach in the streetsif God gives you conversions, I am sure you will go on with your work! It will whet your appetites! You will want more! You will never be satisfied, but will press on in your Masters service!   
But now comes in an if, and then I will leave this point. Said I not unto you, if you would believe, you should see the Glory of God? That is the thing! Why is it that we are not more successful? It is because we do not believe. I heard a conversation the other day, something like this. A Brother saidand a very excellent Brother, tooWhen I go into the pulpit I go hoping that perhaps God will bless the word that I am going to deliver, prayerfully seeking that He would do so, and feeling satisfied that it will be according to His mind and will and believing that if I preach the Word, perhaps it will be blessed. Another Brother said, Well, my Brother, I think you are right, but I do not go into the pulpit in that way at all. How then? asked the other. Why, was the answer, I go into the pulpit believing that God is going to save souls tonight, that I am going to be made by Him the instrument of it and I preach believing that while I am preaching, souls must and will be savedthat there is not a chance they may be, but they will be, that Gods Word will not return unto Him void, but will prosper in the thing whereto He has sent it. I hope I am as humble as if it were a peradventure, but I am all the more earnest, I trust, because I feel certain that now souls will be blessed. Now, I do believe that God does bless in a very great measure according to what we believe will be the result and that if we can only stand and preach Christ, believing Christ will come to souls and souls will find Him, then the more of such faith that we have, the greater will be the results. Beloved, do we always pray in faith, as we ought? We pray here at every Prayer Meeting that God would save soulsbut do we believe that He certainly will hear us? If we do not, we shall lose the blessing. We must believe not only that God is, but that He is the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him, or we shall miss His blessing!   
Oh, what a mercy to rise from your knees and say, I have got it! I asked for souls and God has heard meand I shall see my desire and be satisfied! I have prayed definitely for conversions, and conversions will be given me. Brothers and Sisters, in such a Church as this, where God is so manifestly and so marvelously working, we ought to be forever expecting conversions!   
You Christian people, as you sit in the pews should be looking out for God to bless your friends, believing that your dear children will manifest the first signs of His gracious saving power. Then should you encourage these seedlings of promise and put the young plants in the hothouse of deep love during the winter of their conviction, so that they may not be withered or blighted, but come to be plants of Gods right hand planting! Expect the blessing! It is coming! It is coming! God is blessing His Church and He intends to bless it yet more. He has opened the windows of Heaven and He is pouring out the blessing so that we have not room enough to receive it! We have not even now room enough to receive the hearersthe day is coming when we shall not have room enough to hold the Church! Only let us pray and workand God, even our own God, will bless us and bless His other Churches, tooand the ends of the earth shall fear Him! So you see, then, the whole matter is if you can believe. Now, Mother, can you believe about your child? Now, good Woman, can you believe about your husband? Now, my Brother, can you believe about your wife? May God help you to believe Him! Depend upon it, the struggle is there. It is much harder for you to believe in God than it is for God to convert your wife, much harder for you to trust God about your child than it is for Him to save your child! It is much easier for God to save the harlot, the drunk, the thief, than it is for us to think He will do it! But when we can believe in Him and, believing, boldly pray for it and expect it, we shall get it, and he that was repulsive but yesterday shall be fragrant with Divine Grace tomorrow! He that rotted in his tomb but the other day, so far gone that men turned away from him, shall come into the midst of Gods Church, be found among the living in Zion and make the Church on earth and the Church in Heaven glad in his society! But now we must have a few minutes in which to use the text for   
II. THE COMFORT AND BLESSING OF THOSE WHO ARE NOT THEMSELVES SAVED.   
I do not suppose, dear Friendsspeaking to those of you who are awakened and quickened in your consciencesI do not suppose I could give a descriptive character of you which you would think to be too bad. You once thought yourselves very good and excellent, but it is quite a different tale with you now. God the Holy Spirit has met with you and made you see yourselvesand now you are ashamed of yourselves. You feel as if you were dead, as if you had no power, no life.

You feel more, you seem as if you were buried. Satan tells you that there is no hope for such as you are and you feel as if you were like Lazarus, really corrupt in soul, so that you cannot sometimes endure yourselves. You cannot sleep at nightyour fears distract you. You are afraid that God will do with you as Abraham did with his dead, that is, bury you out of His sight. I have known many like you and whenever I have met with them, I have been glad, for I have always felt that God was about to bless them when they could never stand, much less, bless themselves! It was just then, when they thought so badly of themselves, that God thought well of them. Now, dear Friends, I say I cannot describe your condition as being worse than you really think it to be, for you really now feel yourselves to be about as bad as a person could ever be. Now, what about you? Why, thisthat the badness of your present condition is no barrier whatever to your salvation if you can now, enabled by Divine Grace, trust in the Lord Jesus Christ to save you! I will not enter into your past life, nor into your present state. We will suppose both to be outrageously bad, if you like. You may say that you have no feeling, no sensibilitythat you cannot repent and a great many other things. But now, can you believe that Christ can save you? Can you trust Him to do it? If you can, then all there is of hardness in youeven if it were ten times morecould not keep you out of Heaven! Though your sins are as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool. If your heart is hard, pardoning love can melt it! If you have no repentance, Christ is exalted on high to give repentance! If your will is stubborn, He can make you willing in the day of His power! Can you believe this? Have you not heard the story? It was God, Himself, who died on Calvary! It was none other than that same One who made the heavens, who came down on earth and became a Man for the sake of menand on the bloody tree expired in extreme agonies! He, very God of very God, though a Man like you, died that sin might be put away and that sinners might be saved!   
Sinner, can you believe this? Can you trust Him? Yes, I should trust Him, says one, but I cannot. I do not mean what you can do, but can you trust Him to do? Can you believe? For if you will believe on Him, you shall see the Glory of God. But I cannot see. No! No! No! It does not say if you can see, but if you believe, you shall see! Believing comes first, and then the seeing follows! And what is it you are to see? The Glory of God. Now, supposing you were a very good sort of person and had not any sin, it would not be much Glory to God to save you. Why, you would not need savingyou could save yourselves, or there would be nothing from which to be saved! What glory would then be His? But if, on the other hand, you can see nothing to nurture itthen, in your wondrous salvation would the Glory of God be gloriously seen! You, and others, too, would see God saving you in spite of your sin, in the teeth of your souls corruption and in defiance of all the powers of evil! Such a sight of Gods Glory will make it impossible for a single note of praise to be given to yourselves, but all the Glory, all the Glory shall be to His rich, all-conquering, Sovereign Grace!  
Now, can you believe this? Can you trust Jesus Christ, alone, to utterly save you? Sink or swim, can you throw yourself into the sea of Jesus love? Now, can you just give yourself up to Christ to save you, for if you will believe, you shall see the Glory of God. You shall see that Glory in your pardon, in your new creation, in your being sustained under temptation, in your being kept in the hours of life, in the night of death, in your being lifted up at the Day of Judgment to receive an acquittal and in your being presented faultless before His Presence with exceedingly great joy! Mercy, in her dreamif you rememberlaughed, and when Christiana asked her why she laughed, she said it was because of what she had dreamed. Now, verily, I have known what it is to laugh in the same way. I have thought of myself as black, defiled, corrupt, unworthy. And then I have thought of myself as one day wearing a crown, of waving a palm branch, of bowing before the eternal Throne of God, having neither spot nor wrinkle, nor any such thingand, verily, I have seemed to laugh that that should ever be true and my soul has leaped at the very thought that Iyes I, shall tread the streets of gold, passing through the gates of pearl and see His face and bow before HimI, who was once filled with sin and corruption, filled to the brim with the vision of God! And, Brothers and Sisters, we will meet there and what a wonder it will be that we should ever get there! Do you not think they will sometimes say to one another in Heaven, I rememberit is almost enough to make me weep to rememberwhen I stood in the tavern and made others laugh at a lascivious jest and when I could sing a merry song. Oh, how different from the song that now engages this happy heart and from the music that comes from these blessed strings! And do you not think that another will say, And I remember haunts of wickedness and vice that dare not be mentioned here, but I am washed! And oh, when they think of that, they will strike up again the grand old song that will always be new Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, unto Him be Glory forever and ever. I am of the same mind as the good old soul who said that if Jesus Christ ever took her to Heaven, He would never hear the last of it. And He never will!   
*Ill praise Him in life, Ill praise Him in death, Ill praise Him as long as He lends me breath! And say when the death-dew lies cold on my brow, If ever I loved You, my Jesus, tis now.*   
Yes, and up there in Heaven we shall still praise Him! We shall not have time to think of anybody else, nor to think of any but our Lord *Jesus sought me when a stranger   
Wandering from the fold of God.   
He to rescue me from danger,   
Interposed His precious blood.*   
Why, if an angel had come to me 17 years ago and had said to me, Now, my lad, get up from that bedsidethere was I, about that time, on my knees before God, with many tears, thinking that I should never be saved. I had longed and entreated for mercy from my childhood, without having any comfortable answer. And I considered that I was among the reprobate and was meant to illustrate forever the Justice of God in Hell if, I say, an angel had come to me at that time and said, Come, my lad, you will one day preach the Gospel to thousands of sinners, and tell them what a dear Savior you have founddo you think I would have believed him? No, I would have said, that will never be. Why, it is such a change for me to be here talking to you from being there, afraid of the wrath of God, that I do not know how to talk of it! But oh, that is nothing! That is no change at all compared with our being taken away to Heaven! With our being taken up where angels dwell! Above all, where He dwells, that Blessed One whom, though we have not seen, we love and unceasingly adore, to be in His bosom forever, to be kissed with the kisses of His mouth, to be His dear ones, to live in His Fathers house where the many mansions are! Oh, the Glory of God! What a sight that will be! And, Sinner, if you will believe, you shall see it! Where did you come from tonight? Where are you going when you leave this service? I hope you will leave a different man, a different woman! If you will believe, you shall see the Glory of God! Oh, may the Holy Spirit constrain you to believe tonight! May this be the time when you shall come empty-handed and take Christ to be your All-in-All! May this be the instant when you shall be done with your self-righteousness, when you will give up trying to save yourself and come and rest where God would have you restin the blood of His dear Son! In His death! His Resurrection! In His intercession before the Throne of God!   
Oh, come, Sinner! God help you to come! Come! All black and ruined, come! All lost and defiled, come! Though you are as one dead, no, like Lazarus rotting in the tomb of your sins, Awake, you that sleep, and rise from the dead, and Christ shall give you light. In the name of Jesus, thus I speak to you and He speaks to you through me. Come forth! Come forth! You corrupting Lazarus, come forth! Tis Jesus bids you come! Trust Him! He bids you trust Him and whoever trusts Him shall see the Glory of God forever! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **JOHN 11:1-26.**

Verse 1. Now a certain man was sick, named Lazarus, of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister, Martha. In Gods Book, towns are most remarkable for saints that dwell in them. The town of Mary and her sister, Martha. A day will come when a city shall be more illustrious for a saint than for a Caesarbe more renowned for deeds of faith than for deeds of battle! It was the town of Mary and her sister, Martha.

2, 3. (It was that Mary who anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped His feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick). Therefore his sisters sent unto him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick. They did not say anymore. They felt that it was quite enough to tell Him that Lazarus was sick. They left it to the tender heart of Jesus to do whatever seemed good in His sight. Some prayers would be all the better if they were shorterall the better if they did not so much declare our own will as declare our confidence in the good will of Christ! I like the omissions of Marthas and Marys prayer.

4. When Jesus heard that, He said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the Glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby. Our Savior speaks in a different style from us. We would have said that the sickness was unto death, but, ultimately, to the Glory of God. But He who sees the end from the beginning speaks with a grandeur of style which could not be imitated by us! So the Lord speaks of things, not as they seem to be, nor even as they are in the present moment, but as they shall be in the long runNot unto death, but that the Son of God might be glorified.

5. Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister, and Lazarus. Yet Lazarus died. Jesus loved Lazarus, yet Lazarus was sick. Jesus was not of that cruel sort of people, of whom we have some in these days, who call themselves saints, and who attribute all sickness among Gods people to their sin or to their lack of faith. Not He. Here was one that was sick, but Jesus loved him just as much for all that.

6. When He had heard, therefore, that he was sick, He abode two days, still, in the same place where He was. Notice the connection. Jesus loved Martha and her sister, and Lazarusand yet when He had heard that Lazarus was sick, He abode two days, still, in the same place where He was. Sometimes true love may think fit to make us wait. It may be the truest love on Gods part to let us lie sick and not to come post-haste to us to make us well. Yes, the truest love may demand that the sickness should turn to death, for out of the death He may bring the greater Glory. The Lord acts not upon the scale of man, for He sees not as man sees. He sees the end as well as the beginning.

7. Then after that He said to His disciples, Let us go into Judaea againAnd that because He loved Martha and her sister, and Lazarus! If that love in its wisdom made Him tarry, yet that love in its sincerity at last moved Him to seek the house of grief.

8, 9. The disciples said to Him, Rabbi, lately the Jews sought to stone You, and are You going there again? Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day? Is there not a time in which the sun will not go down in which it is safe and right for men to work?

9, 10. If any man walks in the day, he stumbles not, because he sees the light of this world. But if a man walks in the night, he stumbles because there is no light in him. There is a singular turn, is there not, in that expression? We expected it to be, Because he sees not the light of the world, instead of which the Savior says, Because there is no light in himbecause in spiritual things our light not only comes from above, but it shines withinand without that inner light we are sure to stumble.

11. These things said He: and after that He said unto them, Our friend Lazarus sleeps, but I go that I may awake him out of sleep. It is the Saviors way to use terms concerning His miracles, which, so far from exaggerating them, even appear to depreciate them. He is about to raise a man from the dead, but He says, Our friend Lazarus sleeps; but I go that I may awake him out of sleep. I am afraid that our tendency is always to describe our actions in the largest possible terms consistent with truth, perhaps sometimes forgetting those last words. But the Savior describes truthfully what He does, but still in terms which, like His Humanity, seem to veil the Glory. Wonderfully condescending is it of Him to speak thus

12. Then said His disciples, Lord, if He sleeps, He shall do well. It is considered to be a sign of getting better when a patient can sleep.   
13-16. However Jesus spoke of his death: but they thought that He had spoken of taking of rest in sleep. Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead. And I am glad for your sakes, that I was not there, to the intent you may believe; nevertheless let us go unto him. Then said Thomas, which is called Didymus, unto his fellow disciples, Let us also go, that we may die with Him. A singular mixture of faith and unbelief! He so believes his Master that he is willing to die with Him. He so doubts Him that, although the Savior had plainly told him that He was immortal till His work was done, yet he is afraid that His Master and all of them will be put to death. Oh, the Lord knows us better than we know ourselvesand the Lord accepts us notwithstanding our infirmities.   
17. Then when Jesus came, He found that he had lain in the grave four days already. So that he was probably dead as soon as the messengers arrived to tell the Savior that he was ill.   
18. Now Bethany was near unto Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs off. Just a nice little walk which our Savior had often taken in the evening after the toils of the day in Jerusalem. He had loved to make Bethany His quiet resting place. Fifteen furlongs off.   
19-20. And many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother. Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met Him: but Mary sat still in the house. Because she had not heard that Jesus was come, or else, no doubt, she would have been there as soon as Martha.   
21. Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if You had been here, my brother had not died. They had often said to one another, Oh, we wish the Lord would come. They had sent for Him. They felt sure that He would come. But, alas, their brother had died before the Master had arrivedand now this thought which was uppermost in their hearts is uppermost in their speech, Lord, if You had been here, my brother had not died.   
22. But I know that even now, whatever You will ask of God, God will give it to You. There is faith there, and there is unbelief, too. She believes that Christ can have what He wills of God, but she does not recognize His own personal GodheadHis own power to work resurrection.   
23-26. Jesus said unto her, Your brother shall rise again. Martha said unto Him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the Last Day. Jesus said unto her, I am the Resurrection, and the Life: he that believes in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you Believe this? She looked upon the Resurrection and the Life as things that were to be in some dim and misty future. No, says Christ, I am the Resurrection and the Life. Not only do I get these things by prayer from God, but I am these things. And then He goes on to explain it. He says, I am the Resurrection. He that believes in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. I am the Life. Whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this? He has taken her out of the thought of this poor common animal-life into the thought of the spiritual and higher life, which is, indeed, to the soul what the resurrection is to the body! It was well for the Savior thus to teach her higher truth than as yet she knew.

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PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #3178 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

THE PREPARATORY PRAYERS OF CHRIST   
NO. 3178

A SERMON   
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, DECEMBER 30TH, 1909,

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON THURSDAY EVENING, AUGUST 7, 1873.

**Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass that Jesus, also being baptized, and praying, the Heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon Him, and a voice came from Heaven, which said, You are My Beloved Son, in You I am well pleased.   
Luke 3:21, 22.**

**And it came to pass in those days, that He went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God. And when it was day, He called unto Him, His disciples: and of them He chose twelve, whom also He named Apostles.   
Luke 6:12,13.**

**And it came to pass about eight days after these sayings, He took Peter and John and James, and went up into a mountain to pray. And as He prayed, the fashion of His Countenance was altered, and His raiment was white and glistening.   
Luke 9:28, 29.**

**And when He had sent the multitudes away, He went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, He was there alone. But the boat was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary. And in the fourth watch of the night, Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea.   
Matthew 14:23-25.**

**Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead were laid. And Jesus lifted up His eyes and said, Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. And I know that You hear Me always: but because of the people here, I said it, that they may believe that You have sent Me.**

**John 11:41, 42.**

**And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for you, that your faith fail not: and when you are converted, strengthen your brethren. Luke 22:31, 32.**

**And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, He said, Father, into Your hands I commend My spirit: and having said thus, He gave up the ghost. Luke 23:46.**

THERE is one peculiarity about the life of our Lord Jesus Christ which everybody must have noticed who has carefully read the four Gospels, namely, that He was a Man of much prayer. He was mighty as a Preacher, for even the officers who were sent to arrest Him said, Never man spoke like this Man. But He appears to have been even mightier in prayer, if such a thing could be possible! We do not read that His disciples ever asked Him to teach them to preach, but we are told that, as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, one of His disciples said unto Him, Lord, teach us to pray. He had no doubt been praying with such amazing fervor that His disciples realized that He was a master of the holy art of prayer and they, therefore, desired to learn the secret for themselves. The whole life of our Lord Jesus Christ was one of prayer. Though we are often told about His praying, we feel that we scarcely need to be informed of it, for we know that He must have been a Man of prayer. His acts are the acts of a prayerful Man. His words speak to us like the words of One whose heart was constantly lifted up in prayer to His Father. You could not imagine that He would have breathed out such blessings upon men if He had not first breathed in the atmosphere of Heaven! He must have been much in prayer or He could not have been so abundant in service and so gracious in sympathy.

Prayer seems to be like a silver thread running through the whole of our Saviors life and we have the record of His prayers on many special occasions. It struck me that it would be both interesting and instructive for us to notice some of the seasons which Jesus spent in prayer. I have selected a few which occurred either before some great work or some great suffering, so our subject will really be the

preparatory prayers of Christthe prayers of Christ as He was approaching something which would put a peculiar stress and strain upon His Manhood, either for service or for suffering. And if the consideration of this subject shall lead all of us to learn the practical lesson of praying at all timesand yet to have special seasons for prayer just before any peculiar trial or unusual servicewe shall not have met in vain!

I. The first prayer we are to consider is OUR LORDS PRAYER IN PREPARATION FOR HIS BAPTISM. It is in Luke 3:21, 22Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass that Jesus, also being baptized, and praying, (it seems to have been a continuous act in which He had been previously occupied), the Heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon Him, and a voice came from Heaven, which said, You are My Beloved Son, in You I am well pleased.

The Baptism of our Lord was the commencement of His manifestation to the sons of men. He was now about to take upon Himself in full all the works of His Messiahship and, consequently, we find Him very specially engaged in prayer. And, Beloved, it seems to me to be peculiarly appropriate that when any of us have been converted and are about to make a Scriptural profession of our faithabout to take up the soldiers life under the great Captain of our salvationabout to start out as pilgrims to Zions cityI say that it seems to me to be peculiarly appropriate for us to spend much time in very special prayer! I would be very sorry to think that anyone would venture to come to be baptized, or to be united with a Christian Church without having made that action a matter of much solemn consideration and earnest prayer. But when the decisive step is about to be taken, our whole being should be very specially concentrated upon our supplication at the Throne of Grace.

Of course we do not believe in any sacramental efficacy attaching to the observance of the ordinance, but we receive a special blessing in the act, itself, because we are moved to pray even more than usual before it takes place and at the time. At all events, I know that it was so in my own case. It was many years ago, but the remembrance of it is very vivid at this moment and it seems to me as though it only happened yesterday! It was in the month of May and I rose very early in the morning so that I might have a long time in private prayer. Then I had to walk about eight miles, from Newmarket to Isleham, where I was to be baptized in the river. I think that the blessing I received that day resulted largely from that season of solitary supplication and my meditation, as I walked along the country roads and lanes, upon my indebtedness to my Savior and my desire to live to His praise and Glory. Dear young people, take care that you start right in your Christian life by being much in prayer! A profession of faith that does not begin with prayer will end in disgrace. If you come to join the Church, but do not pray to God to uphold you in consistency of life, and to make your profession sincere, the probability is that you are already a hypocrite! Or if that is too uncharitable a suggestion, the probability is that if you are converted, the work has been of a very superficial character and not of that deep and earnest kind of which prayer would be the certain index. So again I say to you that if any of you are thinking of making a profession of your faith in Christ, be sure, then, in preparation for it, you devote a special season to drawing near to God in prayer.

As I read the first text, no doubt you noticed that it was while Christ was praying that, the Heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon Him, and a voice came from Heaven, which said, You are My Beloved Son, in You I am well pleased. There are three occasions of which we read in Scripture when God bore audible testimony to Christ. And on each of these three occasions He was either in the act of prayer or He had been praying but a very short time before. Christs prayer is especially mentioned in each instance side by side with the witness of His Fatherand if you, beloved Friends, want to have the witness of God either at your Baptism or on any subsequent act of your lifeyou must obtain it by prayer! The Holy Spirit never sets His seal to a prayerless religion! It has not in it that of which He can approve. It must be truly said of a man, Behold, he prays, before the Lord bears such testimony concerning him as He bore concerning Saul of Tarsus, He is a chosen vessel unto Me, to bear My name before the Gentiles.

So we find that it was while Christ was praying at His Baptism that the Holy Spirit came upon Him, in a bodily shape like a dove, to qualify Him for His public service! And it is through prayer that we, also, receive that spiritual enrichment that equips us as co-workers together with God. Without prayer you will remain in a region that is desolate as a desert! But bend your knees in supplication to the Most High and you have reached the land of promise, the country of benediction! Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you, not merely as to His gracious Presence, but as to the powerful and efficacious working of the Holy Spirit! More prayermore power! The more pleading with God that there is, the more power will there be in pleading with men, for the Holy Spirit will come upon us while we are pleading and so we shall be fitted and qualified to do the work to which we are called of God!

Let us learn, then, from this first instance of our Saviors preparatory prayer at His Baptism, the necessity of special supplication on our part in similar circumstances. If we are making our first public profession of faith in Him, or if we are renewing that profession. If we are moving to another sphere of service, if we are taking office in the Church as deacons or elders, if we are commencing the work of the pastorate. If we are in any way coming out more distinctly before the world as the servants of Christ, let us set apart special seasons for prayerand so seek a double portion of the Holy Spirits blessing to rest upon us!

II. The second instance of the preparatory prayers of Christ which we are to consider is OUR LORDS PRAYER PREPARATORY TO CHOOSING HIS TWELVE APOSTLES. It is recorded in Luke 6:12, 13And it came to pass in those days, that He went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God. [See Sermon #798, Volume 14SPECIAL PRO

TRACTED PRAYERRead/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at   
http://www.spurgeongems.org.] And when it was day, He called unto Him, His disciples: and of them He chose twelve, whom also He named Apostles.

Our Lord was about to extend His ministry. His one tongue, His one voice might have delivered His personal message throughout Palestine, but He was desirous of having far more done than He could individually accomplish in the brief period of His public ministry upon earth. He would therefore have 12 Apostles and afterwards 70 disciples who would go forth in His name and proclaim the glad tidings of salvation. He was infinitely wiser than the wisest of mere men, so why did He not at once select His 12 Apostles? The men had been with Him from the beginning and He knew their characters and their fitness for the work He was about to entrust to them, so He might have said to Himself, I will have James, John, Peter and the rest of the twelve, and send them forth to preach that the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand and to exercise the miraculous powers with which I will endow them. He might have done this if He had not been the Christ of Godbut being the Anointed of the Father, He would not take such an important step as that without long continued prayer. So He went alone to His Father, told Him all that He desired to do and pleaded with Him, not in the brief fashion that we call prayer which usually lasts only a few minutesbut His pleading lasted through an entire night!

What our Lord asked for, or how He prayed, we cannot tell, for it is not revealed to us. But I think we shall not be guilty of vain or unwarranted curiosity if we use our imagination for a minute or two. In doing so, with the utmost reverence, I think I hear Christ crying to His Father whom the right men might be selected as the leaders of the Church of God upon the earth. I think I also hear Him pleading that upon these chosen men a Divine influence might rest, that they might be kept in character, honest in heart and holy in lifeand that they might also be preserved in sound Doctrine and not turn aside to error and falsehood. Then I think I hear Him praying that success might attend their preaching. That they might be guided where to go, where the blessing of God would go with them and that they might find many hearts willing to receive their testimony. And that when their personal ministry should end, they might pass on their commission to others so that as long as there should be a harvest to be reaped for the Lord, there should be laborers to reap itas long as there should be lost sinners in the world, there would also be earnest, consecrated men and women seeking to pluck the brands from the burning. I will not attempt to describe the mighty wrestling of that night of prayer when, in strong cries and tears, Christ poured out His very soul into His Fathers ear and heart! But it is clear that He would not dispatch a solitary messenger with the glad tidings of the Gospel unless He was assured that His Fathers authority and the Spirits power would accompany the servants whom He was about to send forth.

What a lesson there is in all this to us! What Infallible Guidance there is here as to how a missionary society should be conducted! Where there is one committee meeting for business, there ought to be 50 for prayer! Whenever we get a missionary society whose main business it is to pray, we shall have a society whose distinguishing characteristic will be that it is the means of saving a multitude of souls! And to you, my dear young Brothers in the College, I feel moved to say that I believe we shall have a far larger blessing than we have already had when the spirit of prayer in the College is greater than it now is, though I rejoice to know that it is very deep and fervent even now! You, Brothers, have never been lacking in prayerfulness. I thank God that I have never had occasion to complain or to grieve on that account, but still, who knows what blessing might follow a night of prayer at the beginning or at any part of the sessionor an all-night wrestling in prayer in the privacy of your own bedrooms? Then, when you go out to preach the Gospel on the Sabbath, you will find that the best preparation for preaching is much praying! I have always found that the meaning of a text can be better learned by prayer than in any other way. Of course we must consult lexicons and commentaries to see the literal meaning of the words and their relation to one anotherbut when we have done all that, we shall still find that our greatest help will come from prayer! Oh, that every Christian enterprise were commenced with prayer, continued with prayer and crowned with prayer! Then might we, also, expect to see it crowned with Gods blessing!

So once again I remind you that our Saviors example teaches us that for seasons of special service, we need not only prayers of a brief character, excellent as they are for ordinary occasions, but special protracted wrestling with God like that of Jacob at the Brook Jabbok, so that each one of us can say to the Lord, with holy determination

*With You all night I mean to stay,*

*And wrestle till the break of day.*   
When such sacred persistence in prayer as this becomes common throughout the whole Church of Christ, Satans long usurpation will be coming to an end and we shall be able to say to our Lord, as the 70 disciples did when they returned to Him with joy, Even the devils are subject unto us through Your name!

III. Now, thirdly, let us consider OUR LORDS PRAYER PREPARATORY TO HIS TRANSFIGURATION. You will find it in Luke 9:28, 29And it came to pass about eight days after these sayings, He took Peter and John and James, and went up into a mountain to pray. And as He prayed, the fashion of His Countenance was altered, and His raiment was white and glistening. You see that it was as He prayed that He was transfigured.

Now, Beloved, do you really desire to reach the highest possible attainments of the Christian life? Do you, in your inmost soul, pine and pant after the choicest joys that can be known by human beings this side of Heaven? Do you aspire to rise to full fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ and to be transformed into His image from glory to glory? If so, the way is open to you! It is the way of prayeronly there will you find these priceless blessings! If you fail in prayer, you will assuredly never come to Tabors top! There is no hope, dear Friends, of our ever attaining to anything like a transfiguration and being covered with the Light of God so that whether in the body or out of the body we cannot tell, unless we are much in prayer!

I believe that we make more real advance in the Divine Life in an hour of prayer than we do in a month of hearing sermons. I do not mean that we are to neglect the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is, but I am sure that without the praying, the hearing is of little worth! We must pray. We must plead with God if we are to really grow spiritually. In prayer, very much of our spiritual digestion is done. When we are hearing the Word, we are very much like the cattle when they are cropping the grassbut when we follow our hearing with meditation and prayer, we do, as it were, lie down in the green pasturesand get the rich nutriment for our souls out of the Truth of God. My dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ, would you shake off the earthliness that still clings to you? Would you get rid of your doubts and your fears? Would you overcome your worldliness? Would you master all your besetting sins? Would you glow and glisten in the brightness and Glory of the holiness of God? Then be much in prayer, as Jesus was! I am sure that it must be so and that, apart from prayer, you will make no advance in the Divine Lifebut that in waiting upon God, you shall renew your spiritual strength, you shall mount up with wings as eagles, you shall run and not be wearyyou shall walk and not faint!

IV. I must hasten on lest time should fail us before I have finished. And I must put together two of OUR LORDS PRAYERS PREPARATORY TO GREAT MIRACLES.

The first, which preceded His stilling of the tempest on the Lake of Gennesaret, is recorded in Matthew 14:23-25And when He had sent the multitudes away, He went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, He was there alone. But the boat was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary. And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea. He had been pleading with His Father for His disciples and then, when their ship was tossed by the waves, and driven back by the contrary winds, He came down to them from the lofty place where He had been praying for them, making a pathway for Himself across the turbulent waters that He was about to calm. Before He walked upon those tossing billows, He had prayed to His Father. Before He stilled the storm, He had prevailed with God in prayer.

Am I to do any great work for God? Then I must first be mighty upon my knees! Is there a man here who is to be the means of covering the sky with clouds and bringing the rain of Gods blessing on the dry and barren Church which so sorely needs reviving and refreshing? Then he must be prepared for that great work as Elijah was when, on the top of Carmel, He cast himself down upon the earth and put his face between his knees, and prayed as only he could pray! We shall never see a little cloud like a mans hand, which shall afterwards cover all the sky with blackness, unless first of all we know how to cry mightily unto the Most High! But when we have done that, then shall we see what we desire. Moses would never have been able to control the children of Israel as he did if he had not first been in communion with his God in the desert, and afterwards in the mountain. So if we are to be men of power, we also must be men of prayer!

The other instance to which I want to refer, showing how our Lord prayed before working a mighty miracle, is when He stood by the grave of Lazarus. You will find the account of it in John 11:41, 42Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up His eyes and said, Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. And I know that You hear Me always: but because of the people here, I said it, that they may believe that You have sent Me. He did not cry, Lazarus, come forth, so that the people heard it, and Lazarus heard it, until first He had prayed, My Father, grant that Lazarus may rise from the dead, and had received the assurance that he would do so as soon as he was called by Christ to come forth from the grave.

But, Brothers and Sisters, do you not see that if Christ, who was so strong, needed to pray thus, what need there is for us, who are so weak, to also pray? If He, who was God as well as Man, prayed to His Father before He worked a miracle, how necessary it is for us, who are merely men, to go to the Throne of Grace and plead there with importunate fervency if we are ever to do anything for God! I fear that many of us have been feeble out here in public because we have been feeble out there on the lone mountainside where we ought to have been in fellowship with God. The way to be fitted to work what men will call wonders, is to go to the God of Wonders and implore Him to gird us with His all-sufficient strength so that we may do exploits to His praise and Glory!

V. The next prayer we are to consider is OUR LORDS PRAYER PREPARATORY TO PETERS FALL. We have the record of that in Luke 22:31, 32And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for you, that your faith fail not: and when you are converted, strengthen your breth

ren. [See Sermons #2620, Volume 45CHRISTS PRAYER FOR PETER; #2034, Volume 34 PETERS RESTORATION and #2035, Volume 34PETER AFTER HIS RESTORATIONRead/download all the sermons, free of charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.]

There is much that is admirable and instructive in this utterance of our Lord. Satan had not then tempted Peter, yet Christ had already pleaded for the Apostle whose peril He clearly foresaw! Some of us would have thought that we were very prompt if we had prayed for a Brother or Sister who had been tempted and who had yielded to the temptation. But our Lord prayed for Peter before he was tempted. As soon as Satan had desired to have him in his sieve, that he might sift him as wheat, our Savior knew the thought that was formed in the diabolic mindand He at once pleaded for His imperiled servant who did not even know the danger that was threatening him! Christ is always beforehand with us. Before the storm comes, He has provided the harbor of refuge. Before the disease attacks us, He has the remedy ready to cure it. His mercy outruns our misery!

What a lesson we ought to learn from this action of Christ! Whenever we see any friend in peril through temptation, let us not begin to talk about him, but let us at once pray for him! Some persons are very fond of hinting and insinuating about what is going to happen to certain people with whom they are acquainted. I pray you, beloved Friends, not to do it! Do not hint that So-and-So is likely to fall, but pray that he may not fall. Do not insinuate anything about him to others, but tell the Lord what your anxiety is concerning him.

But So-and-So has made a lot of money and he is getting very purseproud. Well, even if it is so, do not talk about him to others, but pray God to grant that he may not be allowed to become purse-proud. Do not say that he will be, but pray constantly that he may not beand do not let anyone but the Lord know that you are praying for him.

Then there is So-and-So. He is so elated with the success he has had that one can scarcely get to speak to him. Well then, Brother, pray that he may not be elated. Do not say that you are afraid he is growing proud, for that would imply what you would be if you were in his place! Your fear reveals a secret concerning your own nature, for what you judge that he would be is exactly what you would do in similar circumstances! We always measure other peoples corn with our own bushelwe do not borrow their bushel. And we can judge ourselves by our judgment of others. Let us cease these censures and judgmentsand let us pray for our Brothers and Sisters. If you fear that a minister is somewhat turning aside from the faith, or if you think that his ministry is not so profitable as it used to be, or if you see any other imperfection in him, do not go and talk about it to people in the street, for they cannot set him rightgo and tell his Master about him! Pray for him and ask the Lord to make right whatever is wrong. There is a sermon by old Matthew Wilks about our being Epistles of Christ, written not with ink, and not on tablets of stone, but in fleshy tablets of the heart. And he said that ministers are the pens with which God writes on their hearts heartsand that pens need sharpening every now and thenbut even when they are sharp, they cannot write without ink! So he said that the best service that the people could render to the preacher was to pray the Lord to give them new pens and dip them in the fresh ink that they might write better than before! Do so, dear Friendsdo not blot the page with your censures and unkind remarks, but help the preacher by pleading for him even as Christ prayed for Peter!

VI. Now I must close with our LORDS PREPARATORY PRAYER JUST BEFORE HIS DEATH. You will find it in Luke 23:46And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, He said, Father, into Your hands I commend My spirit: and having said thus, He gave up the ghost. [See Sermons #2311,

Volume 39OUR LORDS LAST CRY FROM THE CROSS and #2644, Volume 45THE LAST WORDS OF CHRIST ON THE CROSSRead/download both sermons, free of charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.]

Our Lord Jesus was very specially occupied in prayer as the end of His earthly life drew near. He was about to die as His peoples Surety and Substitute. The wrath of God, which was due to them, fell upon Him! Knowing all that was to befall Him, He set His face steadfastly to go unto Jerusalem and, in due time, He endured the Cross, despising the shame. But He did not go to Gethsemane and Golgotha without prayer! Son of God as He was, He would not undergo that terrible ordeal without much supplication. You know how much there is about His praying in the later chapters of Johns Gospel. There is especially that great prayer of His for His Church in which He pleaded with amazing fervor for those whom His Father had given Him. Then there was His agonized pleading in Gethsemane when His sweat was, as it were, great drops of blood falling down to the ground. We will not say much about that, but we can well imagine that the bloody sweat was the outward and visible expression of the intense agony of His soul which was exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death.

All that Christ did and suffered was full of prayer, so it was but fitting that His last utterance on earth should be the prayerful surrender of His spirit into the hands of His Father. He had already pleaded for His murderers, Father, forgive them: for they know not what they do. He had promised to grant the request of the penitent thief, Lord, remember me when You come into Your Kingdom. Now nothing remained for Him to do but to say, Father, into Your hands I commend My spirit: and having said thus, He gave up the ghost. His life, which had been a life of prayer, was thus closed with prayeran example well worthy of His peoples imitation!

Perhaps I am addressing someone who is conscious that a serious illness is threatening. Well then, dear Friend, prepare for it by prayer! Are you dreading a painful operation? Nothing will help you to bear it so well as pleading with God concerning it! Prayer will help you mentally as well as physicallyyou will face the ordeal with far less fear if you have laid your care before the Lord and committed yourselfbody, soul and spiritinto His hands. If you are expecting, before long, to reach the end of your mortal life either because of your advanced age, or your weak constitution, or the inroads of the deadly consumptionpray much. You need not fear to be baptized in Jordans swelling flood if you are constantly being baptized in prayer! Think of your Savior in the Garden and on the Crossand pray even as He didNot my will, but yours be done...Father, into Your hands I commend my spirit.

While I have been speaking to Believers in our Lord Jesus Christ, there may have been some here who are still unconvertedwho have imagined that prayer is the way to Heavenyet it is not! Prayer is a great and precious help on the road, but Christ, alone, is the Way! And the very first step heavenward is to trust ourselves wholly to Him. Faith in Christ is the all-important matter and if you truly believe in Him, you are saved! But the very first thing that a saved man does is to prayand the very last thing that he does before he gets to Heaven is to pray. Well did Montgomery write

**Prayer is the contrite sinners voice, Returning from his ways   
While angels in their songs rejoice, And cry, Behold, he prays!   
Prayer is the Christians vital breath, The Christians native air!   
His watchword at the gates of death He enters Heaven with prayer!**

**EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: LUKE 18:1-14.**   
Verse 1. And he spoke a parable unto them to this end, that men ought   
always to pray, and not to faint. [See Sermon #2519, Volume 43WHEN SHOULD WE PRAY?Read/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.] An

old writer says that many of Christs parables need a key to unlock them. Here, the key hangs outside the door, for at the very beginning of the parable we are told what Christ meant to teach by itthat men ought always to pray, and not to faint. And this is the parable.

2. Saying, There was in a city a judge who feared not God, neither regarded man. It is a great pity for any city and for any country where the judges do not fear Godwhere they feel that they have been put into a high office in which they may do just as they please. There were such judges in the olden times even in this landGod grant that we may not see any more like them!

3. And there was a widow in that city and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of my adversary. She had no friend to plead for her. She had nobody to help her and, therefore, when she was robbed of her little patrimony, she went to the court and asked the judge for justice.

4. And he would not for a while. He preferred to be unjust. As he could do as he liked, he liked to do as he should not.   
4, 5. But afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man, yet because this widow troubles me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me. She seems to have gone to him so often that he grew quite fatigued and pained by her persistence! The Greek words are very expressive, as though she had beaten him in the eyes and so bruised him that he could not endure it any longer. Of course, the poor woman had not done anything of the kindbut the judge thus describes her continual importunity as a wounding of him, as an attacking of him, an assault upon himfor he had, perhaps, a little conscience left. He had, at least, enough honesty to confess that he did not fear God, nor regard man. There are some of whom that is true, who will not admit it, but this judge admitted itand though he was but little troubled about ithe said, that I may not be worried to death by this womans continual coming, I will grant her request and avenge her of her adversary.   
6, 7. And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge says. And shall not God avenge His own elect who cry day and night unto Him, though He

bears long with them? [See Sermon #2836, Volume 6PRAYERFUL IMPORTUNITY Read/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.] He is no

unjust judge! He is One who is perfectly holy, just, true and who appears in a nearer and dearer Character than that of judge, even as the One who chose His people from eternity! Shall not God avenge His own elect? Yes, that He willonly let them persevere in prayer and cry day and night unto Him.

8. I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of Man comes, shall He find faith on the earth? [See Sermon #1963, Volume  
33THE SEARCH FOR FAITHRead/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at

http://www.spurgeongems.org.] If anybody can find it, He can, for He is the Creator of it! Yet, when He comes, there will be so little of it in proportion to what He deserves, and so little in proportion to the loving kindness of the Lord, that it will seem as if even He could not find italthough if there were only as much faith as a grain of mustard seed He would be the first to spy it out!

9. And He spoke this parable unto certain who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others. It seems as if these two things went togetheras our esteem of ourselves goes up, our esteem of others goes downthe scales seem to work that way.

10. Two men went up into the Temple to pray. [See Sermon #2395, Volume 41  
THE BLESSINGS OF PUBLIC WORSHIPRead/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at

http://www.spurgeongems.org.] It was the place that was specially dedicated for prayer. It was the place where God had promised to meet with suppliants. They did well, in those days, to go up into the Temple to pray to God. Though, in these days

*Wherever we seek Him, He is found,*

*And every place is hallowed ground.*   
It is sheer superstition which imagines that one place is better for prayer than another! So long as we can be quiet and still, let us pray wherever we may be.

10, 11. The one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank You that I am not as other men areextortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. It is possible that this was all true. We have no indication that he was a hypocriteand if what he said was truethere was something in it for which he might well thank God. It was a great mercy not to be an extortioner, nor unjust, nor an adultererbut what spoilt his expression of thankfulness was that back-handed blow at the other man who was praying in the same Templeor even as this publican. What had the Pharisee to do with him? He had quite enough to occupy his thoughts if he could only see himself as he really was in Gods sight!

12. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. Observe that there is no prayer in all that the Pharisee said. There was a great deal of self-righteousness and self-congratulation, but nothing else. There was certainly no prayer at all in it!

13. And the publican, standing afar offJust on the edge of the crowd, keeping as far away as he could from the Most Holy Place  
13. Would not lift up so much as his eyes unto Heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. [See Sermon #1949, Volume

33A SERMON FOR THE WORST MAN ON EARTHRead/download the entire sermon, free of

charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.] That was all prayerit was a prayer for mercy, it was a prayer in which the suppliant took his right place, for he was, as he said, a sinner. He does not describe himself as a penitent sinner, or as a praying sinner, but simply as a sinner. And as a sinner, he goes to God asking for mercy. Our English version does not give the full meaning of the publicans prayer, it is, God be propitious to me, that is, be gracious to me through the ordained Sacrifice. And that is one of the points of the prayer that made it so acceptable to God. There is a mention of the Atonement in it. There is a pleading of the sacrificial blood. It was a real prayer and an acceptable prayerwhile the Pharisees boasting was not a prayer at all.

14. I tell you, this manThis publican, sinner as he had been, though he had no broad phylacteries like the Pharisee had, though he may not have washed his hands before he came into the Temple, as, no doubt the Pharisee didthis man, who could not congratulate himself upon his own excellence, this man

14. Went down to his house justified rather than the other. He obtained both justification and the peace of mind that comes from it! God smiled upon him and set him at ease concerning his sin. The other man received no justificationhe had not sought it and he did not get it. He had a kind of spurious ease of mind when he went into the Temple and he probably carried it away with him! But he certainly was not justified in

the sight of God. [See Sermon #2687, Volume 46TOO GOOD TO BE SAVED!Read/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.]

14. For everyone that exalts himself shall be abased; and he that humbles himself shall be exalted. God turns things upside down! If we think much of ourselves, He makes us little, and if we make little of ourselves, we shall find that a humble and contrite heart He will not despise! May He teach us so to pray that we may go down to our house justified, as the publican was!

Adapted from The C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307 PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #1776 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

UNBINDING LAZARUS   
NO. 1776

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, APRIL 20, 1884, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**And when He had thus spoken, He cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth! And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave clothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus said unto   
them, Loose him, and let him go.   
John 11:43, 44.**

In many things our Lord Jesus stands alone as a worker. No other can unite His voice with the fiat which says, Lazarus, come forth! Yet, in certain points of gracious operation, the Master associates His servants with Him, so that when Lazarus has come forth He says to them, loose him, and let him go. In the raising of the dead, He is alone, and therein majestic and Divinein the loosing of the bound He is associated with them and still remains majesticbut His more prominent feature is condescension. How exceedingly kind it is of our Lord Jesus to permit His disciples to do some little thing in connection with His great deeds, so that they may be, workers together with Him. Our Lord, as frequently as possible, associated His disciples with Himself. Of course, they could not aid Him in presenting an atoning Sacrifice, yet it was their honor that they had said, Let us go, that we may die with Him, and that in their love they resolved to go with Him to prison and to death.

Our Lord understood the fickleness of their character, yet He knew that they were sincere in their desire to be associated with Him in all His life story, whatever it might be. Therefore, when He, afterwards, rode into Jerusalem in triumph, He, alone, was saluted with Hosannasbut He sent two of His disciples to bring the donkey on which He rode and they cast their garments upon the colt. And they set Jesus on it and, as He went, they spread their clothes on the way. Thus they contributed to His lowly pomp and shared in the exultation of the royal day. Further on, when He would keep the feast, He expressly dwells upon it that He would keep it with them, for He said, With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer.

He sent Peter and John to prepare that Passover. He directed them to the large furnished upper room and there He bade them make ready. Anything that they could do, they were allowed to do. Their Lord was willing to have led them further, still, but through weakness they stopped short. In the garden He bade them watch with Him on that dreadful night and He sought sympathy from them

*Backward and forward, thrice He ran,   
As if He sought some help from man.*

He cried in sorrowful disappointment, Could you not watch with Me one hour? Ah, no! They could go to the brink of the abyss with Him, but they could not descend into its deeps! He must tread the winepress alone and of the people there must be none with Him. Yet, as far as they could go, He disdained not their dear society. He allowed them, according to their capacity, to drink of His cup and to be baptized with His baptism. And if their fellowship with Him in His sufferings went no farther, it was not because He warned them back, but because they had not the strength to follow.

According to His own judgment they were intimately associated with Him, for He said to them, You are they which have continued with Me in My temptations. Beloved, our Jesus Christ still delights to associate us with Him as far as our feebleness and folly will permit! In His present work of bringing sinners to Himself, He counts it a part of His reward that we should be laborers together with Him. In His working people He beholds the travail of His soul as well as in the sinners whom they bring to Him. Thus He has a double reward and is as much glorified in the love, pity and zeal of His servants as in the harvest which they reap. As a father smiles to see his little children imitating him and endeavoring to assist him in his work, so is Jesus pleased to see our lowly efforts for His honor.

It is His joy to see the eyes which He has opened weeping with Him over the impenitent and to hear the tongue which He has loosed speaking in prayer and in the preaching of the Gospelyes, to see any of the members which He has restored and healed occupied as members of righteousness in His service! Jesus is glad to save sinners at all, but most of all glad to save them by the means of those already saved. Thus He blesses the prodigal sons and the servants of the household at the same moment! He gives to the lost, salvation and upon His own called and chosen ones, He puts the honor of being used for the most grand purposes under Heaven! It is more honorable to save a soul from death than to rule an empire! Such honor all the saints may have.

The chief subject of this mornings discourse is our association with Christ in gracious labor, but we must on the road consider other themes which lead up to it. First, I would call your attention to a memorable miracle which was worked by our Lord in the burying place at Bethany. Secondly, I would set before you a singular spectacle, for in Lazarus we see a living man wearing the wrappings of the dead. Thirdly, we will learn something from a timely assistance which the friends around lent to the risen man after the Lord had said, Loose him, and let him go. And then, by way of conclusion, we will note a practical hint which this whole subject gives to those who are willing to hear what Christ, their Lord, will speak to them. Oh, that the Spirit of God may make us quick of understanding to perceive the mind of the Lordand then diligent of heart to carry out His will! Come, O blessed Spirit, help Your servant at this hour!

I. First, then, this chapter records A MEMORABLE MIRACLE. Perhaps that writer is correct who speaks of the raising of Lazarus as the most remarkable of all our Lords mighty works. There is no measuring miracles, for they are all displays of the Infinite, but, in some respects, the raising of Lazarus stands at the head of the wonderful series of miracles with which our Lord astonished and instructed the people. Yet I am not in error when I assert that it is a type of what the Lord Jesus is constantly doing at this hour in the realm of mind and spirit. Did He raise the naturally dead? So does He still raise the spiritually dead! Did He bring back a body from corruption? So does He still deliver men from loathsome sins! The life-giving miracle of Grace is as truly astounding as the quickening miracle of power.

As this was, in some respects, a more remarkable resurrection than the raising of Jairus daughter, or of the young man at the gate of Nain, so there are certain conversions and regenerations which are, to the observing mind, more astonishing than others. I notice the magnificence of this miracle in the subject of it because the man had been dead four days. To give life to one of whom his own sister said, Lord, by this time he stinks, was a deed fragrant with Divine Power! Corruption had set in, but He who is the Resurrection and the Life stayed and reversed the process! Probably the sisters had perceived the traces of decay upon the body of their beloved brother before they buried him, for it is more than likely that they delayed the funeral as long as possible under an undefined hope that, perhaps, their Lord would appear upon the scene.

In that warm climate the ravages of decay are extremely rapid and, before many hours, the loving sisters were compelled to admit, as Abraham had done before them, that they must bury their dead out of their sight. It was their full conviction that the terrible devouring of corruption had commenced. What, then, can be done? When a man has newly fallen asleep in death and every vein and artery is in its placeand every separate organ is still perfectit might seem possible for the life-flood, again, to flow. It somewhat resembles an engine which was but lately in full action and, though it is now motionless, the valves, wheel and bands are still thereonly kindle anew the fire and reapply the motive forceand the machinery will speedily begin to work. But when corruption comes, every valve is displaced, every wheel is broken, every band is severed and the very metal, itself, is eaten away. What can be done then?

Surely it were an easier task to make a new man, altogether, out of the earth than to take this poor corrupted corpse which has turned to worms meat and make it live again! This was the stupendous miracle of Divine Power which our glorious Lord performed upon His friend, Lazarus. Now, there are some men who are symbolized by this casethey are not only devoid of all spiritual life, but corruption has set intheir character has become abominable, their language is putrid, their spirit is loathsome. The pure mind desires to have them put out of sight! They cannot be endured in any decent society. They are so far gone from original righteousness as to be an offense to all and it does not seem

possible that they should ever be restored to purity, honesty, or hope.

When the Lord, in infinite compassion, comes to deal with them and makes them to live, then the most skeptical are obliged to confess, This is the finger of God! What else can it be? Such a profane wretch become a Believer? Such a blasphemer a man of prayer? Such a proud, conceited talker, receive the kingdom as a little child? Surely God Himself must have worked this marvel! Now is fulfilled the Word of the Lord by Ezekiel And you shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O My people, and brought you up out of your graves. We bless our God that He does thus quicken the dry bones whose hope was lost! However far gone a man may be, he cannot be beyond the reach of the Lords right arm of mighty mercy! The Lord can change the vilest of the vile into the most holy of the holy! Blessed be His name, we have seen Him do this and, therefore, we have cheering hope for the worst of men!

The next notable point about this miracle is the manifest human weariness of its worker. He who had to deal with this dead man was, Himself, a Man. I do not know of any passage of Scripture wherein the Manhood of Christ is more frequently manifested than in this narrative. The Godhead is, of course, eminently conspicuous in the resurrection of Lazarus, but the Lord seemed as if He designedly, at the same time, set His Manhood to the front. The Pharisees said, according to the 47th verse, What do we? For this Man does many miracles. They are to be blamed for denying His Godhead, but not for dwelling upon His Manhoodfor every part of the singular scene before us made it conspicuous! When our Lord had seen Marys tears, we read that He groaned in spirit and was troubled. Thus He showed the sorrows and the sympathies of a man. We cannot forget those memorable words, Jesus wept. Who but a man should weep? Weeping is a human specialty. Jesus never seems to be more completely bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh than when He weeps!

Next, our Lord made an enquiryWhere have you laid him? He veils His Omniscienceas a Man, He seeks informationwhere is the body of His dear departed friend? Even as Mary, in later days said about Him, Tell me where you have laid Him, so does the Lord Jesus ask for information as a man who knows not. As if to show His Manhood even more fully, when they tell Him where Lazarus is entombed, He goes that way. He needed not to go! He might have spoken a word where He was and the dead would have risen! Could He not as easily have worked at a distance as near at hand? Being Man, Jesus therefore, again groaning in Himself, comes to the grave.

When He has reached the spot, He sees a cave whose mouth is closed by a huge stone. And now He seeks human assistance. He cries, Take away the stone. Why surely, He who could raise the dead could have rolled away the stone with the same word! Yet, as if needing help from those about Him, the Man, Christ Jesus, reminds us, again, of Mary at His own sepulcher, saying, Who shall roll away the stone for us? That done, our Lord lifts up His eyes to Heaven and addresses the Father in mingled prayer and thanksgiving. How like a man is all this! He takes the suppliants place! He speaks with God as a man speaks with his friend, but still as a Man! Did not this condescending revelation of the Manhood make the miracle all the more remarkable?

The time came when the flame of the Godhead flashed forth from the unconsumed bush of the Manhood! The voice of Him who wept was heard in the chambers of death and forth came the soul of Lazarus to live again in the body! The weakness of God proved itself to be stronger than death and mightier than the grave! It is a parable of our own case as workers. Sometimes we see the human side of the Gospel and wonder whether it can do many mighty works. When we tell the story, we fear that it will appear to the people as a thrice-told tale. We wonder how it can be that Truth so simple, so homely, so common, should have any special power about it. Yet it is so. Out of the foolishness of preaching the wisdom of God shines forth! The Glory of the eternal God is seen in that Gospel which we preach in much trembling and infirmity. Let us, therefore, glory in our infirmity, because the power of God does all the more evidently rest upon us! Let us not despise our day of small things, nor be dismayed because we are manifestly so feeble. This work is not for our honor, but for the Glory of Godand any circumstance which tends to make that Glory more evident is to be rejoiced in!

Let us consider, for a few moments, the instrumental cause of this resurrection. Nothing was used by our Lord but His own word of power. Jesus cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth! He simply repeated the dead mans name and added two commanding words. This was a simple business enough. Dear Friends, a miracle seems all the greater when the means used are apparently feeble and little adapted to the working of so great a result. It is so in the salvation of men! It is marvelous that such poor preaching should convert such great sinners. Many are turned unto the Lord by the simplest, plain, most unadorned preaching of the Gospel. They hear little, but that little is from the lips of Jesus! Many converts find Christ by a single short sentence. The Divine Life is borne into their hearts upon the wings of a brief text.

The preacher had no eloquence. He made no attempt at it, but the Holy Spirit spoke through him with a power which eloquence could not rival! Thus said the Lord, You dry bones, live, and they did! I delight to preach my Masters Gospel in the plainest terms. I would speak still more simply if I could. I would borrow the language of Daniel concerning Belshazzars robe of scarlet and his chain of goldand I would say to RhetoricLet your gifts be to yourself and give your rewards to another. The power to quicken the dead lies not in the wisdom of words but in the Spirit of the living God! The voice is Christs voice and the Word is the Word of Him who is the Resurrection and the Life and, therefore, men live by it! Let us rejoice that it is not necessary that you and I should become orators in order that the Lord Jesus should speak by uslet the Spirit of God rest upon us and we shall be endowed with power from on high so that even the spiritually dead shall, through us, hear the voice of the Son of God and they that hear shall live!

The result of the Lords working must not be passed over, for it is a main element of wonder in this miracle. Lazarus did come forth and that immediately. The thunder of Christs voice was attended by the lightning of His Divine Power and, forthwith, life flashed into Lazarus and he came forth. Bound as he was, the power which had enabled him to live, enabled him to shuffle forth from the ledge of rock where he layand there he stood with nothing of death about him but his grave clothes! He left the close air of the sepulcher and returned to know, once more, the things which are done under the sunand that at once. To me it is one of the great glories of the Gospel that it does not require weeks and months to quicken men and make new creatures of them! Salvation can come to them at once!

The man who stepped into this Tabernacle this morning, steeped in rebellion against his God and, apparently impervious to Divine Truth, may, nevertheless, go down those steps with his sins forgiven and with a new spirit imparted to himin the strength of which he shall begin to live unto God as he never lived before! Do you speak of a nation being born, at once, as if it were impossible? It is possible with God! The Divine Power can send a flash of life all round the world at any instant to quicken myriads of His chosen! We are dealing, now, with Godnot with men! Man must have time to prepare his machinery and get it into working order, but it is not so with the Lord. We, on our part, must seek after a preacher and find, for him, a place where the people may be gathered. But when the Lord Jesus works, straightway the deed is donewith or without the preacherand inside or outside the place of assembly!

If you and I had to feed 5,000, we would need to grind the corn at the mill, bake the bread in the ovenand then we would be a long time in bringing the loaves in baskets! But the Master takes the barley cakes and breaksand as He breaksthe food is multiplied! Likewise He handles the fish and lo, it seems as if a shoal had been in His hands instead of a few small fishes. Behold, the vast multitude receives refreshment from the little stock which has been so abundantly increased! Trust in God, my Brothers! In all your work of love, trust in the unseen Power which lay at the back of the manhood of Christand still lies at the back of the simple Gospel which we preach! The everlasting Word of God may seem to be weak and feeble. It may groan and weep and seem as if it could do no more. But it can raise the dead and raise them at once! You can be sure of this.

The effect which this miracle produced upon those who looked on was very remarkable, for many believed in the Lord Jesus. Besides this, the miracle of raising Lazarus was so unquestioned and unquestionable a fact, that it brought the Pharisees to a pointthey would now make an end of Christ. They had huffed and puffed at His former miracles, but this one had struck such a blow that in their wrath they determined that He should die! No doubt this miracle was the immediate cause of the Crucifixion of Jesusit marked a point of decision when men must either believe in Christ or become His deadly foes. Oh, Brothers, if the Lord is with us, we shall see multitudes believing through Jesus! And if the rage of the enemy becomes, thereby, the more intense, let us not fear itthere will come a last decisive struggle and perhaps it shall be brought on by some amazing display of the Divine Power in the conversion of the chief of sinners! Let us hope so! Let us not be afraid that Armageddon should be fought, for it will end in victory! We shall see greater things than these!

II. Secondly, I beg you to observe A SINGULAR SPECTACLE. A notable miracle was unquestionably worked, but it required a finishing touch. The man was wholly raised, but not wholly freed! Look, here is a living man in the garments of death! That napkin and other grave clothes were altogether congruous with death, but they were much out of place when Lazarus began to live again! It is a wretched sight to see a living man wearing his shroud. Yet we have seen, in this Tabernacle, hundreds of times, people quickened by Divine Grace with their grave clothes still on them! Such was their condition that unless you observed carefully, you would think them still dead. And yet within them the lamp of heavenly Life was burning. Some said, He is dead, look at his garments. But the more spiritual cried, He is not dead, but these bands must be loosed. It is a singular spectaclea living man hampered with the garments of death!

Moreover, he was a moving man bound hand and foot. How he moved, I do not know. Some of the old writers thought that he glided, as it were, through the air, and that this was part of the miracle. I think he may have been so bound that though he could not freely walk, yet he could shuffle along like a man in a sack. I know that I have seen souls bound and yet movingmoving intensely in one directionand yet not capable of stirring an inch in another. Have you not seen a man so truly alive that he wept, he mourned, he groaned over sinbut yet he could not believe in Christ but seemed bound hand and foot as to faith? I have seen him determinedly give up his sin and crush a bad habit under his footand yet he could not lay hold on a promise or receive a hope! Lazarus was free enough in one way, for he came out of the tomb, but the blinding napkin was about his head and, even so, it is with many a quickened sinner, for when you try to show him some cheering Truth of God, he cannot see it.

Moreover, here was a repulsive object, but yet attractive. Mary and Martha must have been charmed to see their brother, even though wrapped in grave clothes. He startled all the assembly and yet they were drawn to him. A man fresh from the sepulcher robed in a winding-sheet is a sight one would go a long way not to see, but such was Lazarus! But a man restored from deathit were worthwhile to travel round the world to look uponand such was Lazarus! Mary and Martha felt their hearts dancing within them since their dear brother was alive! Notwithstanding the repulsiveness of the spectacle, it must have charmed them beyond anything they had seen except the Lord Himself! So have we come near to a poor sinnerit was enough to frighten anybody to hear his groans and to see his weepingyet he was so dear to every true heart that we loved to be with him! I have sometimes spoken with broken-hearted sinners and they have pretty nearly broken my heart. And yet, when they have gone out of the room, I have wished to see a thousand more like them! Poor creatures, they fill us with sorrow, and yet flood us with joy!

Moreover, here was a man strong and yet helpless. He was strong enough to come forth from his grave and yet he could not take the napkin from off his head, for his hands were bound and he could not go to his house, for his feet were swathed. Unless some kind hand unbound him, he would remain a living mummy! He had sufficient strength to quit the grave, but he could not loosen his grave clothes. So have we seen strong men, for the Spirit of God has been in them, and has moved them mightily! They have been passionately in earnesteven to agony in one directionyet the newborn life has been so feeble in other ways that they seemed to be mere babes in swaddling clothes. They have not been able to enjoy the liberty of Christ, nor enter into communion with Christ, nor work for Christ. They have been bound hand and foot so that work and progress have, alike, been beyond them.

This seems a strange sequel to a miracle. The bands of death loosed, but not the bands of linen! Motion given, but no movement of hands or fee! Strength bestowed, but not the power to undress himself! Such anomalies are common in the world of Divine Grace.

III. This brings us to consider A TIMELY ASSISTANCE which you and I are called upon to render. O for wisdom to learn our duty and Grace to do it at once! Let us consider what are these bands which often bind newly regenerated sinners. Some of them are blindfolded by the napkin about their headthey are very ignorantsadly devoid of spiritual perception and, therefore the eye of faith is darkened. Yet the eye is there and Christ has opened it. And it is the business of the servant of God to remove the napkin which bandages it, by teaching the Truth of God, explaining it, and clearing up difficulties. This is a simple thing to do, but exceedingly necessary.

Now that they have life, we shall teach them to purpose. Besides that, they are bound hand and foot, so that they are compelled to inactionwe must show them how to work for Jesus! Sometimes these bands are those of sorrow, for they are in an awful terror about the pastwe have to unbind them by showing that the past is blotted out. They are wrapped about by many a yard of doubt, mistrust, anguish and remorse. Loose them, and let them go. Another hindrance is the band of fear. Oh, says the poor soul, I am such a sinner that God must punish me for my sin. Tell him the grand Doctrine of Substitution! Unwrap this cerement by the assurance that Jesus took our sin and that, by His stripes we are healed. It is wonderful what liberty comes by that precious Truth of God when it is well understood!

The penitent soul fears that Jesus will refuse its prayerassure it that He will in nowise cast out any that come to Him. Let fear be taken from the soul by the promises of Scripture, by our testimony to their truth and by the Spirit bearing witness to the doctrine which we endeavor to impart. Souls are very often bound with the grave clothes of prejudice. They used to think such-and-such before conversion and they are very apt to carry their dead thoughts into their new life. Go and tell them that things are not what they seemthat old things have passed awayand behold, all things have become new! The days of their ignorance God winked at, but now they must change their minds about everything and no more judge according to the sight of the eyes and the hearing of the ears.

Some of them are bound with the grave clothes of evil habit. It is a noble work to aid a drunk to unwind the accursed bands which prevent his making the slightest progress towards better things. Let us tear off every band from ourselves, that we may the more readily help them to be free! The bonds of evil habits may still remain upon men that have received the Divine Life until those habits are pointed out to them and the evil of them is shown. And so they are helped by precept, prayer and example, to free themselves. Who among us would wish Lazarus to continue wearing his shroud? Who would wish to see a regenerate man falling into evil habits? When the Lord quickens men, the main point of the business is secured then you and I can come in to loose every bond which would hamper and hinder the free action of the Divine Life.

But why are those bandages left? Why did not the miracle which raised Lazarus, also loosen his grave clothes? I answer because our Lord Jesus is always economical of miracles. False wonders are plentiful! True miracles are few and far between. In the Church of Rome, such miracles as they claim, are usually a lavish waste of power. When St. Swithin made it rain for 40 days, that his corpse might not be carried into the Churchit was much ado about very little. When St Denis walked a thousand miles with his head in his hands, one is apt to ask why he could not have journeyed quite as well if he had set it on his neck! And when another saint crossed the sea on a tablecloth, it would appear to have been an improvement if he had borrowed a boat. Rome can afford to be free with her counterfeit coins! The Lord Jesus never works a miracle unless there is an object to be gained which could not be obtained in any other way. When the enemy said, Command that these stones be made bread, our Lord refused, for it was not a fit occasion for a miracle. Lazarus cannot be raised out of the grave except by a miraclebut he can be unstripped without a miracle and, therefore, human hands must do it.

If there is anything in the Kingdom of God which we can do, ourselves, it is folly to say, May the Lord do it, for He will do nothing of the sort! If you can do it, you shall do itor if you refuse, the neglect shall be visited upon you. I suppose that those bands were left that those who came to unwind him would be sure that he was the same man who died. Some of them may have said, This is Lazarus, for these are the grave clothes which we wrapped about him. There is no trickery here. This is the same man that was laid out and prepared by us for burial. I recollect putting in that stitch, cries one. I remember that stain in the linen, cries another! From coming so near to Lazarus, they would be equally well assured that he was really alive! They perceived his living flesh rising as each ligature was removedthey marked his breathing and the flush which reddened his cheeks.

For some such cause our Lord permits the quickened sinner to remain in a measure of bondage, that we may know that the man is the same person who was really dead in trespasses and sins. He was no sham sinner, for the traces of his sins are still upon him. You can see by what he says that his training was none of the bestthe relics of the old nature show what manner of man he used to be. Every now and then the smell of the sepulcher meets your nostrilsthe mold of the grave has stained his grave clotheshis was true death and no imitation! So, too, we know that he is alive, for we hear his sighs and cries. And we perceive that his experience is that of a living child of God. Those desires, that searching of heart and that longing to be soundly right with Godwe know what these mean. It is a great help to us in discerning spirits and in being assured of the work of God upon any person, to come into living contact with those imperfections which it is to be our privilege to remove under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Moreover, I still think that the main object was that these disciples might enter into rare fellowship with Christ. They could each say, not proudly, but still joyfully, Our Lord raised Lazarus and I was there and helped to unloose him from his grave clothes. Perhaps Martha could say in later life, I took the napkin from my brothers dear face. And Mary could add, I helped to unbind a hand. It is most sweet to hope that we have done anything to cheer, or to teach, or sanctify a soul! Not unto us can be any praise, but unto us there is much comfort concerning this thing. Brothers and Sisters, will you not earn a share in this dear delight? Will you not seek the lost sheep? Will you not sweep the house for the lost money? Will you not, at the very least, help to feast the long-lost son?

This, you see, gives you an interest in a saved person. Those who are very observant tell us that those whom we serve may forget us, but those who do us a service are fast bound to us! Many kindnesses you may do for people and they will be altogether ungrateful, but those who have bestowed the benefit do not forget. When the Lord Jesus sets us to help others, it is partly that they may love us for what we have donebut still more that we may love them because we have rendered them a benefit! Is there any love like the love of a mother to her child? Is it not the strongest affection on earth? Why does a mother love her child? Did the little child ever render a pennyworth of service to the mother? Certainly not! It is the mother that does everything for the child. So then, the Lord binds us to the new converts in love by permitting us to help them. Thus is the Church made all of one piece and woven together from the top throughout by the workmanship of love. O you who are devoid of love, it is evident that you do not labor with pure desire to benefit others, for if you did, you would be filled with affection for them!

Before we leave this point of seasonable assistance, let us ask why should we remove these grave clothes? It is enough reply that the Lord has bid us do so! He commands us to loose him, and let him go. He bids us comfort the feeble-minded and support the weak. If He commands it, we need no other reason! I hope, my dear Friends, you will set to work at once, for the Kings business requires haste and we are traitors if we delay. We should do this because it is very possible that we helped to bind those grave clothes upon our friend. Some of the people who were at Bethany that day had assisted in the burial of Lazarus and, surely, they should loose Lazarus who helped to bind him. Many a Christian man, before his conversion, has helped to make sinners worse by his example. And possibly, after his conversion, he may, by his indifference and lack of zeal, have aided in binding new converts in the bonds of doubt and sorrow. At any rate, you have said of many a person, He will never be saved! Thus you have wrapped him in grave clothesthe Lord never told you to do thatyou did it of your own accord and now that He bids you remove those grave clothes, will you not be quick to do it?

I remember when somebody lent a hand to take the grave clothes off me and, therefore, I desire to loose the grave clothes of others. If we cannot repay what we owe to the precise individual who worked us good, we can at least repay it by working for the general benefit of seekers. There, said a benevolent man, as he gave help to a poor man, take that money and when you can pay it back, give it to the next man whom you meet who is in the same plight as yourself. And tell him he is to pay it to another destitute person as soon as he can afford itand so my money will go traveling on for many a day. That is how our Lord does itHe sends a Brother to loose my bonds. Then I am helped to set another free and, he releases a third, and so on to the worlds end! God grant that you and I may not be negligent in this heavenly service!

IV. Lastly, A PRACTICAL HINT. If the Lord Jesus Christ employed the disciples in relieving Lazarus of his grave clothes, do you not think He would employ us if we were ready for such work? Yonder is Paul. The Lord Jesus has struck him down, but the lowly Ananias must visit him and baptize him, that he may receive his sight. There is Cornelius. He has been seeking the Lord and the Lord is gracious to him, but he must, first, hear Peter. There is a wealthy Ethiopian riding in his chariot. He is reading the Book of the Prophet Isaiah, but he cannot understand it till Philip comes. Lydia has an opened heart, but only Paul can lead her to the Lord Jesus. Innumerable are the instances of souls blessed by human instrumentality!

But I shall conclude by calling attention to one passage upon which I wish to dwell for a second or two. When the prodigal came home, the father did not say to one of his servants, Go and meet him. No, we read, when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion and ran, and fell on his neck and kissed him. He did all this himself! The father personally forgave him and restored him. But we read further on, the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet: and bring here the fatted calf, and kill it, and let us eat, and be merry. The loving father might have done all this himself, might he not? Oh yes, but then he desired that all the servants in the house should be of one accord with him in the joyful reception of his son.

The great Lord could do everything for a sinner, Himself, but He does not do so because He wishes all of us to be in fellowship with him! Come, fellow servants, bring forth the best robe! I am never happier then when I preach the righteousness of Christ and try to put it upon the sinner. What? cries one! You cannot put it on! So the parable saysBring forth the best robe and put it on him.

I not only bring it out and show it, but by the Holy Spirits help, I try to put it on the sinner! I hold it up before him, just as you hold up a friends great-coat to help him to put it on. You have to guide the poor sinners hand into the sleeve and lift it up upon his shoulders or he might never get it on. You are to teach him, comfort him, cheer him and, in fact, help him to be dressed like one of the family! Then the ring, can we not bring it forth? Surely the father should have put the ring upon his sons hand. No, he bids his servants do that. He cries to them, Put a ring on his hand introduce him into fellowship, gladden him with the communion of saints! You and I must conduct the new convert into the joys of Christian society and let him know what it is to be married to Christ and joined to His people! We must put honor upon these reclaimed ones and decorate those who once were degraded.

Nor must we fail to put shoes on his feet! He has a long journey to go he is to be a pilgrim and we must help to shoe him with the preparation of the Gospel of Peace. His feet are new in the Lords wayswe must show him how to run on the Masters errands. As for the fatted calf, it is ours to feed the restored ones. And as for the music and the dancing, it is ours to make the hearts of penitents glad by rejoicing over them. There is plenty to be done! O my Brothers and Sisters, try and do some of it this morning! Certain among us will be looking after an enquirer as soon as the service is overand they will try to put a ring on his hand and shoes on his feet. I wish that more of you did this, but if you cannot do so within these Tabernacle walls, do it when you get home!

Commence a holy ministry for the converted who are not yet brought into liberty. There are children of God who have not yet a shoe on their feetthere are plenty of shoes in the house, but no servant has put them on! When I come to look, I see some Brethren who have not the ring on their hand. Oh, that I might have the privilege of putting it on! I charge you, Brothers and Sisters, by the blood that bought you, and by the love that holds you, and by the supreme bounty which supplies your needgo forth and do what your Master graciously permits and commands you to doloose Lazarus! Bring forth the best robe and put it on him! Put a ring on his hand and shoes on his feet! And let us all eat and be merry with our Father! Amen.

**PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMONJohn 11:1-46.** HYMNS FROM OUR OWN HYMN BOOK176, 251, 35 (VER I).  
Adapted from The C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307 Sermon #2554 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

THE SPIRITUAL RESURRECTION

NO. 2554

A SERMON   
INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS-DAY, JANUARY 30, 1898.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT NEW PARK STREET CHAPEL, SOUTHWARK, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, NOVEMBER 18, 1855.

**And when He thus had spoken, He cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave clothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus said unto them, Loose him, and let him go. John 11:43, 44.**

PERHAPS the legitimate topic of this discourse, after such a text, ought to be the resurrection of the dead. Lazarus had diedhe had lain in his grave. At the invitation of his sisters, Jesus Christ came to see them and His visit answered the double purpose of comforting the bereaved and restoring the dead. It would be a blessed and an excellent topic were we, for a little while, to dilate upon the wonders of the resurrection. We shall do so for a few moments and then we shall come to the principal theme of this evening which will rather concern spiritual resurrection from a spiritual death, than that natural resurrection which is to take place upon us all, by-and-by.

The very fact that Lazarus came from his grave, after he had lain there four days and was corrupt, and that he was called from the sepulcher by the mighty voice of Jesus is, to us, a proof that the dead shall rise at the voice of Jesus at the Last Great Day. Every Christian believes that there is to be a resurrection of the dead, but, unfortunately, the great Doctrine of the Resurrection is not, by most of us, made so prominent as it ought to be. In old times, the Resurrection was preached by the Apostles as being the sum and substance of the Gospel. Wherever Paul went, we know that he spoke concerning the Resurrection of the deadand then, some mocked. But now, usually, if we speak concerning the after state of the departed, we generally treat of immortality, not of resurrection. Now, immortality was known to the ancients before the Gospel came. They believed in a kind of immortality, but

resurrection never entered into the thoughts of the heathen. Many of them believed in the immortality of the soul. Those who had been enlightened by powerful reason, or remnants of ancient tradition, believed that the soul did not die, but lived on in a future state. But immortality is not resurrection! And the immortality of the soul is very different from the Christian doctrine of the resurrection of the body. We believe that the soul is immortal and shall last forever, but we believe something more than that. We believe that the body is immortal, too! And that after this body shall have been sown in the gravein the Lords good time it shall be raised again and shall either be translated to Heaven, there to enjoy eternal blissor else be sent down to Hell to suffer forever and ever.

The Doctrine of the Resurrection of the Dead belongs peculiarly to the Christian dispensation. It was never taught by any rationalists or philosophers. They might hold the transmigration of souls, but the resurrection of the body they did not hold. But we, as Christians, really believe that this body which we now inhabit, though it must die and see corruption, shall be raised from the dustthat, though consumed on the funeral pyre, its ashes, scattered to the winds, shall yet come together again! We believe that do what you will with the bodydivide it, scatter it, mingle itGod, by the fiat of His Omnipotence, shall rebuild the fabric to become the habitation of the living soul forever and forever. We dare not in fact, deny this, because we are so expressly taught it in the sacred writings and it has been so fully and satisfactorily proved by the Apostle Paul.

And oh, my Friends, is it not a blessed fact that we shall rise again? I see among my audience some whose garb of woe betokens that they have lost a friend. I see some whose time-worn countenances tell me that they must have buried a mother or a father. Others, I know, have laid beloved infants in the dust. Others have had a precious husband or wife severed from their bosom. I mark among you some whose dress tell me you have been lately widowed, or bereaved of one tenderly beloved. Ah, despair not, you mourners! Here is a fact for younot only that your soul and the soul of your loved one shall meet in eternitybut that the same body on which you doted shall, if you are Believers, be seen by you in Heaven! The eyes of the tender and pious mother which once dropped tears on you shall behold you in Heaven! And the hands of that pious father, now lying in the grave, that once lay on your head and consecrated you to the Lord shall be grasped by you in Heaven! Not only shall the soul of that infant live forever and ever, but its beautiful body, which is dear to you as the casket which contained the soul of your child, shall live again! It shall not be a fictitious resurrectionit shall not be a new race of ethereal creaturesbut actual bodies shall be ours.

And oh, my Brothers and Sisters, if you have been bereft of all your friendsif they have departed in the faith of Jesus, you shall see them again! Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yes, says the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them. But yet more blessed are they to be, for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall see the bodies of those we once loved on earth. Those bodies we once silently gazed upon, as they lay in all the stiffness of death, we shall see quickened and glorified! That mortal shall put on immortality. That corruptible shall, put on incorruption. It was sown in weakness and we wept when we saw it lowered into the gravebut it shall be raised in power. It was sown a natural body and though it shall be raised a spiritual body, yet it shall be a body to all intents and purposes, as it was before. And we shall recognize it as such

*Oh, sacred hope! Oh, blissful hope,   
That Jesus Grace has given;   
The hope, when days and years are past, We all shall meet in Heaven!*

Not in a separate existence of merely souls, but souls and bodies, too! And   
*There, on a green and flowery mount,   
Our wearied (bodies as well as) souls shall sit, And with transporting joys recount   
The labors of our feet.*   
Ah, Beloved, does not this make Christianity worth having? Does not   
this light up the grave with a supernatural splendorthis cheering, this   
glorious, this overpowering, this more than natural, this superhuman  
Doctrine of the Resurrection of the Dead? I will not stop to picture the   
sceneI might tell you of the silent graves and of the churchyards covered with the grass of ages. I might picture to you the battlefields, I might  
bid you hear the voice of Jesus when, descending with the sound of the   
trumpet and with an exceedingly great army of angels, He shall say,   
Awake, you dead, and come to judgment! When he cries, Awake! eyes  
that have been glazed for many a year shall open! Bodies that have long  
been stiffened shall regain their energy and stand upright! Not sheeted   
ghosts, not phantoms, not visions, but actual beings shall rise! They  
the same persons who were buriedthe real men, the real women. I   
think I see them bursting the cerements of the grave, pushing open their   
coffin lids and coming forth. Ah, we shall see them, and each one, for  
himself, shall rise. There shall rise Lazarus and Martha and Maryand  
loved ones that belong to uswhom long we have wept as departed, we   
shall then rejoice over as having been recovered!   
So much by way of preliminary remarks concerning the resurrection  
from the dead.   
Now let us deal with the subject in another manner. The death of  
Lazarus, his burial in the tomb and his corruption are a figure and picture of the spiritual condition of every soul by nature. The voice of Jesus,  
crying, Lazarus, come forth, is an emblem of the voice of Jesus, by His   
Spirit, which quickens the soul. And the fact that Lazarus, even when  
alive, wore his grave clothes for a little while, until they were taken from   
him, is extremely significant, for if we allegorize upon it, it teaches us   
that even when a soul is quickened into spiritual life, it still wears some  
of its grave clothes which are only torn off when Jesus afterwards says,   
Loose him, and let him go. We propose, therefore, to consider these   
three points. First, the slumber of death, in which every soul lies by nature. Secondly, the voice of lifeJesus cried with a loud voice, Lazarus,  
come forth. And thirdly, the partial bondage which even the living soul has to endure, which is signified by Lazarus coming forth bound hand and foot and having his face wrapped about with a napkin. I. First, then, we have here THE SLUMBER OF DEATH in which all of us lie by nature. Come with me now, Christian, to the rock from where you were hewn, to the hole of the pitto the miry clayfrom where you were dug. Come with me to the house of death, for there your soul once lay, dead in trespasses and sins. There are some in this world, we know, who utterly deny that the sinner is really dead in sins. I remember, some time ago, hearing a preacher assert that, though the Scriptures said that men were dead, it meant a metaphorical deaththat they were not really and actually dead, but only metaphorically so. Now, I always like, when there is a metaphor, to keep to the metaphor. Some of the eminent doctors in Rowland Hills day said that there were no such beings as angels, that they were only Oriental metaphors. Very well, said Rowland Hill, then it was a company of Oriental metaphors that sang at the birth of Christ, Glory to God in the highest. Angels are Oriental metaphors? Then it was an Oriental metaphor that slew 185,000 of Sennacheribs army in a single night. Angels are Oriental metaphors? Then it was an Oriental metaphor that appeared to Peter in prison, that knocked off his chains and led him through the streets. Truly, Mr. Hill said, these Oriental metaphors are wonderful things! We will try the same rule here. You has He metaphorically quickened, who were metaphorically dead in trespasses and sins! A fine metaphorical Gospel that is! Then again, To be carnally-minded is metaphorical death! But to be spiritually-minded is metaphorical life and peace! Such language does not mean anything at all! My Friends, it is all nonsense about metaphorical death! Men are really dead in a spiritual sense.   
But I must tell you in what this death consists. There are different grades of lifeunderstand that to commence with. There is the life of a plant which a stone does not possess and, therefore, a stone is dead. There is the life of an animal which the plant does not possess and, if you were speaking of animal life, you might describe the plant as to that extent dead. Then, again, there is mental lifeand since the animal has no mind, you might say that the animal is mentally dead. Then there is a grade beyond the soul life of a mana spiritual life. To an ungodly man, there are only two partssoul and body. To the Christian, there are threebody, soul, and spirit. And as a body without a soul would be dead, naturallyso a man without a spirit, a man who has not had a spark struck off from the great orb of Light called Godis spiritually dead. Nevertheless, there are some who assert that men who are ungodly are spiritually alive. Come, sinner, if you think thus, I must argue with you a little while.   
First of all, if you are spiritually alive and can do spiritual actions, the first thing I ask you is, Why do you not do them now? Some men say that they can repent and believe when they like and they do not believe that, to do this, they need the power of the Spirit. Then, Sir, if you can do it, and do not do itif any man deserves to be damned, it is you! And on your own showing, if there is a corner of the Pit hotter than another, you ought to be put there!   
The next thing I have to say to you, O Sinner, is thisYou say, I am not dead; I have spiritual life, and can pray, and repent and believe. Let me ask,

Have you tried to do it? Do you say, Yes? Well, then, I know you will confess, unless you will lie before God, that you have found out your inability! There never was a man yet who strove to pray sincerely before God, but he felt something repressing his devotion. When he has come before God, under an agony of guilt, crying out for mercy, he has felt at times as if he could not pray, as if he could not utter a single word! Have none of you known what it is to be in such a condition that you cannot pray, that you cannot believe, that you cannot repent? When you put your hand on your heart and say, O God, my heart is hard! I wish it would melt! I cannot break it? When you would pray, do you not feel that your heart is far away, wandering in the world? The best method of proving a mans inability is to set him about doing the thing. When the young man said, All these things have I kept from my youth up, Jesus, just to try him, said, Go and sell all that you have. Ah, Beloved, when God brought us to Himself we wrestled in prayer and pleaded with him and we were taught, after all, that the power for everything spiritual must come from God, for there were certain times and seasons when we could no more have prayed than we could have flown up to Heaven! When we could no more have believed than we could have taken the moon in our hands! We could not grasp a promise. We could not grapple with a single temptation. We felt ourselves to be powerless, lost, dead. Sinner, I tell you, you are dead as to all spiritual matters, and dead you always will be, if left to yourselfand you cannot by any means carry yourself to Heaven! The sovereign will and power of God alone must quicken you, or else you can do nothing except sin. Neither righteous acts nor coming to Jesus can you ever do of yourself.   
But I think I hear someone say, If I cannot do anything, I will sit down where I am and make myself content. What? Will you sit down when Hell blazes before you, when the Pit is yawning at your feet, when damnation stares you in the face, when God is angry with you, when your sins are bellowing out to high Heaven for condemnation? Will you sit down? I tell you, you cannot and dare not sit down. Sit down? As well might a man sit on yonder housetop when the flames are blazing around him! As well might he float down the rapids, to be at once dashed to pieces! Ah, if you talk about sitting down, you give me the best proof in all the world that you are dead in trespasses and sins, for if you were not dead, you would be beginning to cry out, O God, quicken me! O God, give me life! I know that I am dead! I feel that I can do nothing, but You have promised to do it all for me. Though I am less than nothing, You have Omnipotence to give me life. Do you not see, Man, that I am putting you down that Christ may pick you up? Do you not see that I am laying you low, not to perish, not to be trampled on in the dust, but rather that, like a corn of wheat, you might fall into the ground and die and afterwards be quickened and bring forth fruit? Nothing can bring a man into a state of life so well as a feeling of death! And if I could get my Hearers, one and all, to recognize, acknowledge and feel that they were in a state of spiritual death and utterly powerless, I could then have hope for themfor no man can confess himself to be dead and yet sit down contentedlyhe will cry out for Divine Grace and ask God to deliver him from that death. But there is one thing I have yet to tell you before I leave this point and it is that the ungodly man is something more than dead. He is like Lazarus lying in his tomb. You remember those homely words which Martha said to Jesus? They are translated into plain Saxon and, I daresay, the Hebrew is quite as expressive, Lord, by this time he stinks: for he has been dead four days. Yes, Brothers and Sisters, and this is the condition of every ungodly manthe is not only dead, but he has become positively corrupt in Gods sight! There are some here, to whom I might point at this moment, who know what I mean when I say they not only groan under a sense of spiritual death, but feel themselves to be a stench in their own nostrils and in Gods also. I ask you, poor convicted sinner, does there live or exist in this world a greater nuisance than yourself? I know you will say, No, there may be other filthy and abominable things, but I feel myself to be the most loathsome incarnation of filthiness that ever could have existed. I did not always think myself to be so, but I do now. I feel that I am not simply dead and powerless, but I feel offensive to myself, so that I wish I could run away from myself. And I feel offensive, moreover, to Godutterly obnoxious to Him. Well, then, if that is your feeling, you are brought low enough, for it is just when we begin to corrupt, as the body of Lazarus did, and we, like Martha, are for giving everything up as hopeless, that Jesus Christ calls as He did then, Lazarus, come forth!   
Now you see what I have made my congregation out to be. Some of you are aliveyou have been quickened by God. But as for the rest of you, I am standing in an immense catacomb, tonight, and all around me there are dead personsin the gallery and down belowmen and women who are spiritually dead!   
II. But now comes the wonder-working process, THE VOICE OF LIFE. Jesus said, Lazarus, come forth.   
We commence, then, with this wonder-working process by saying that the giving of life to Lazarus was instantaneous. There lay Lazarus in the grave, dead and corrupt. Jesus cried aloud, Lazarus, come forth. We do not read that a single moment elapsed between the time when Christ said the words and when Lazarus came out of his grave! It did not take the soul an instant to wing its way into the body of Lazarus, nor did that body need any delay to become alive, again! So, if the Lord speaks to a man and quickens him to spiritual life, it is an instantaneous work. There are some of you standing there, apparently alive, but you feel, you acknowledge, you confess, that you are dead. Well, if the Lord speaks to you tonight, life will come into you in a moment, in one single instant! The power of Divine Grace is shown in this, that it converts a man instantly and on the spot! It does not take hours to justifyjustification is done in a moment! It does not take hours to regenerateregeneration is done in a second. We are born and we die, naturally, in instants. And so it is with regard to spiritual death and spiritual lifethey occupy no period of time, but are done instantly, whenever Jesus speaks! Oh, if my Master would cry tonight, Lazarus, come forth! there is not a Lazarus herealthough covered with the shroud of drunkenness, bound about with the belt of swearing, or surrounded with a huge stone coffin of evil habits and wickednesswho would not burst that coffin and come forth a living man!   
But mark, it was not the disciples, but Jesus, who said, Lazarus, come forth. How often have I strived to preach you, if possible, into lifebut that could not be done. I remember, when I have preached at different times in the country, and sometimes here, that my whole soul has agonized over menevery nerve of my body has been strained and I could have wept my very being out of my eyes and carried my whole frame away in a flood of tearsif I could but win souls. On such occasions, how we preach! As if we had men before us, personally, and were clutching them and begging them to come to Christ! But with all that, I know I never yet made a soul alive, and never shall. And I am perfectly conscious that all the pleadings of all the living ambassadors from God will never induce a sinner to come to Jesus unless Jesus comes to that sinner! Peter might have cried for a long while, Lazarus, come forth, before Lazarus would have moved an inch! So might James or Johnbut when Jesus does it, it is done! Oh, does not this lower the pride of the minister? What is he? He is a poor little trumpet through which God blows, but nothing else! In vain do I scatter seedit is on God the harvest depends! And all my Brothers in the ministry might preach till they were blind, but they would have no success unless the Spirit attended the quickening Word!   
But, poor Soul, though the hearer cannot do it, and although the minister cannot do it, I want to persuade you, if I can, that tonight, dead as you are, Jesus can speak you to life. Let me single out a character, for I like to do that. There is a man who says, I have been living 50 years in sin and tonight I am worse than ever. My old habits bind me hand and foot and I have no hope of being delivered. Now, if tonight, my Hearer, Jesus says, Lazarus, come forth, you will come forth in an instant! No, but, you say, I am corrupt. Ah, but Christ is mightier than your corruption! Do you say, I am dead? No, but Christ is life. Do you say, I am bound hand and foot, and in a dungeon of darkness? No, but Christ is a Light in darkness and He will disperse the gloom. You say, perhaps, I do not deserve it, but Jesus cares nothing for deserving. The dead body of Lazarus deserved nothing! It was putrid and only deserved to have the stone covering it forever. Roll away the stone, says Christ, and oh, what odor issued forth! And there may be some from whom Jesus Christ may have rolled away the stone tonightand they may be standing at their own graves and feeling themselves loathsome and offensive. But still, my Hearer, offensive as you are, Jesus asks no merit of youHe will give you His merits. It is only for Him to say, Come forth, and you will, this night, come forth from your graveand be made alive in Christ Jesus! Oh, may our God wake many dead souls that may be present and bring them to life by His summons, Lazarus, come forth.   
I think I hear another person saying, Ah, but I am afraid, Sir, that if I were told to come forth, the devil would not let mehe has been oppressing me so longhe has been trying to keep me down and to make me lie still in my grave! I feel that he is now sitting upon my breast and weighing down all my hopes, and quenching all my love. Ah, but let me tell you Sinner, there is not one in Hell that is so mighty as Christ is in Heaven! The Evil One is in Christs power and if you will but call upon Himif He has enabled you only to utter a groan this nightHe will cry unto you, Come forth, and you shall live!

III. Now let us turn for a few moments to the last point and that is, THE PARTIAL BONDAGE.   
Even when a soul is called by Divine Grace from death to life, yet it often wears its grave clothes for a long while. Many of my dear friends are afraid they are not converted because they are not like Mr. So-and-So, or Mrs. So-and-Sothey have not so much faith and assurance and do not know as much as othersso they are afraid they are not alive. I have a word of comfort for them! The fact that Lazarus came forth in his grave clothes, with a napkin wrapped about his head, teaches us that many of us, though we are alive in Christ, still have our grave clothes on. I believe many Arminians still have their napkin about their head. That is to say, they have not got quite free from trusting in works. They used to, when dead, believe in salvation by worksthey do not, now, but they still have some remnants of their grave clothes hanging about them. They have not yet come to believe that salvation is by Sovereign Grace, alone, but will have some works mixed up with it. They fear that, after all, God may cast them out of the Covenant. Oh, if we could but tear their napkin off! We will not quarrel with them, we will not be angry with thembut we think we hear Jesus Christ say to us, Loose them, and let them go. And we will try all the ways in our power, by preaching, to pull the napkin from their eyes and let them see, free election known by calling, full salvation, matchless security, discriminating Grace, particular redemption and all those things that make up the great strength of the Gospel of Jesus!   
This, however, is not the point I want to dwell on with you, because I think most of you have got that napkin off your eyes. But when we first obtain spiritual life, how many grave clothes there are hanging about us! A man who has been a drunk, even though he becomes a living child of God, will sometimes find his old habits clinging to him. I have known many drunks give up their drunkenness, but when they have been going by a bar, they have thought that, for the life of them, they could not keep from going in. And they have often well-near gone astray and their feet have almost slipped. And the man who has been a swearer will confess that there have been times when the vile words have almost come from his lipsperhaps not quiteI hope not, but there will be enough to show that he has some of his grave clothes still hanging about him. We have known men who have indulged in other kinds of vices and sins and whenever an opportunity has presented itself, there has been the old feeling getting up and saying, Let me do it, let me do it, and they have strived to keep it down, but they have hardly been strong enough. The grave clothes have still been about them. Those grave clothes will keep on very tightly until the habit is broken off. I believe there is not a Christian living who has not some shreds of his grave clothes remaining and that until we lie down in the grave, we shall carry them about with us. Look at poor Paul. Who could have been a more holy man than he? Yet he cried, O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? Let this comfort and cheer the man who has come to Christ, but who is yet striving against his corruption. Perhaps his unbelief says, If you were a child of God, you would not have these wicked thoughts and inclinations. But, let me ask, do you hate those thoughts and inclinations? Then tell the devil, next time that he assails you thus, that he lies, for verily, this is not a sign that you are not the Lords, but rather a sign that you are His, for if you were not a child of God, you would not mind these things! But since you are His child, you strive against them.   
These wicked grave clothes will show themselves sometimes. We know some who seem as if they could not get rid of their old angry tempers as long as they live. Their grave clothes have been torn in shreds by Divine Grace. They do not quite strap their arms up, but the shreds still hang about themand our Brothers and Sisters, even though converted, still seem inclined, sometimes, to be hot and fierce. And we meet with instances, now and then, even in the Church, of some Brothers and Sisters who cannot exactly curb themselvesthey have some of their grave clothes still about them. Do not think I am speaking to exonerate or excuse youI am striving to comfort you. You may be spiritually alive with these grave clothes on if you struggle against them and try to get them off. But if you love them, they are not your grave clothes, but your living clothesyou are doing the work of your fatherand you shall have his wages! If you feel your sins to be grave clothes and are anxious to get rid of them, though you cannot conquer all your sins and corruptions, be not dismayedtrust in Christ! Though the grave clothes yet hang about you, still trust His mercy and His Grace, for, by-and-by, Jesus Christ shall say, Loose him, and let him go.   
We are loosed, first, from one bad habit, and then from another. All the while I live, I feel that I carry some of my grave clothes about with methe garment that encumbers me and the sin that most easily besets me. But, by-and-by, (it may only be tomorrow, but it may be many years henceperhaps some of you will pray for me that it may be many yearsbut I do not know why we should wish it, but, by-and-by), the time will come and Christ will say, Loose him, and let him go. I see one lying on his bedthe eyes glancing upward to Heaven, the pulses faint and fewthe breath drawn heavily, the body decaying. What does all this mean? Why, it is the undoing of the wires of the cage and, in a little while, when sickness and pain have done their work, Christ will say, Loose him, and let him go. I remember hearing a brother-minister telling me of his pious sisters death-bed. When she was very near dying,   
she said, Sit me up a moment, and they did. She then said *Oh! that the final word were given,   
Loose me, and let me rise to Heaven,   
And wrap myself in God.*   
In a moment or two, she fell back. God had said, Loose her, and let her  
go. Oh, how our disembodied spirits will rejoice when God says, Loose   
them, and let them go. We are fettered, nowwe shall be emancipated   
then! Then our spirits shall fly more rapidly than the flashing lightning!   
Then shall they be wafted along, swifter than the gales of the North or   
the winds of the South! We shall fly upwards to our God and be free forever from all that now distresses us, for God shall have said, Loose   
them, and let them go.   
And now a thought or two, dear Hearers, to finish up with. Before God   
will say, Loose him, and let him go, remember, you must have had life.   
Now I come to this last solemn enquiry. How many of us in this place, tonight, have life? How frequently it is the case that we preach to our people with all our soul and might, and yet nobody takes it home to himself!   
How often, my Friends, have I preached in vain, from the simple fact that   
the hearer has listened and there has been no application of it to his own   
soul! But, oh, I would not let you go, feeble as I am, and unable to say  
much to you, until I have tried to press this matter home upon your   
souls! My Hearers, in a little while I, too, must stand before Gods bar.   
And when I think of it, it is enough to make me tremble! When I call to   
mind the tens and hundreds of thousands unto whom I have ministered   
the Word of the Gospel, and think if there should, on the Last Day, be   
found one person who shall lay his damnation to my charge, how horrible and terrible must be my lot! If, after having preached to others, I   
should have been unfaithful and should prove a castaway, what an awful   
thing that would be! In these days, when it is advertised that there is a   
special sermon to be preached, people rush off to hear a popular  
preacher, or somebody who happens to be much talked aboutbut do   
you know what that man does when he preaches, and what you do when  
you hear? Are you aware that every time that man stands in the pulpit, if he is unfaithful, he subjects himself to the wrath of God? Do you not know that if, at last, that man who stands up to preach to the people should have been discovered to have preached false doctrine, his doom must be horrible in the extreme? And do you remember, when you hear, it is not as if you go to see a play, or to listen to a recital? You are listening to a man who professes to speak by God and for God! And to speak for your good and his heart yearns over you. Oh, it is solemn work to preach, and it should be solemn work to hear! For every preaching and every hearing the Lord will call us to account in the Last Great Day when He shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ. What has the preacher talked of tonight?   
He has told you, first, that you are all dead. But some of you will go away and laugh at itbut laughing at it will not make you alive. He has told you, in the next place, that Christ can make you alive. But you despise that Christbut mark, your despising Him will not free you from condemnation at the Last Great Day. He has told you of the bands of death that some of you are bound with, and you are, perhaps, tempted to smile. But mark you thisif you never sorrow over the bands of death, here, you will have to wear clanking fetters forever! Did I speak of fiction when I said that? I speak not of fiction, but a dread reality! There is, somewhereGod knows where it isa place where the fire of Gehenna shall torture bodies forever and where unutterable misery shall pain souls! And oh, tremble, you heavens, and shake, you hills! O Earth, let your solid ribs of brass shake and let your heart be dissolved! It is a facta fearful fact that there is a Hell! I know not where it ismy spirit longs not to visit that dread region! But had it wings, it might fly somewhere and it would find a Hellnot a picture, not a dream, but a positive Hell! And there are souls there, this night, that are biting their bonds of iron and shrieking out under inexpressible torture! And there are some of your friends and relations there, perhapssome whom you knew in the fleshthe man with whom you drained the wine-cups, the harlot, the adulterer, the thief and such-like persons. There they are, in Hell, at this hour!

Do you believe it? I do not think you do, but do you believe Gods Word? Or are you hardy infidels and deny it? It is true, you say. Then are you so mad and irrational as to persevere in the road to there? O Sirs, if there were some tremendous precipice and I saw you hastily approaching it, would I not cry out to you and say, Stop! Stop! Stop! There is ruin before you? And may I not tonight plead with you for your life, that you may be led to stop your course of sin? For the wages of sin is death, while the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord, whom you are shunning, avoiding and grieving! Must I not plead with you? Shall you be going to Hell blindfolded and shall not one of your poor fellow creatures pull the bandage from your eyes? Shall he not call to you, without being thought mad, or an enthusiast? Well, if I am mad, in that respect may I always be so! And if that is to be an enthusiast, let none be sober! But if it is mad and enthusiastic to go to Heaven, how much more so is it to go to Hell? O God, show these poor souls what their portion in the flames must be and tell themfor Your mercys sake tell themwhat salvation by Jesus Christ is!   
Do you ask me to tell you that before I finish? Do I hear one say, Men and brethren, what must I do to be saved? I answer, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved. It is written, He that believes and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believes not shall be damned. If you will trust in Jesus, tonight, you shall be saved! It does not say such-and-such a person that believes, but, he that believesif he has been a drunk, a swearer, or whateverhe that believes and is baptizedmark how the two are put together! I dare not part what Christ has joined, nor dare I reverse their proper orderhe that believes and is baptized shall be saved.   
Farewell to you, my Hearers, for this night. I shall never meet some of you again in this world. Before another Sabbath is come, your corpse may have been laid in the grave. Which of us shall it be? On whom the hungry teeth of Death shall feed before another Sabbath shall let its chimes be heard? Oh, if you are the man, or if the preacher is the   
doomed one, may it be fulfilled   
**Prepare me, Lord, for Your right hand,   
Then come the joyful day!   
Come death and some celestial band,   
To bear my soul away.**   
But another says, I will not enter this Chapel again! I will never listen  
to that man again! I will never again hear his voice. Good-bye, my  
Friend. I hope you will hear someone who will be as faithful to you and if   
you find a man who loves you more, or would suffer more for your sake,   
go and hear him! And God bless him to your soul! But one says, I will   
hear no more of this matter! It is cant. It is nonsense. I will not turn. Ah,   
my Hearer, if I see you going to destruction and you know it not, it is   
none the less destruction because you do not see it! But another says,  
This night I will give myself to Jesus, for I know I need life. I lie down, a  
corpse, and though I cannot move, I know that when He passes by, He   
will give me life. Go! God has something for you! Go and fall before Him!   
You shall have life bestowed upon yougo and accept it! For, wherever  
there is a now, it is of God. The Holy Spirit says, Today, if you will hear   
His voice, harden not your hearts.

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PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #2736 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

THE GREAT MIRACLE WORKER   
NO. 2736

A SERMON   
INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS-DAY, JULY 21, 1901.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, NOVEMBER 21, 1880.

**Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What shall we do? For this Man does many miracles. John 11: 47.**

I WILL make a preface out of the verse preceding our textSome of themthat is, some of those who saw Lazarus raised from the dead, went their ways to the Pharisees, and told them what things Jesus had done. Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What shall we do? For this Man does many miracles.

Mr. Whitefield once raised a great storm against himself by saying that man, by nature, was little better than half beast and half devil. That was, certainly, a very strong expression, yet I question whether there are not abundant instances of conduct, on the part of men, which would be a disgrace even to beastsand which would seem more in harmony with the character of the deviland, in such cases, it would not be inappropriate if we were to say that man is altogether devil! Certainly, in his natural condition, he is altogether under the power of the prince of the air and, being led captive by Satan, he is oftentimes made to do the very worst of deeds. I am led to make this observation because the two verses which I have just read to you reveal some of the meanest conduct that has ever been recorded in human history!

Here we have, first, a band of common informersmen who stood by the grave of Lazarus and heard that he had been dead four daysand who listened to the objection of the prudent Martha to the taking away of the stone because, she said, by this time he stinks. These men had seen Lazarus come forth from the tomb at the call of Jesus. They had observed how the onlookers, at Christs command, unwound the napkin and the grave clothes. And they had not the shadow of a doubt that a notable miracle had been worked and that a dead man had been raised to life! One would have thought that the last thing anybody would have done would be to steal away from such a sight as that and go and tell the enemies of the great Miracle Worker in such a way as to excite them to yet greater enmity against Him! Many of the spectators on that memorable occasion were so convinced by what they saw that they became Christs disciples, and very properly sobut these other people were only excited to malice and ill-willand in a mean manner marched off to accuse Jesus to the Pharisees.

Perhaps you say, Oh, but that happened only once in human history. Possibly not, but our Savior has never done anything among men but that which is good and kind! His whole life was one of self-denying goodness and His Gospel is a message of mercy, love, peace and truth and yet there are still many who insinuate all manner of evil against Him and find fault with His followers! No difficult task, alasnot so much out of enmity to the offenders, as enmity to the cause of Christ. O human Nature, you are, indeed, an evil thing when you can act thus meanly!

Nor is this all, for the Pharisees, who were informed of the miracle which had been worked by Christ, present to us another picture of man at his very worst. Here is positively a parliament of hypocrites! They come together as the great Sanhedrim, or supreme council of the nationthe chief priests in their robes and the Pharisees with their phylacteriesthe holiest men in all Judea! Ask them and they will assure you that it is soyet they have met together to oppose a perfectly innocent Man, to say the very least about Him, who has proved, by working a miracle, that He is a great deal more than a man! When they meet together, they say, This Man does many miracles, yet they are sitting there, plotting and planning to put Him down. Surely this assembly looks like another form of Pandemonium and, as Milton gives us pictures of all the winged spirits in Hell coming close together into the council with Satan in the midst, I think I see the same thing carried out in Jerusalem! There is the high priest, Caiaphas, in the midst of themand the Pharisees gather together around him, taking counsel to see if they cannot destroy the Christ!

So, first, there was a band of common informers, and then, a parliament of hypocrites. Next, look at the arguments they use as the reason why Christ is to be put down. Of course it is pretended that their desire for His overthrow is the result of their zeal for the public good. It is still often the case that when a man opposes true religion, he says that he is prompted to do it by zeal for morality, or a burning desire for the good of his country or his race. So it was with these hypocrites in Jerusalem. In effect, they said, If this Man goes on working miracles, and we do not stop Him, the people will become His disciples. Then the Romans will believe that a new king is being set up over us and they will pounce upon our nation and destroy it! And, therefore, we must put Him down before they do so. Now this was a transparent lie, for, first, supposing that Christ had converted all the people of Judea, had He ever in His life said a word about making Himself a king?

Did not these Pharisees know that when the people wanted to make Him a king, Jesus had withdrawn Himself from them, in order that nothing like a political tinge might be given to His sacred mission? Did they not also know that the Romans never interfered with religious movements among the nations that they subdued? They were the most tolerant of all conquerors! What mattered it to the Romans what the Jews believed, or did not believe? They left them entirely to themselves, religiously, so that if Christ had induced all the people of the land to become His followers, the Romans would not have interfered in the least degree. But this is, to me, the most transparent part of the lie. If this Man worked miracles, then the people ought to believe in Him and they ought to become His disciplesand they ought not to be afraid of the Romans! The Romans might be strong, but the Man who could work miracles must be stronger. And if it should ever come to a conflict between Roman legions and the Divine Miracle Worker, there can be no question about which would be victorious! So, you see, this argument of the Pharisees, as to why Christ should be put down, was a self-evident fraud.

Perhaps someone asks, Do men, at the present time, ever talk like this about the Savior? I answerYes, the majority of the objections to Christianity which lull mens consciences to sleep, are nothing better than transparent lies. If they would honestly examine the evidence laid before them. If they would give their minds to searching out the Truth, they would soon be brought to believe on Jesus. Do you not remember how two gentlemen, both of whom were skeptics, said to one another, Let us, as candid men, investigate some part of the Bible and see whether it holds together and bears the mark of Inspiration. One of them took the subject of Christs Resurrection and the other selected the conversion of the Apostle Paul. They both sat down to study the Scripture narratives, not believing them to be trueand the result of their investigation was that they were both converted! And the one has given us a book upon the Life of Paul, and the other has given us a book upon our Lords Resurrection. Their own examinations of the Word of God, candidly made, led them to the Saviors feet. And I believe a similar result would follow, in the case of any skeptics here present, who would take the same course. At any rate, I challenge them to make the trial, and I am not asking of them more than candor requires of every honest man.

There are some people who raise questions even concerning God, Himself. According to their notions, God should be this, or that, and almost anything but what He really is. Jehovah, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob. The God and Father of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The only living and true God, is not at all according to their taste. Some even venture so far as to call His justness, severity. They would have a God all mercy if they could. Or they pick out some one or other of Gods attributes and they want to have a change made in it. What? Man, is God to be made to suit you, instead of you, yourself, being adapted to Gods will? And is the question to be, not, How can I be right with my Maker? but, How can I make my Maker right with myself? Is that the blasphemous turn that your thoughts have taken? It is so with some people and, accordingly, they practically become idolaters, for, while they pretend to worship the one living and true God, yet, inasmuch as they attribute to Him a Character which is not His own, they do, in effect, worship a god of their own making!

There are others whose quarrel is with Gods Word, this blessed Book, the Bible. There are certain things in it which they do not approveand when a man once begins to rail at Scripture, you never know what he will say! It is impossible to tell on which side he will find what he calls a fault and, probably, that which is the highest excellence of the Word will most offend him. We shall, therefore, put this question to himWould you have a Bible made according to your minda brand new Bible, I suppose, once a week, for your mind changes so often that it would need constantly to be revised in order to be according to your mind? And shall God speak only such things as you would have Him say? Are you to be master of His voice, and lord even of the Inspired Word? That must not be! It is not for us to say what the Bible ought to be, but to find out what the Bible really is, and then meekly to bow before it and accept it as the Revelation of the Most High.

Many persons dispute with God concerning His Providence, both on the larger and on the smaller scale. They think that they could govern nations much better than God can. And when they read history, some of them cannot see Gods hand there at all. And others, who do perceive His hand, yet dare to arraign their Maker for His management of the world! As to their own share in the dispensations of Providence, many are utterly discontented. They are not so much in the sunlight as they would like to beand the rivers that ripple over golden sands do not pass through their inheritance. They are often poor and obscure and, therefore, they quarrel with the arrangements of Gods Providence. To anyone of that sort whom I may be addressing, I would say, Should it be that the Maker of Heaven and earth should do your bidding? Surely, this is only another form of the opposition of these chief priests and Pharisees to the Christ of God!

I have to mention one more point that arises from the context and that is that the arguments of this parliament of hypocrites led them to a conclusion of bloodThis Man is a worker of miracles, therefore He must die. You know the word, regicide, which describes the killing of a king, a crime that is rightly thought to be a very terrible one. You know what fratricide means, killing a brotherparricide, killing a father. Matricide, killing a mother. But what will you say of a deicide, a God-killer, one who seeks to destroy God if it is possible? There was God in human flesh, moving among men, displaying His Divine Power in working miracles, yet these wicked men said, This is the heir. Come, let us kill Him, that the inheritance may be ours. Human sin reached its highest point when, at last, it took the innocent, loving Savior and hung Him up upon a cross to die like a common felon. Yet such is the nature of man that he will do anything he can against his God! The case is proven against the capacity of human nature, at any rate, by the passage which we have been considering.

Now I want especially to turn your attention to the latter part of the textWhat shall we do? For this Man does many miracles.   
I. In considering these words, I ask you to notice, first, THE STUBBORNNESS OF UNBELIEF.   
The natural conclusion from the statement, This Man does many miracles, should have beenThen He is the Christ of God! So let us believe in Him. Let us yield ourselves up wholly to Him. But these chief priests and Pharisees did not come to the natural conclusionso stubborn was their unbelief that they saidThis Man does many miracles, therefore we will put Him to death if we can.   
So that, first, they admitted the miracles, yet denied the Miracle Worker. We have many rising up, nowadays, who do not even admit the miracles! They are consistent if they also deny Him who worked the miracles. But if you acknowledge the miracles, how can you deny the Miracle Worker? I may be addressing some who did not know how much that statement concerned themselves. You believe that Jesus Christ of Nazareth worked many miracleswhy, then, do you not believe in Him? You are convinced that He did all these things that are recorded concerning Him in His Wordwhy, then, do you not trust Himtrust Him to save you and so to work a miracle of mercy in you? You know that He raised to life those who had been dead. Then why do you not ask Him to raise you up from spiritual death and to give you everlasting life? You believe that He opened the eyes of the blind. Then why do you not ask Him to open your eyes? If this Man does such miracles as these, why do you not come to Him and touch the hem of His garment, that virtue may go out of Him to you, as it did to the woman who had the issue of blood?   
Oh, says one, I believe all that I find recorded in the ScripturesI am no skeptic! I am glad to hear you say so. But, if you really believe it, why do you not act upon it? If you are sick and you know that this medicine will heal you, why do you not take it when it is freely given to you? If there is salvation in Christ, why are you not saved? If there is pardon for sin, why have you not obtained it, especially as it is to be had for nothing, as the free gift of the Grace of God to everyone who trusts in the Lord Jesus Christ? It was, indeed, stubborn unbelief which made the chief priests and Pharisees accept the truth of the miracles, and yet deny the great Miracle Worker!   
Further, they admitted the miracles, yet opposed the Miracle Worker. Well, now, a man is a fool who acts like that! If a person can work miracles, I certainly will not oppose him, for I cannot tell how far his power may extend. If he can kill, and make alive, I am not going to strive against him! If I fight against anyone, give me an adversary who has only natural power and not supernatural. Woe unto him that strives with his Maker! To contend with Omnipotence is as foolish as for wax to fight with flame, or twigs with fire! Possibly I am addressing some who admit that Christ works miracles and yet who refuse to accept His Gospel. You, dear Friends, are living in a state of heart which practically does despite to His precious blood. And I ask you, whoever you are, to consider how fruitless your opposition must be and no longer to be so stubborn in your unbelief as to confess that Christ is able to save, able to destroy, able to do all thingsand yet, all the while, you will not yield yourself to Himand even scoff at religion, and use harsh and cruel words towards those dear ones in your own family who are true followers of the Lord Jesus Christ! Do not, I implore you, continue to be so inconsistent as to believe the miracles and yet to oppose the Miracle Worker!   
Yet once more, these chief priests and Pharisees manifested a very stubborn unbelief in another way, for they admitted the miracles, and yet they were afraid of the Miracle Workers influence over the people. We also have some objectors, in the present day, who believe Jesus Christ to be a great Teacher, but they are constantly telling us that to preach up salvation by Grace and justification by faith in Jesus is to endanger morality. Ah, me! I marvel not that the darkness thinks the light is dangerous, yet this complaint is most absurd! If Jesus Christ works miracles, then He is of God, and if He is of God, then the more His influence is extended among the people, the better!   
Suppose that the preaching of the Gospel does stir up opposition in some minds? Yet the supremacy of the Truth of God is such that opposition to it need never be feared, for Truth will lay her iron hand on all her adversaries and break them in pieces if they will not submit to her righteous rule! Perhaps some of you imagine that if you could see a miracle worked, you would believe in the Miracle Workerbut there is no certainty that you would do anything of the kind. These Pharisees had, doubtless, seen many of Christs miracles, or received reports of them from those who knew they were true. They admitted that Christ had worked many miracles, yet they did not believe in Him. As a rule, signs and wonders are not sufficient to make men believe. Such things may, indeed, increase their responsibility, but not affect their conscience and their heart.   
Why do any of you want to see miracles worked by Christ? You have His Word, you have the Spirit of God among you and if you reject these, neither would you believe though one rose from the dead! Though the earth should shake and the heavens should pass away like a scroll. Though the sun should be turned into darkness and the moon into blood, yet you would not believe if you will not accept the Christ of God as He is revealed in Holy Scripture! Such is the stubbornness of unbelief.   
II. But now, secondly, and briefly, let us notice THE FUTILITY OF ALL OPPOSITION TO CHRIST, for the chief priests and the Pharisees said, as if they realized their own impotence, What shall we do? For this Man does many miracles.

The whole history of Christs Church in the world is summed up in the words of our text. After the persecutions to which the early Christians were subjected among the Jews, the Romans tried to destroy Christianity by hunting Christians to the death. Nero smeared them with tar and set them up in his palace gardens to burn at night to provide light for his sports. There was no kind of inhuman cruelty that was not practiced upon the followers of Jesus, yet within about 300 years after the death of Christ upon the Cross, Christianity was the ruling religion of the then known world. The more the persecutors tried to crush it, the more it continued to advance. The more they fought against it, the more it conquered. Christians had patience and Grace enough to endure all manner of trialsand courage enough to continue to bear testimony to the Gospel they believed till, at last, the Truth of God overthrew the gods of the heathens, and the temples of the idols became, in many instances, the places where Christians met to worship the one living and true God! Well might the adversaries of Christ then have said, What shall we do? For this Man does many miracles.   
Then there came a long time when the light of the Gospel grew fainter and waned under the influence of riches and wealth. The devil probably thought that he would have everything his own way, then, but up there among the mountains of Northern Italy, and in the valleys of Piedmont, and away there towards Lyons, and in divers spots there were godly men and women who had not bowed the knee to Baal! And even when the followers of antichrist thought themselves supreme, they might still have said, What shall we do? For this Man does many miracles and here, among poor ignorant men and women is the power of the Gospel still kept alive.   
The enemies of the faith sought to crush out all who loved it, but God continually sent fresh witnesses to bear testimony to the Truth. Two of these mighty men were Jerome of Prague, and John Huss, who preached the Gospel in Bohemia and then sealed his testimony with his blood. The name, Huss, means, goose, so as he was being burned, he said to his persecutors, You may roast this goose, but there will come a swan that you will not be able to burn. That prophecy was fulfilled in Martin Luther and, by-and-by, there sprang up many others who held the Truth of God and, in various places, no sooner was the Gospel proclaimed than multitudes responded to its call as though they had lain concealed and were only awaiting the summons to arise! It was as when some chieftain has hidden away his men and then, when he blows his whistle, from every rock there rises up a soldier! Once more was that ancient Scripture true, The Lord gave the Word: great was the company of those that published it. Calvin, Zwingli Knox, and thousands of others stood up in different lands until the devil and the pope had to say, What shall we do? For this Man does many miracles.   
And since then, whenever there has come a sad, dark time, and the enemy has begun to exult over the faithful, then the light of the Gospel has suddenly broken out again, as it did in the days of Whitefield and Wesley, when the whole land seemed steeped in midnight darkness. Then up rose these earnest men and thousands were brought to the Savior by their preachingand the Church had a new reformation! And so will it be right on to the end of the ageGod will go on converting men by the power of His Truth as applied by His Holy Spirit. Some of them will be such remarkably singular men that their conversion will, indeed, be a miracle of mercy.  
Foolish people talk about the last of the Evangelicals and the last of the Puritans, but that is all nonsense! So long as the earth endures, and sun and moon shall shine, the everlasting Gospel shall not lack a man to proclaim itand if all the ministers who now live should desert the Gospel and all universities should pour out heretics instead of true preachers of the Wordthe Lord will raise Him up ministers out of the darkest slums of London, or will find them among the very poorest of the poor, or even among the heathen! But, somehow or other, His Gospel must be continually spread abroad. What are you doing, O you haters of the Christ of God? What do you accomplish after all your opposition to Him? Remember that ancient verse of the PsalmistHe that sits in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision. For, still, this Man does many miracles. and He will continue to do them till He Himself shall come to claim His final victory! Therefore, be of good comfort, all you who tremble because of the evil times in which you live, and believe that God will overcome all the powers of darkness in His own good time!   
III. Now, the last and the longest part of my discourse is concerning THE CONCLUSION OF TRUE REASON FROM THE TEXTThis Man does many miracles. What then? Why, let us believe on Him!   
I want everyone of you to give me your most earnest attention. I do not want you to hear for your neighbor, but for yourself. Let each one of us say for himself or herself, If this Man does many miracles, I will see what sort of miracles He does, in order that, if possible, I may have such a miracle worked upon me. We must always remember that most of the miracles of Christ are symbols and emblems of the spiritual and moral miracles that He works in the world of the heart.   
In the Gospel according to John, several miracles are recorded which are not mentioned by any other Evangelist. I want to refer to some of them, and also to others recorded by John, in order that we may learn the spiritual lessons that they teach. The first miracle which Christ worked was the turning of water into wine at the marriage at Cana of Galilee. This is recorded in the second Chapter of Johns Gospel. Christ did but speak the word and, the conscious water saw its God and blushed itself to wine. Is there any instruction for me in that miracle? Suppose that I am a Christian, that I have been rendered pure and clean, so that I am like water that might be served up at a feast. What then? I should like to be much better than I am, now, if that is possible. I should like to have much mere influence over my fellow men, far more power to affect them for their present and eternal welfare. I should like to be more fit for use in Christs blessed festival of mercy. Can I be? Yes, for this Man does many miracles.   
He can make that which is good to be much better. He can take the gracious and lift them up to a still higher plane of spiritual life. He can make the best Christian to be as much better than he now is as the wine that Christ made was better than the water of which He made it. Come, you devout spirit, you who love Christ, you who know His power to saveand put yourself into His hands, that He may make something more of you than you have ever yet imagined! I earnestly desire to experience this miracle in my own soul just nowand cannot some young man here from this time forth live a nobler life than he has ever lived? God has, by His Grace, made him pure and clearnow may He make him strong and full of holy savor, that he may bless his race as long as he lives! It will be a great miracle, says one, if He does that to me. That is true. But, then, this Man does many miracles. Brother, SisterHe can do as much for you as He did for the water when He turned it into wine!   
Now read on in that second Chapter, and you will find that it contains the record of another miracle. That is to say, the driving out of all the buyers and sellers who were in the Temple at Jerusalem. This is not usually called a miracle, but I think it should be reckoned as one that Christ, with a scourge of small cords, should be able to drive out the many men who were sitting there selling doves and changing shekels, for, if they had banded themselves together, they might easily have overcome one person armed only with a little scourge! But the Lord Jesus, by the majesty of His Person, completely overawed them all! He overturned the tables of the money-changers and said to those that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not My Fathers House a house of merchandise.   
Is there anything in this miracle that can comfort anybody here? Dear Friend, you who are consecrated to God, you who are Gods temple and who rejoice to know that it is so, you desire that your whole being should be the house of God and used only for His Glory, but, somehow or other, evil thoughts have entered into your mind and you cannot get them out. Constitutional temptations, old habits, your daily surroundingsall these are like the money-changers in the Temple or like those that seem not only to sell doves, but to sell dragons and owls. Well, now, you wish you could get rid of these unwelcome invaders. Do you not see what comfort there is for you in our text? This Man does many miracles. Then ask Him to come and drive out these evil thoughts, these atheistic doubts, these critical sophistries which lead you almost into infidelity, for He can cast them all out!   
Oh, you say, I have struggled against them for years and I cannot get rid of them! If they were once all banished from me, it would, indeed, be a miracle. Well, this Man does many miracles, and He can give you such calm and peace of mind, and such certainty of holy faith that your nature shall become like a purged temple, wherein is heard nothing but the song of holy praise and the voice of them that say, from morning until evening, Blessed be the name of the Lord. Oh, what a miracle that would be! And as this Man does many miracles, why should He not do this for you?   
Now, if you will turn to the fourth Chapter of this Gospel, at the 47th verse, you can read about the next wonder which Christ worked and which John has recorded. That was the raising up to health of the noblemans child who was at the point of death. Jesus said to him, Go your way; your son lives, and he found that it was even so. Have any of you children at home unconverted? Are they the subject of your prayerful solicitude? Are you afraid, from what you see of them, that they will not turn out well? Mother, do they distress you? Father, do they cause you sleepless nights and much anxiety? Well, now, do you not see in this miracle much that may comfort you? Apply to Jesus as that nobleman didtell Him about your child and his soul-sickness, for the Lord Jesus can heal him of his ill temper, and evil disposition, and all that now causes you such sorrowand you shall yet hear Him say to you, Your son livesand you shall have most joy in the very child who caused you most grief.

Those characteristics which now seem to be most likely to lead to vicious practices shall, by Divine Grace, be turned into a strength of character which shall enable your son to glorify God even more than others who have not those propensities. I think we ought to have great comfort concerning our children whenever we read of our Lord Jesus Christ healing those who were at the point of deathand raising up those who were already dead. After all that He has done, what is there that Christ cannot do either for ourselves or for our dear ones? If He has done for you all that you need, then ask Him to do for your household all that He has done for youand from this miracle of the healing of the sick child take comfort to bring every hard case before Him!   
Now turn to the fifth Chapter and read the record of the miracle worked by Christ at the pool of Bethesda. There lay a man who had been decrepit for 38 yearsand not until Christ came on that Sabbath and bade him take up his bed and walk, was he cured of his malady! I wonder whether anybody here can get comfort out of this miracle? This poor man was alive, but he was very ill. There had been a time in his life when he was well, but it was such a long while ago that he must almost have forgotten it. Thirty-eight years is a long period of sickness and the man must almost have despaired of ever being restored. Am I addressing somebody who was once a professor of religion, a member of a Christian Church? Are you sighing   
*What peaceful hours I then enjoyed!   
How sweet their memory still?*   
It is a long time since you had any such enjoyment as that, yet there is still some life in you, and that makes you look back upon the past with some pleasure, wishing that you could have those happy times over again and once more know yourself to be Gods child. Well, that mans 38 years sickness, out of which he was restored by Christ, should seem to say to you, Backslider, though you may have fallen very low, and wandered very far, yet, this Man does many miracles, and He can bring you back again to all your former joy. The devil may have concluded that you belong to him. Ah, he says, I shall never trouble about him. He does not tempt you much, now, for he looks upon you as one who is perfectly safe. He thinks that you will never run away from him! But suppose he should be deceived this very hour? What if this God-Man who does many miracles, should come and call you, by His Grace, and you should leave the sin into which you have fallen and in which you seemed as though you had been imbedded, as though you had stuck fast in a bed of cementand should so call you that you will be able to come forth, and say, I will arise, and go to My Father? Why should it not be so with you? Have faith in Him who does great marvels and trust Him to work a miracle of mercy even for you!   
I have not time to do more than just remind you, in passing, that in his sixth Chapter John tells us of the five thousand hungry men, besides women and children, whom Christ fed with the lads five barley loaves and two small fishes. What does that miracle teach us? I think it tells all anxious workers that Jesus Christ is equal to every emergency. Think of the four millions of people in this city and of the very few in it who really are dealing out to them the Bread of Life. Yet, Brothers and Sisters, never despair! Christ can feed five million souls as easily as He can feed five and though the stock to begin with is only a few barley loaves, and a still smaller quantity of little fishes, yet He can keep on multiplying them until the whole multitude shall be satisfied! The agencies at work are sufficient for the purpose in viewif Christ does but bless themso have unbounded faith in Him, for, this Man does many miracles.   
In that sixth Chapter, there is also the story of Christs walking on the sea to come to His troubled disciples. The sea arose by reason of a great wind that blew, but in the night watch Jesus came, and immediately the ship was at the land where they went. What says that miracle to us? Is not this the lesson to be learned from it? Christs Church is always safeshe may be tossed with tempest, and not comforted, but in the darkest night Christ will come, walking over the waves of her trouble, and He will hush her tumult and give her perfect peace, for this Man does many miracles. Everything is safe in His hands, so let us not be afraid, whatever may happen.   
Then, if you turn to the ninth Chapter, you can read about the miraclewhich John alone recordsof the man born blind. He had never seen the light, yet Christ made his eyes to open, to the astonishment of all beholders. Is there not someone who can get comfort out of this miracle? Are you, dear Friends, desirous to see the true Light of God and to find Christ as your Savior? I have met with many persons who have been for years attending a place of worship, anxious to find salvation. Very often their failure has been explained by what they have said to me, Where I have been in the habit of worshipping, Sir, there was about a quarter of an hour or 20 minutes of something that I never understood. I did not know anything about the way of salvation and could not make heads or tails of what the minister said. But it seemed to be the proper thing to go to a place of worship, so I continued to go there. But, at last, I went to another house of prayer where I heard the simple story of the Cross and my eyes were opened to see my Savior, and now I am rejoicing in Him. Ah, dear Friend, this Man who opened the eyes of the blind still does many miracles! And if you have been for years wanting to know what you must do to be saved, and are not yet saved, ask Jesus Christ to save you, now! Trust Him to do it and the film shall depart from your eyes as you see that Jesus Christ, your Savior and Redeemer, has undertaken to save all those that put their trust in Him!   
The last miracle that I can mention now is the one with which our text is concerned, that is, the raising of Lazarus. Here was a man who was not blind, or sick, or hungrybut deaddeadDEAD! Yet that made no difference to the great Miracle Worker. This Man does many miracles and here is the crowning one of all! He can actually raise the dead to life! Is your verdict concerning yourself that you are spiritually dead? Dead? DEAD? Do I seem to make those words sound to you like a knell? Dead! Dead! DEAD! And, my Christian Friend, have you been earnestly talking to someone, trying to persuade him to trust in Christ and, after all that you have said, have you had to turn aside and cry, Alas! He is dead! Dead! DEAD!? Then, what is the good of your talking to him? What is the use of my preaching to him? Can the dead arise through anything we can do? No!   
But this is our comfort and our blessed hopethere is One who is the Resurrection and the Lifeand if He will but bless the message that He gives us to deliver in His name, however feeble we may be as the repeaters of it, He is not feeble, He still does great miracles! He can raise the dead! He is still mighty to save. Ah, yes, if He so wills, He can convert any soul here, however hardened or debased! When I am preaching, I do not think to myself, I wonder how many souls here will make themselves willing to come to Christ. My thought is, They shall be willing in the day of His power. When His Grace goes forth, the free will of man is not marred as to its freeness, yet it is sweetly controlled and miraculously subdued so that he who, but an hour ago, could curse and swear, now begins to pray and to sing! He, who despised Christ, now adores Him! He, who was an unbeliever, is now a believer in Christ and, therefore, is saved, for, he that believes on the Son has everlasting life.   
If the Gospel had to wait till men came to it, there would be poor results from itbut it is a dew from the Lord that waits not for men, neither tarries for the sons of men, but it falls when He pleases! Christ waits not till men bare their bosoms to receive His pointed shafts, but He takes His bow, fits the arrow to the string and through mailed armor or steeled breastplate He makes His dart fly Omnipotently strong till it pierces the heart and causes the sinner to fall down slain beneath His matchless might, only to rise to a new life by His glorious Grace!   
O strong Son of God, work some of these miracles in this place just now, and out of Heaven may the angels lean over the jeweled battlements to see what Christ is still doing among the sons of men! For verily, verily, I say unto you, this Man does many miracles! Amen.

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